



The Joy of Forgiveness

Sherry Lanier

*Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered. — Psalm 32:1*

Two of the most powerful sets of words are ‘*Please forgive me!*’ and ‘*I forgive you!*’ These are also two of the most difficult phrases to say and actually mean! When my husband and I were newly married and getting our new household set up, we had our first real argument. I had an idea of what a tidy house was and that bumped into his. This resulted in a very heated discussion between two very strong individuals who were now learning to come together and live as one. It took a while to let things cool down and come back together and then talk it through. What had started as a sharp disagreement turned into a sweet time of forgiveness and restoration of relationship and joy. The turn in the situation was the willingness of both asking for forgiveness and extending forgiveness. I would also say that a good sense of humor is also very helpful!

The need for forgiveness is paramount in our lives, as we are broken sinners in a world full of other broken sinners. In fact, the purpose of our Savior’s life, death and resurrection was the forgiveness of our sins. At the cross of Christ, the justice and wrath of God collide with the mercy and grace of God and the result is forgiveness. And that restoration of relationship is the true basis of real joy!

But not only do we receive forgiveness, we follow the model of Christ as we extend forgiveness. “...as the Lord has forgiven you, you also must forgive others.” – Col. 3:13. The forgiveness Christ extends to us is both the model and motivation to forgive others. This translates into a life of forgiveness—both given and received. It has been said that the church is ‘The Community of the Forgiven.’ Through the practice of forgiveness, we learn to die to self and become more alive in Christ!

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help bring to your mind those whom you may have offended. Ask that He would fill you with the courage you need to go to that person, own up to your specific offense, and ask their forgiveness. If you have been holding on to an offense that someone has brought against you, again ask for the courage to go to that person and extend forgiveness to them. Above all, follow the model of Christ! Then celebrate the joy of restored relationships!

Let’s Chat!

- What makes asking for forgiveness so hard?
- What makes extending forgiveness so hard?
- What is the benefit of holding on to offenses?
- What is the benefit of extending forgiveness?
- How can you learn to be a ‘quick forgiver’?

Take-away Truth

Forgiveness is a way of life for every believer!

Find more conversation starters: <https://women.pcacdm.org/made-for-more>

