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## Daily Devotional, Tuesday, October 24, 2017 - Obstacles to Forgiveness

OCTOBER 24TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Matthew 18:21-35

Forgiveness can be defined as letting go of both resentment and the right to return hurt. On the other hand, unforgiveness demands that the guilty one pay for the wrong he or she did.

According to these definitions, unforgiveness looks very much like justice, and forgiveness seems inequitable. That's why we have such a hard time with it. Forgiveness goes against our natural sense of fair play. Yet God calls us to forgive those who don't deserve it!

To avoid offering a pardon, we dwell on the wrongdoing until our desire to retaliate seems totally justified. Convinced of our right to be angry, we demand repayment, thinking, *Releasing a person from deserved punishment is unfair!*

The Father faced the same dilemma. All humanity had sinned and deserved eternal separation from Him. He couldn't simply forgive sin arbitrarily, because He'd then cease being just. Our forgiveness is possible only because divine justice was satisfied by the Son's payment for our sins. As a result of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, God is free to righteously forgive us.

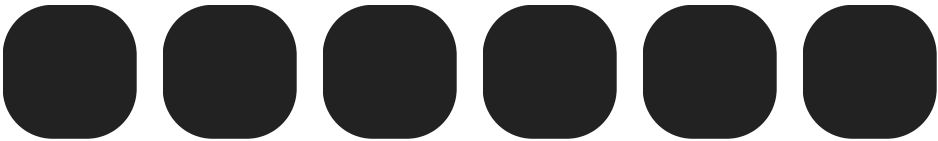
When we accepted the Lord’s forgiveness, we gave up all rights to hold anything against anyone else. An unforgiving heart is miserable because it is far from God, who is the source of all peace and joy.

Does the thought or sight of someone arouse harsh feelings within you? Holding onto a grievance will keep you imprisoned in emotional turmoil, but letting go will set you free. Christ has provided the key of forgiveness. Take hold of it, unlock the door, and walk out into the light.

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