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Daily Devotional - A Lifestyle of Forgiveness

AUGUST 25TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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[Ephesians 4:29-32](#)

Showing mercy to those who hurt us does not come naturally— it's easier to get angry at them and remain that way. We justify our lack of forgiveness by pointing to the injustice that took place or harm that was done. But God commands us to be merciful ([Luke 6:36](#)). We who have been shown divine mercy are to practice a lifestyle of forgiveness.

So why don't we obey? Sometimes our pride gets in the way. We are angered when treated with disrespect, passed over for a job opportunity, or ignored despite our accomplishments. At other times we get focused on other people's refusal to change, so we withhold mercy until they improve their behavior. And some of us have been badly hurt or treated unjustly. Our minds are filled with such pain that we become stuck in the past and cannot see how we'll ever be able to forgive.

An unforgiving attitude can have all sorts of unwanted consequences, including broken relationships, emotional bondage, and indifference toward the Lord. The longer we hold on to our anger, the more it will affect our fellowship, not only with other people but also with our heavenly Father. Over time, we may become bitter and hostile, which certainly doesn't fit with our identity in Christ.

It is hard for us to pardon those who tell lies about us, treat us badly, or cause harm to our loved ones. And yet their behavior toward us is not a reason to withhold mercy. God calls us to forgive as He forgave us—and with His help, we can do just that.

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