

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

T H E B O O K O F

EPHESIANS

*How to live the Christian life*

EPHESIANS: HOW TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – PART 31

*How Can I Forgive?*

*Ephesians 4:32*

*“<sup>25</sup> Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. <sup>26</sup> “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, <sup>27</sup> nor give place to the devil. <sup>28</sup> Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. <sup>29</sup> Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” -Ephesians 4:25-32 (NKJV)*

## KEY BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR EPHESIANS

To gain a better understanding of the Book of Ephesians, consider the following background information:

1. **Authorship: The Apostle Paul** - Traditionally attributed to the Apostle Paul.
2. **Date of Writing: A.D. 60-63** - Likely written around A.D. 60-63 during Paul's Roman imprisonment.
3. **Place of writing: Rome** – Paul wrote the book/letter of Ephesians from a Roman prison
4. **Audience: Ephesian Christians at Ephesus and surrounding area** Addressed to the Christian community in Ephesus, a major city in Asia Minor. Ephesians is considered a

“circular letter” meant to be circulated to church in the area of Ephesus... possibly the same 7 churches

5. **Purpose: How to live the Christian life** To strengthen the faith of believers and address issues of unity and spiritual maturity.
  6. **Themes: Grace, the church, and holy living** - Key themes include grace, the church as the body of Christ, and the importance of living a holy life.
  7. **Structure: Ephesus is divided into two main sections** - Divided into two main sections: doctrinal teachings (chapters 1-3) and practical applications (chapters 4-6).
  8. **Cultural Context: Ephesus was center of commerce and religion** - Ephesus was a center of commerce and religion, known for the Temple of Artemis.
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### Application Questions

1. **Some argue that forgiveness should be unconditional. Do you agree? Give biblical support for your answer.**
2. **If a family member molests your child, does forgiveness require seeking a reconciled relationship with him? Can trust ever be totally restored in such cases?**
3. **Do you agree that apologizing is the world’s substitute for forgiveness? How does an apology differ from seeking forgiveness? How should we ask for forgiveness when we’ve sinned?**
4. **Do you agree with the distinction between forgiving someone in your heart before he repents, but not extending forgiveness to him until after he repents? Give biblical support.**

**Q. DEAR BILLY GRAHAM:** I know we’re supposed to forgive people who’ve hurt us, but why should we? It doesn’t change them in any way, so why bother? They’re probably just going to hurt us all over again the next time they get an opportunity. — F. M.

**How would you respond to this person?**

**A. DEAR F.M.:** One reason we ought to forgive those who’ve hurt us is simply because God commands us to do so. Jesus warned, *“If you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:15).*

But why does God command us to forgive others — even if they don’t deserve it or even want it? One reason is because of what an unforgiving spirit does to us. Think of it a moment: If someone hurts you, what happens to your attitude toward them? You know the answer: You’ll be filled with anger and bitterness, and you may even try to strike back and hurt them in some way. And these feelings will stay in your heart as long as you fail to forgive that person. In fact, they’ll become like a poison in your soul, robbing you of your joy and turning you into someone who is sour and bitter and angry at life. The Bible warns, *“See to it ... that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many” (Hebrews 12:15).*

But it doesn't need to be this way — not if we begin to see the other person through the eyes of Jesus. He loves them in spite of their failures — and so should we. Don't let bitterness crowd out your joy, but ask God to help you forgive others just as he has forgiven you — freely and fully. Then ask him to help you show Christ's love to them, and to bring them to himself

*The Spanish have a story about a father and son who had become estranged. The son left home and the father set out to find him. He searched for many months with no success. Finally, in desperation, the father took out a newspaper ad that read, “Dear Paco, meet me in front of this newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you. Your father.” On Saturday, 800 men named Paco showed up looking for forgiveness and love from their fathers.*

Dr. Charles Swindoll has said...

***“We are never more Christlike than when we are forgiving.” –Dr. Charles Swindoll.***

1. What do you think Swindoll means?
2. Do you agree or disagree with that statement? Explain
3. Why is it so hard to follow Christ example of forgiveness?

While that statement is a powerful statement and is very true, “We are never more Christlike than when we are forgiving,” it is none the less a challenging statement to say the least. The truth is we are not always as reflective of Jesus as we need to be when it comes to forgiveness. Remember it was some of Jesus final words from a cross that expressed it this way... while looking into the eyes of his crucifiers and knowing that it was our sin that put Him on that cross He cried out, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34). It isn't an overstatement to claim that Jesus was all about our forgiveness... our finding it and our extending it to others. So perhaps to say, “We are never more Christlike than when we are forgiving” is an accurate claim and an outstanding pursuit for our lives as believers who desire to be like Him.

While a great goal and ambition to be “forgiving,” let's face it, it's not always easy is it. ***Why, in your opinion is it often so hard to forgive?*** Take a few moments and reflect on why we sometimes have such a hard time forgiving. Record your thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Why Do We Sometimes Have a Hard Time Forgiving?:**

1. **Emotional pain** – The wounds of betrayal, anger, and sadness can be profound and linger, making it hard to let go of the hurt.
2. **Fear of being hurt again** – Holding onto resentment can protect us from future pain, but it can also keep us stuck in the past.
3. **Lack of trust** – If we trust a person who wronged us, it can be hard to forgive them.
4. **Self-guilt** – Some individuals may feel guilty about their actions or the action of the person they are trying to forgive.
5. **Need for justice** – A desire for justice can keep us from fully forgiving, as it may feel unfair to let go of the hurt.

These factors can create emotional barriers that make it difficult to move toward forgiveness. However, with time, and the right approach, healing and moving forward is possible.

### **What is wrong with these reasons for “not forgiving”:**

1. **They fail to take into account their own sin nature and their need for forgiveness**
2. **They fail to take into account the effects of an unforgiving spirit in their life**
3. **They fail to take into account the unconditional forgiveness of Sovereign God**

In a fallen world, forgiveness is essential to maintain close relationships. We all need forgiveness and we all need to grant forgiveness, because we all sin and we all have been sinned against.

But asking for and granting forgiveness are not easy tasks! It’s not an easy subject to understand, as seen by the fact that different writers say conflicting things about forgiveness. It’s not an easy subject to practice, especially on the emotional level. The deeper you have been hurt, the more difficult it is truly to forgive. Some of you were abused emotionally, physically, or sexually as children by your parents or by trusted family members. Some of you have children who were abused by your mate or by a family member. Some have been betrayed by an unfaithful spouse whom you loved and cared for deeply. These kinds of wrongs are not easy to forgive.

But if you’re a Christian, seeking and granting forgiveness are not optional. Listen to these verses and reflect on what Jesus is telling us about forgiveness...

### **3 Important Bible Passages on Forgiveness:**

1. **Matthew 6:14-15, *“<sup>14</sup> For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*** - Scholars are divided over whether that refers to being

under God's eternal judgment or to your relationship with the Father as His child. I favor the second option. But either way, you don't want to miss out on the Father's forgiveness!

- **Forgiveness in your life may be conditional**
  - **Forgiveness in your life may affect your being forgiven**
  - **Forgiveness in your life affects your relationship with the Father**
2. **Mark 11:25, “<sup>25</sup> And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that you Father in heaven may also forgive your trespasses. “**
- **An unforgiving spirit will hinder your prayer life**
  - **An unforgiving spirit will affect your relationships**
  - **An unforgiving spirit will affect your receiving forgiveness**
3. **Matthew 5:23-24 – “<sup>23</sup> Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”** - Jesus said that forgiving others is so important that if you are worshiping God when you remember that your brother has something against you, you should first go be reconciled to your brother and then come back to worship God (Matt. 5:23-24). So it is vital for you as a Christian to grapple with understanding and practicing forgiveness. Since many books have been written on this topic, I can only touch on some of the issues.
- **Unforgiveness affects our giving**
  - **Unforgiveness affects our worship**
  - **Unforgiveness affects our relationships**

In the context of our passage in Ephesians 4, Paul is showing specific ways that we are to put on the new man in Ephesians 4:24, “<sup>24</sup> and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” According to Ephesians 4:31 we are to put away all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander. We are to replace these sins with kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you according to Ephesians 4:32, “<sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

Now we want to focus on what it means to forgive and how we can practically apply it.

**KEY THOUGHT**: *To forgive others, we must understand the nature of forgiveness and the perspective needed for it, and we must take action to demonstrate forgiveness.*

### **3 Truths for Forgiving Others:**

1. **To forgive others, we must understand the nature of forgiveness**
2. **To forgive others, we must understand the perspective needed for forgiveness**
3. **To forgive others, we must take action to demonstrate forgiveness**

## TO FORGIVE OTHERS, WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF FORGIVENESS

*What does it mean to ask forgiveness or to forgive someone? There is a lot of misunderstanding here... Is forgiveness and apologizing the same thing? What is the difference between apologizing and forgiveness*

**Dr. Jay Adams** (*From Forgiven to Forgiving* [Calvary Press], pp. 58-60) gives us these interesting and thought provoking insights in his book "**From Forgiven to Forgiving**" on the subject(s) of forgiving and apologizing...

**Insights on Forgiving and Apologizing: (these are at least thought provoking and at best very instructive for our understanding of forgiveness)**

1. **Apologizing and forgiveness are not the same thing** – Adams argues that apologizing is the world's substitute for forgiving.
2. **There is no reference to apologizing in the Bible** - Adams points out that there is not a single reference in the Bible to apologizing. It is an unbiblical concept.
3. **Apologizing is a cheap substitute for forgiveness** - It allows the wrongdoer to tell you how he feels ("I'm sorry") without acknowledging his sin and it does not ask the one sinned against to grant forgiveness.
4. **Biblical forgiveness does not mean accepting a person in their sin** - Adams points out (pp. 112, 135) that biblical forgiveness does not mean accepting the other person in his sin, which often amounts to condoning sin. Again, this is often the world's way. The world brushes aside the concept of sin by saying, "Hey, no problem! Don't worry about it, we all make mistakes!" But there is no acknowledgement or confession of sin.
5. **Biblical forgiveness involves admitting, confessing and seeking forgiveness** - In biblical forgiveness, the wrongdoer admits, "I sinned against you," and asks, "Will you forgive me?" The one wronged must respond by promising, "I forgive you." This is very different than just saying you're sorry or saying to the one who wronged you, "Hey, don't worry about it!"

Paul says that we are to forgive each other "**just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.**"

- God didn't say, "**Hey, don't worry about it, we all make mistakes!**"
- He didn't just brush our sin aside.
- Rather, our sin renders us truly guilty before God's holy justice.
- We have violated His holy law.
- He requires that the penalty be paid.
- But in love, He sent His own Son to bear the penalty that we deserved.

When the guilty sinner repents of his sin and lays hold of Christ by faith, God graciously and totally forgives the debt of sin. He releases the sinner from the guilt of his sin. He promises not to remember those sins against him, in the sense of not bringing them up again

for judgment. And, He is reconciled to the sinner through the blood of Christ. Extrapolating from God's forgiveness of us, we can say the following about our forgiveness of others:

**Truths Concerning Our Forgiveness of Others: (based on God's forgiveness of us)**

**1. Biblical forgiveness is a decision** - Before I tell you what this decision involves, let me underscore that it is *a deliberate decision* you must make.

A friend of Clara Barton, the founder of the American Red Cross, once reminded her of an especially cruel thing that someone had done to her years before. But Miss Barton did not seem to recall it. "Don't you remember it?" her friend asked. "No," said Miss Barton, "I distinctly remember forgetting it."

Forgiveness is the decision to drop the offense, to let it go. It involves at least five aspects:

**5 Aspects of the Decision to Forgive:**

- (1) To release the offender from the guilt of his sin** - When God forgives us, He brings down the gavel in His courtroom and declares, "Not guilty! Case dismissed." And the guilty sinner bears his guilt no longer! When you choose to forgive someone, you let the matter drop, releasing him from his guilt
- (2) To refuse to bring up the offense to use against the offender** - When God says that He will not remember our sins any more (Heb. 8:12; 10:17), He does not forget them in the sense of amnesia. Rather, He means that He will not bring up any of our offenses against us in the future. We do not have to fear standing before Him someday, because there is now no condemnation for us in Christ (Rom. 8:1). To forgive someone is to promise not to bring the matter up again to use against him. Sometimes it is necessary to bring up a forgiven sin for the purpose of teaching or restoration. Sometimes it is proper to impose consequences to teach the seriousness of sin, as God did with David after his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:9-14). It may be proper for a forgiven offender to be required to make restitution. If he committed a crime, he may need to be prosecuted and spend time in prison. But when we forgive him, we should not bring up his sin to accuse or condemn him or to win an argument.
- (3) To refuse to think about the offense** - Thankfully, God is not in heaven rehearsing our forgiven sins every day! For us, this is one of the most difficult aspects of forgiveness, especially when the wrong was serious. But, like Clara Barton, we must distinctly remember to forget past wrongs that we have chosen to forgive. You must deliberately direct your thoughts to other things, such as how much God has forgiven you. To dwell on an offense that you have forgiven is to break your promise to forgive.
- (4) To refuse to talk to others about the offense** - If you say that you forgive someone and then tell others about the offense, you are trying to make the offender pay, which is not forgiveness. Or, you're trying to evoke sympathy or admiration from others at the offender's expense. When you forgive, you choose to drop the matter. The only exception would be if you fear that the offender may be trying to repeat his sin toward

another person, who needs to be warned of the danger. For example, if someone has molested your child and you see him hanging out with another family with young children, it is appropriate to warn them to be on guard.

(5) **To be reconciled with the offender as far as is biblically possible** - God forgives us so that we may be reconciled to Him and enjoy a close relationship with Him. When we forgive others, we should also seek to restore the broken relationship. This does not always mean becoming best of friends, but it should at least mean that we are cordial and friendly towards the person. To say, "I forgive you, but I never want to see your ugly face again," is not to forgive as God forgives! Of course, if the offender does not truly repent of his sin, we cannot be truly reconciled or in a close relationship. But even then, we are still commanded to love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, bless those who curse us, and pray for those who mistreat us (Luke 6:27-28). So, biblical forgiveness is a decision to release the offender from the guilt of his sin, to refuse to bring up the offense to use against him, to refuse to think about the offense, to refuse to talk to others about the offense, and to be reconciled to the offender if possible. Also, to understand forgiveness we must realize that...

2. **Biblical forgiveness is costly** - It cost God the death of His beloved Son. It will not usually cost us that much, but it still may be very costly. I have read stories of parents who have forgiven the murderer or molester of their child. That is costly! At the very least, it costs us the time and effort to go to the offender and try to work on reconciliation. It does not happen automatically or when you are passive.
3. **Biblical forgiveness is undeserved** - God forgives us by grace alone, which is undeserved favor. If someone has to earn it, it's not forgiveness. If you make him pay or do penance, it's not forgiveness.
4. **Biblical forgiveness is total** - God doesn't forgive just some of our sins, saving some others to bring up later when He needs some leverage against us! He forgives them all (1 John 1:9). So we can't say, "I forgive you for this, but I'm not going to forgive you for that!" It must be total.
5. **Biblical forgiveness is final** - God doesn't say, "If you do that again, I'm revoking your previous forgiveness!" He says (Heb. 10:17), "*Their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more.*" To forgive someone is to dismiss the case against him. You can't bring it up again.

Much more could be said, but that gives us some understanding of the nature of biblical forgiveness. But, how do we put it into practice? We need the right perspective or mindset...

## **TO FORGIVE OTHERS, WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE PERSPECTIVE NEEDED FOR FORGIVENESS**

Many Christian authors emphasize the benefits that forgiving others will bring to you. It's true, you will benefit by forgiving others.

### **Some Benefits of Forgiving Others:**

1. **You will get rid of your bitterness, which eats at your soul**
2. **You will enjoy restored relationships with others**
3. **You will enjoy restored relationship with God**
4. **You will set your own soul free from the weight of being wronged**
5. **You will find your own joy restored and your peace settled**

But, the benefits for you are really the by-products of forgiveness. Your focus should not be on what's in it for you, but rather on glorifying God and loving others.

### **A New Perspective in Forgiveness:**

1. **The motive in forgiving others should be to glorify God, who has forgiven you** - As we saw in Ephesians 1:7, the forgiveness of our sins is according to the riches of His grace, so that we will be to the praise of His glory (1:12). If someone sees how much you have forgiven someone else and praises you for it, be quick to divert the praise to God, who has forgiven you so much.
2. **Remember how and how much God has forgiven you in Christ** - As we have seen, He forgave you by grace alone. You didn't deserve anything but His judgment, but He still forgave you out of His great love. And He has forgiven you far more than you can ever forgive anyone else. Jay Adams (pp. 5-6) illustrates how much God has forgiven us by imagining sitting in a movie theater. The theater is packed and the show is about to begin. Then you discover that this movie is the unedited, undeleted story of your entire life! The sound track will contain everything that you have ever said. In fact, the movie will project everything you have ever thought, including all of the things you would have liked to have done if you thought you could have gotten away with it. Every one of us is relieved that such a movie of us does not exist! But, God has that movie! His forgiveness means that He tosses it in the depths of the sea. Having been forgiven that much, He commands us to forgive others for their lesser sins against us (Matt. 18:21-35).
3. **Remember that God is the sovereign over all that happens and He is the righteous Judge of all** - When someone wrongs you, it helps to control your anger, root out bitterness, and make you ready to forgive if you remember that God has allowed this to happen for His purpose and your ultimate good (Rom. 8:28). When Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, he could have become a very bitter young man. Instead, he chose to forgive his brothers. After their father died, they feared that now he would use his position of power to get revenge. But Joseph acknowledged God's sovereignty and goodness when he said to them (Gen. 50:19-20), "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." By the way, it is blasphemous to say that we must sometimes forgive God. We only must forgive those who wrong us, and the Judge of the earth *always* does what is right! Also, while we should not wish for or pray for God to judge our enemies, but rather to save them, we can take comfort in the

fact that if they do not repent, they will face God's justice someday (1 Pet. 4:17-19; Rev. 18:20; 19:1-3). Vengeance belongs to the Lord and He will repay; so we are free to forgive (Rom. 12:19).

4. **Have compassion on the other person as a fellow sinner needing God's grace** - Paul tells us to be kind and tenderhearted toward those who wrong us, rather than bitter and angry. One way to do that is to realize that you don't know all that the other person has gone through in his life. Perhaps his parents abused him. That isn't an excuse for his sin, but realizing that he may have had a difficult life may mitigate your anger and put you in the frame of mind to forgive. Also, it helps to realize that if I had been born in the ghetto to a drug-using mother who didn't even know who my father was, I could be committing horrible sins today. In other words, the person who has wronged me is just like me, a sinner in need of God's grace.

So I need to be kind and forgiving towards him. That leads to the final step towards implementing forgiveness:

## **TO FORGIVE OTHERS, WE MUST TAKE ACTION TO DEMONSTRATE FORGIVENESS**

Before I discuss this point, I need to make two distinctions, which are vital for understanding and implementing biblical forgiveness. Then I need to give a brief warning before we look at the action of forgiveness.

### **2 Distinctions and a Warning:**

1. **First distinction: There is a difference between granting forgiveness and re-establishing trust** - When someone sins against you, he destroys trust in the relationship. Forgiveness is granted freely and graciously, but trust is earned over time. If a husband is unfaithful to his wife, she may forgive him freely, but she doesn't trust him. That is *not* a contradiction! He must demonstrate repentance and integrity to earn back her trust and it will take time.
2. **Second distinction: There is a difference between forgiving someone in your heart and extending that forgiveness to him verbally** - We are to forgive others as God has forgiven us. Question: Does God forgive sinners apart from their repentance and confession of sin? Answer: No. God is ready to forgive sinners the instant they repent. He has made provision so that any sinner that repents is promised mercy and abundant forgiveness (Isa. 55:6-7). He shows kindness towards sinners to lead them to repentance. But God does not forgive sinners unless they repent. Thus I conclude that as imitators of God (Eph. 5:1), we must forgive in our hearts those who have wronged us. We must be praying for their repentance and be ready to forgive the instant that they do repent. Like the father of the prodigal son, we should be looking for their repentant return and when we see them on the horizon, we run joyously to welcome them back. But, we should not extend forgiveness verbally until they actually do repent.

3. **A Warning: Be careful not to reflect pride in showing forgiveness** - If someone has wronged you but has not yet come and asked forgiveness and you go to him and say, "I forgive you for what you did to me," it may come across as pride. It puts you in the high place of saying, "I am such a kindhearted, benevolent soul that I'm going to forgive you, you undeserving wretch!"

I have heard amazing stories of those who have gone to a killer in prison and forgiven him for murdering their loved one. In some cases, it has led to his repentance and conversion. But in those cases, there wasn't any doubt about the man's guilt and so it didn't come across as self-righteous pride on the part of the ones extending forgiveness. So be careful in how you go about extending forgiveness to the offender, that you don't.

If you're thinking, "I hope that dirty rat gets what he has coming to him and that his life is ruined," you haven't forgiven him in your heart. If you're seething with anger, you haven't forgiven him. You have forgiven him when you pray for his repentance, when you cheerfully do kind deeds for him, and when you well up with joy at the thought of his repentance and the restoration of the relationship.

You may be thinking, "But I don't *feel* like doing something kind for him. Wouldn't I be a hypocrite to act against my feelings?" The answer is, no, you would be obeying God! Often we must act in obedience and pray for God to change our feelings. If you can't treat the other person with kindness out of a desire to please him, then do it out of a desire to please God. If you wait for good feelings towards the offender, you may never show him kindness. Remember, it is God's kindness towards evil and ungrateful men that leads them to repentance (Luke 6:35; Rom. 2:4). Your kindness toward the offender for Christ's sake may be what God uses to bring him to repentance.

**Josephine Ligon** ("Your Daffodils are Pretty," *Christianity Today* [3/2/1979], p. 18) related an incident from her childhood that she never forgot. There was a family named Parsons in her hometown that preached and practiced forgiveness. On one occasion, Josephine and some of her third-grade friends put a handful of pencil shavings into the Parsons girl's sandwich, just to be mean and to make her mad. But she didn't get mad. Instead, the next day, without any sign of repentance from her persecutors, the Parsons girl brought everyone in the class a large, beautiful, hand-decorated cookie that said, "Jesus loves you." That little girl demonstrated the action of forgiveness and those third graders remembered it for the rest of their lives!

## CONCLUSION

If God has used this message to put on your heart relationships where you need to ask forgiveness or grant forgiveness, I urge you not to procrastinate. Maybe you cannot grant forgiveness because the other person has not repented, but you can pray for his repentance.

You can ask God for ways to show kindness to the offender. You can be ready to forgive and restore the relationship.

General Oglethorpe once said to John Wesley, "I never forgive and I never forget," to which Wesley replied, "Then, sir, I hope you never sin." Because we all sin, we all need forgiveness and we all need to forgive, just as God in Christ has forgiven us.

There are two directives you need to remember in order to become a giving and forgiving servant.

### **2 Directives for Forgiving Believers:**

1. **Focus full on God's forgiving of you** – This will help you to humbly acknowledge any way that you have wronged another and seek his or her forgiveness, but it will also enable you to freely forgive others who may have wronged you recognizing God great extension of forgiveness toward you.
2. **Deal directly and honestly with any resentment you currently hold against anyone** – Remember the injurious consequences to your physical as well as spiritual wellbeing that result when you are unwilling to forgive others. Also, keep in mind that anytime you are unwilling to forgive another person you give them power over your own life.

## **HOW TO ASK FOR FORGIVENESS - WHEN YOU'VE WRONGED ANOTHER**

### **9 Things To Do When Asking For Forgiveness:**

1. **Think about what happened and what it is you are sorry for doing.**
2. **Write down your apology; this will help you organize your thoughts and calm your nerves.**
3. **Practice what you plan to say until you feel comfortable with it.**
4. **State clearly what it is you are sorry for doing.**
5. **Acknowledge your actions without making excuses.**
6. **Share your feelings about what happened - avoid blaming, exaggerating or saying empty words.**
7. **Listen to the other person's response without getting defensive.**
8. **Offer to make amends if appropriate.**
9. **Move on. Once you've apologized, let it go.**

### **Some Tips & Warnings**

- **Think of an apology as a commitment to the relationship rather than an act of weakness.**
- **Be honest. Only apologize for things you truly feel responsible for; don't apologize just to make an unpleasant situation go away.**

- **Say it in writing if a personal confrontation is just way too scary. Remember that apologizing in person is always the best and number one way to deal with seeking another's forgiveness.**
- **Give the other person some time to sort out his or her feelings - don't be discouraged if you aren't completely forgiven the moment you apologize**