

# Fathers' Studies: Personal Growth

"...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

LESSON 11 OF 52

## FORGIVENESS

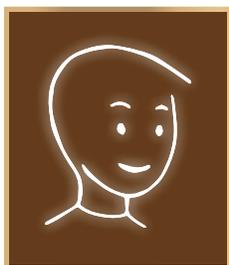
**LESSON AIM:** To show how important it is to forgive.

### KEY VERSE:

1. **MATTHEW 18:22** Peter asked Jesus if it was good enough to forgive his brother seven times. Jesus said that he should forgive his brother \_\_\_\_\_ times.
2. **EPHESIANS 1:7** It is because of Jesus' death and His shed blood that you have been \_\_\_\_\_.
3. **COLOSSIANS 3:13** In the same way that Jesus has forgiven you, you are to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. **EPHESIANS 4:32** The Bible says to be \_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_ one another.

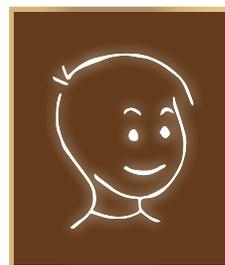
### PERSONAL NOTES:

## For You To Do



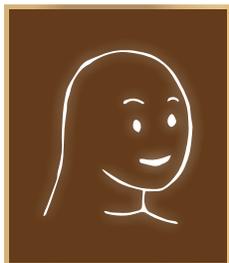
### By Yourself

In the next week, memorize two verses on forgiveness from this list:  
Mark 11:25; Luke 17:4; Ephesians 4:32;  
Colossians 3:13.



### With Your Children

Read with them the story of the unmerciful servant who would not forgive his friend after he himself had been forgiven (Matthew 18:21-35). Discuss with them how they can use the ideas from the story in their lives.



### With Your Wife

Take some time to think carefully about your relationship with your wife. Is there anything from the past or the present for which you have not forgiven her? If there is something, talk to God about it and ask His help to forgive her.

### WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

Forgiveness is “clearing the other person’s record” with you. No matter what he did to you, he now owes you nothing. To fully forgive is to give the conclusion of the matter fully to God. When a man gives his feelings of bitterness and revenge to God to take care of, then he can forget the hurt because he is not responsible for it anymore. When you forgive a person, you have the same openness toward him after he hurt you as you had before he hurt you.

### GRANTING FORGIVENESS.

When there is hurt between two people, that hurt must be cleared up. But sometimes the offending person doesn’t know how to apologize, isn’t aware that wrong was done, or just doesn’t care. In Matthew 18:15-35, Jesus tells how to forgive.

- Tell the other person what he has done. Don’t pretend it never happened. Don’t say, “Well, it doesn’t matter very much. It wasn’t important anyway.”
- Tell the other person that you forgive him just as God has forgiven you. Showing forgiveness is necessary, but telling it makes it more powerful.
- Forgive as often as wrong is done. Don’t put a limit on the number of times you forgive.
- Forgive small wrongs, just as God has forgiven your great wrongs.

### FORGIVENESS IS FREEDOM.

Forgiveness is a sign of growing up as a child of God. Forgiveness gives freedom to each person to be what God wants him to be. Forgiveness gives freedom to relate to a marriage partner and to other people in a complete way with nothing held back. There is freedom for living and growing.

**GENESIS 50:15-21; MARK 11:25-26, MATTHEW 6:14-15, MATTHEW 18:15-35**

**YOU MUST BE KIND TO EACH OTHER. THINK OF THE OTHER PERSON. FORGIVE OTHER PEOPLE JUST AS GOD FORGAVE YOU BECAUSE OF CHRIST’S DEATH ON THE CROSS. (EPHESIANS 4:32)**

### Forgiveness is:

- clearing a person’s record
- leaving the results with God

**Hurts must be forgiven to be forgotten.**

**Forgiveness gives freedom to relate freely to others.**

## WINDOW TO LIFE

Many years ago a great Cree Indian chief lived on the western prairies. This chief, whose name was Maskepetoon, became known among all the western tribes as one of the greatest warriors who ever lived. He fought and won many battles with the Cree’s enemies, the Blackfoot tribe. As Maskepetoon grew older, he began to lose interest in fighting. He became more interested in making peace than in killing.

One day while he was out hunting, a raiding party of Blackfoots killed his father and a few others in his camp. Maskepetoon was very sad, but he did not chase after the raiding party to pay them back. A few months later, a party of Blackfoots was travelling by Maskepetoon’s camp. Maskepetoon made offers of peace to them and invited them into his camp for a feast. Among the Blackfoot party was the man who had killed Maskepetoon’s father. Everyone thought Maskepetoon would kill the man. Instead, Maskepetoon gave the surprised man his best suit of clothes, one of his best horses, and the place of honour at the feast.

Maskepetoon told the Blackfoot warrior, “From now on you will take the place of the man you killed, and be a father to me!” Maskepetoon had forgiven and had put the offence out of his mind. In the Cree language, the word used for forgiveness means “to put out of the mind”. Maskepetoon had truly done that. This kind of forgiveness healed a hurt between two people and even between two tribes.

