



Courage to Forgive



Explore the strength found in God to forgive others courageously, transforming hurt into healing through faith and grace.



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Introduction

Forgiveness is one of the most challenging acts of courage a believer can face. It requires us to lay down our pride, release our pain, and trust God's justice and mercy instead. The courage to forgive is not a weakness; rather, it is a profound expression of *spiritual strength* and obedience to God's command. Jesus confronted this difficulty head-on, calling His followers to forgive not just once, but repeatedly (Matthew 18:21-22), showcasing that forgiveness is an ongoing journey, not a one-time event.

In this five-day study, we'll explore Biblical examples and practical encouragement to develop this courage within us. The process begins with recognizing God's forgiveness toward us, which empowers and enables us to extend that same mercy. Through Scripture, prayer, and reflection, you will be invited to confront areas in your heart that need healing and to embrace the freedom found in forgiving others.

Courage to forgive does not mean forgetting or excusing wrongs, but choosing to release others from the debt of hurt, trusting God to restore and redeem. As we grow in this grace, we become agents of peace and reconciliation in a broken world. Be encouraged, dear believer: God's power is made perfect in our weakness, and your willingness to forgive is a testimony of that divine strength. Let's embark on this journey together and discover the liberty and peace that come from courageous forgiveness.





Day 1: The Call to Forgiveness



Your Verse

Ephesians 4:31-32 NIV - "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Colossians 3:13 NIV - "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*
- *Matthew 6:14 NIV - "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."*



Devotional: Forgiveness Begins with God's Example

Forgiveness begins not with human effort alone but with understanding God's own forgiving nature. Ephesians 4:31-32 commands us to get rid of bitterness and instead choose kindness and forgiveness. This is tough because holding on to hurt feels natural — it's a protective defense. But God invites us to rise above that natural impulse, reflecting His heart for mercy.

When the Bible tells us to forgive “just as in Christ God forgave you,” it shows that courage to forgive springs from knowing we've been forgiven first. Christ's sacrifice on the cross paid the price for our sins, setting us free from condemnation. We don't have to carry grudges or grudges because God has already extended grace to us. In this awareness, we find courage because we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus himself.

Today's challenge is to examine if there is bitterness or anger you are holding onto. Bring it to God and ask Him to soften your heart and empower you by His Spirit to forgive, even when it feels hard. Forgiveness is a choice strengthened by God's grace, and with this, courageous healing can begin.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does it mean to forgive 'just as Christ forgave me'?

2. Are there areas of bitterness in your heart that are preventing forgiveness?

3. How does recognizing God's forgiveness toward you empower you to forgive others?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time you experienced God's forgiveness personally.




2. List any grudges or bitterness you feel needs to be released.

3. Reflect on what makes forgiving difficult for you.



Day 1:  The Call to Forgiveness

Prayer for Today

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the incredible gift of forgiveness You have poured out through Jesus Christ. Help me to let go of bitterness and anger that weigh down my heart. Fill me with Your courage to forgive those who have hurt me, just as You have forgiven me. Teach me to walk in kindness and compassion every day. Strengthen me by Your Spirit so I can release all offenses, trusting You to bring healing and peace. In Jesus' name, Amen.   





Day 2: ✂️ Facing the Pain



Your Verse

Psalm 34:18 NIV - "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

Supporting Scriptures

- *2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV - "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses..."*
- *Romans 12:19 NIV - "Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath..."*



Devotional: God Is Near in Your Brokenness

Forgiving often means confronting deep wounds that feel unbearable. The courage to forgive comes with vulnerability — we admit the pain, the betrayal, and that we may never fully understand why it happened. Psalm 34:18 reassures us that God is close to those who are brokenhearted and crushed in spirit. You are not alone in your suffering.

When we face the pain honestly and bring it before the Lord, His grace sustains us. Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 12:9 remind us that God's power shines brightest in our weakness. You don't have to fix everything yourself. Embrace your weakness as a doorway for His strength.

Romans 12:19 encourages us to relinquish revenge to God, who is perfectly just. This is the heart of brave forgiveness — choosing to trust God's righteousness rather than taking matters into your own hands. Courage to forgive means releasing control and resting in God's promises to bring justice and healing in His perfect time.

Today, be honest about your pain and bring it to God. Ask Him for courage to face your wound instead of running from it, knowing He is near and powerful even in your weakest moments.



Reflect and Apply

1. What pain do you feel hesitant to face or forgive?

2. How does it change your perspective that God is close to your broken heart?

3. What does resting in God's strength mean to you during moments of weakness?



Journaling Prompts

1. Describe a painful experience you are carrying.

2. Write a prayer asking God to give you strength amid your weakness.

3. Reflect on what revenge or justice means to you and how you can release it to God.



Day 2: 🦋 Facing the Pain

Prayer for Today

Lord, my heart is heavy and broken from past hurts. Thank You for drawing close when I am crushed in spirit. Please fill me with Your grace and strength where I feel weak and vulnerable. Help me to face my pain with courage and to trust You with justice rather than seeking revenge. Teach me to forgive even when it feels impossible, resting fully in Your loving presence. In Jesus' name, Amen. ❤️🕊️🙏





Day 3: 🕊️ Letting Go of Bitterness



Your Verse

Hebrews 12:15 NIV - "See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."

Supporting Scriptures

- *James 1:19-20 NIV - "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires."*
- *Proverbs 19:11 NIV - "A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."*



Devotional: Choose Healing Over Bitterness

Bitterness is like a root that can grow quietly but cause deep damage in our lives and relationships. Hebrews 12:15 warns us to be vigilant so that no bitter root takes hold. Bitterness hardens the heart, blocks love, and defiles our walk with God.

Choosing courage to forgive means intentionally uprooting bitterness, even when it lingers beneath the surface. James teaches us to be quick to listen and slow to anger because anger doesn't produce godly righteousness. In the moments before bitterness gains control, we have the power to choose patience and understanding.

Proverbs 19:11 compliments the wise person who shows patience and overlooks offenses. This isn't denial but a courageous decision to prioritize peace and healing above holding grudges.

Today's focus is on recognizing bitterness and making a conscious decision to surrender it to God. Forgiveness frees your soul from the chains of resentment and opens the door for renewed relationships and inner peace.



Reflect and Apply

1. Can you identify any 'bitter roots' growing in your heart?

2. How might impatience or anger affect your ability to forgive?

3. What does it mean to you to 'overlook an offense' in a godly way?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about any bitterness you've noticed inside yourself.

2. List ways you can practice patience when hurt by others.

3. Reflect on a situation where forgiving brought peace instead of pain.



Day 3: 🕊️ Letting Go of Bitterness

Prayer for Today

God of Grace, I ask for Your help in uprooting bitterness from my heart. Teach me to be patient and slow to anger, to choose peace over resentment. Help me to see others through Your eyes and to extend mercy as You have shown me. May Your grace fill the spaces where bitterness once lived and transform me from within. In Jesus' name, Amen. 🌿 🙏 ❤️





Day 4: 🔥 Strength in Vulnerability



Day 4: 🔥 Strength in Vulnerability

Your Verse

2 Timothy 1:7 NIV - "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Joshua 1:9 NIV - "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*
- *Philippians 4:13 NIV - "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."*



Devotional: God's Spirit Empowers Courageous Forgiveness

Forgiveness requires more than a feeling; it takes the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome fear, bitterness, and pride. 2 Timothy 1:7 reminds us that God has not given us a spirit of fear but one that empowers us with love and self-discipline.

Courage is not the absence of fear but the ability to act in spite of it. Joshua's charge to "be strong and courageous" comes with the promise that God is with us always. When we forgive, we are stepping into the strength God provides, enabling us to extend grace even when it feels risky or painful.

Philippians 4:13 reinforces that our strength to forgive does not come from ourselves but from Christ who empowers us. Vulnerability in forgiveness reveals true strength — it shows that we trust God enough to surrender hurt and move forward in love.

Today, ask God to fill you afresh with His Spirit and courage. Step forward in vulnerability as a testimony to His power working through you.



Day 4: 🔥 Strength in Vulnerability

Reflect and Apply

1. What fears hold you back from forgiving fully?

2. How does knowing God gives power, love, and self-discipline change your view of forgiveness?

3. In what ways can vulnerability demonstrate strength in your life?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time you acted courageously even when afraid.

2. List areas where you need God's empowerment to forgive.

3. Reflect on how you can allow the Holy Spirit to guide your healing.



Day 4: 🔥 Strength in Vulnerability

Prayer for Today

Holy Spirit, I invite You to fill me with Your power, love, and discipline. Help me overcome fear and step boldly into forgiveness. Teach me to be strong and courageous, trusting that You are with me every step of the way. May my vulnerability be a testament to Your strength working in me. In Jesus' name, Amen. 💪🕊️❤️🙏





Day 5: 🌈 Walking in Freedom



Your Verse

Galatians 5:1 NIV - "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 8:36 NIV - "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."*
- *Matthew 11:28 NIV - "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*



Devotional: Freedom Is the Fruit of Forgiveness

Forgiveness brings freedom — freedom from bitterness, anger, and the chains of the past. Galatians 5:1 calls us to stand firm in the liberty Christ has won for us and to refuse being burdened again by resentment. Choosing to forgive is choosing to walk in that freedom.

John 8:36 echoes this truth: Christ's freedom leads to true freedom, one that liberates our hearts and minds. When we surrender unforgiveness, we release ourselves from invisible shackles that limit our joy and peace.

Jesus extends an invitation in Matthew 11:28 to come to Him with all our burdens, including the heavy weight of unforgiveness. He promises rest — a deep, soul-level peace that restores and refreshes.

Today, embrace freedom. Forgive courageously, step into peace, and celebrate God's restoring power in your life. This is a new beginning, empowered by the love of Christ.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does freedom from unforgiveness look like in your life?

2. How can standing firm in Christ help you resist returning to bitterness?

3. What rest does Jesus offer when you surrender your burdens to Him?



Journaling Prompts

1. Describe how you feel when you imagine walking in forgiveness and freedom.

2. Write a letter of forgiveness to someone who has hurt you (you do not have to send it).

3. Reflect on ways you can support others in finding courage to forgive.



Day 5: 🌈 Walking in Freedom

Prayer for Today

Father God, thank You for setting me free through Christ. Help me to stand firm and not be burdened again by bitterness or unforgiveness. I choose today to walk in the freedom and peace that comes from forgiveness. May Your rest fill my weary heart and may my life be a testimony of Your renewing love. In Jesus' name, Amen. ✨🕊️❤️🙏





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