

Forgiveness (Ephesians 4:30-32)

“It’s a choice”



(Ephesians 4:30-32)

“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

Discernment

*“Is there any unforgiveness in my heart”
(Psalms 139:23-24)*

- If you have truly forgiven every person who has wronged, offended, hurt and sinned against you, then you are able to experience – *Matthew 6:14-15*

➤ Freedom

➤ Joy

➤ Peace

➤ Blessing



- It is possible to live with an unforgiving spirit so long, that you become blinded to its presents in your life – *Hebrews 12:15*
- *The following exercise will help you discern if there is any forgiveness lodged in your heart -*

Question: Have you ever been hurt?

- *Lied to*
- *Promises broken*
- *Neglected*
- *Rejected*
- *Find yourself telling others how that person hurt you.*



- *If the person's name comes up in a conversation I am more likely to say something negative about him/her than positive.*
- *I cannot thank God for that person.*

Note: If any of these statements are true it is an indication that you have not fully forgiven those who have sinned against you –
Mark 11:25-26

Definition

“What is Biblical Forgiveness?”

- Forgiveness means that you fully release your offender from his debt – *Matthew 6:12*
- Forgiveness means that you fully clear his record – *Psalms 103:12*
- *Forgiveness means that never bring up the offense against him again – Hebrews 10:17-18*



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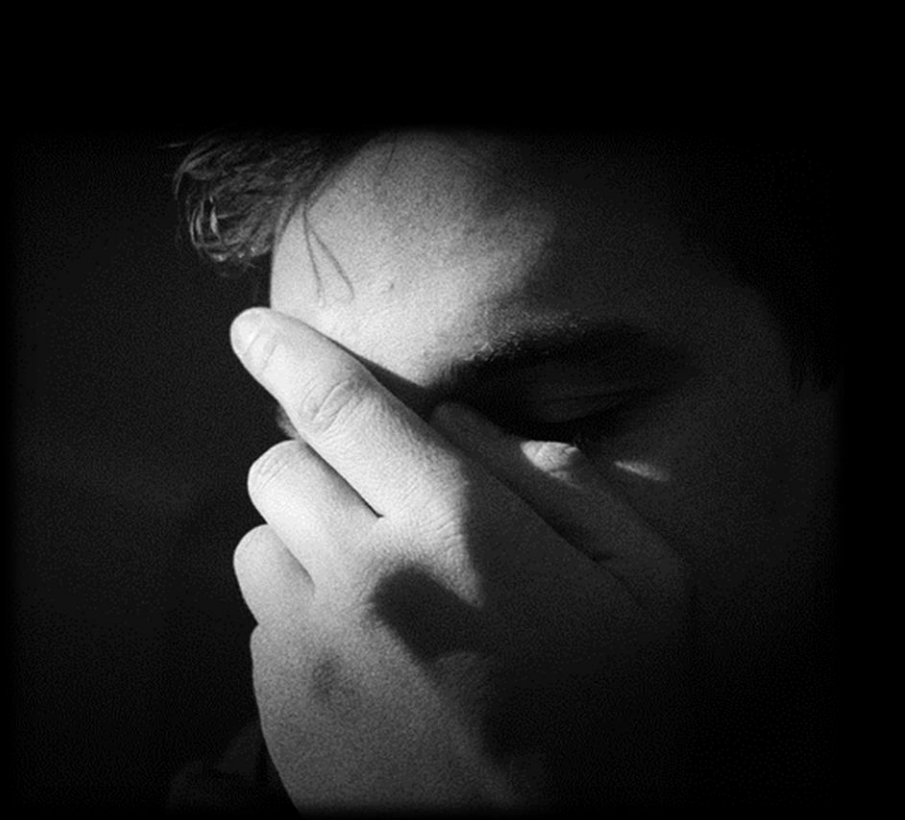
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- Violent crime against you or loved ones
- Treated unfairly by a parent, employer, family member, husband, wife, children, friend, etc.
- Slandered or falsely accused
- Divorced by a mate
- Mate committed adultery or other sexual sin
- Stolen from
- Cheated in business
- Rebellious children



- Physical abused
- Sexually abused
- Emotional abuse
- Belittled
- Publicly humiliated
- Mocked
- Ridiculed
- Alcoholic parents or mate
- Bad church experience
- Etc.



Self-examination

“As you reflect on ways you have been offended. Do you find any of these statements to be true?”

- Every time I think of that person I still feel angry.
- I have a subtle, secret desire to see that person pay for what the did to me.
- Deep in my heart, I wouldn't mind if something bad happened to that person.

“It is impossible but that offences will come...take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him...”



“But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you...”



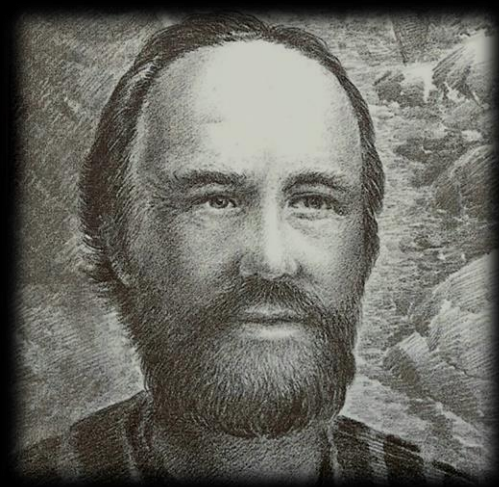
“Forgive him seventy times seven...If ye do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses...”

“When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any...”

“If ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses...”

“Forgive and ye shall be forgiven...”

“If any brother trespass against thee forgive him...”



“Recompense to no man evil for evil. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves...for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.”

(Romans 12:17-21)

The Standard for our Forgiveness

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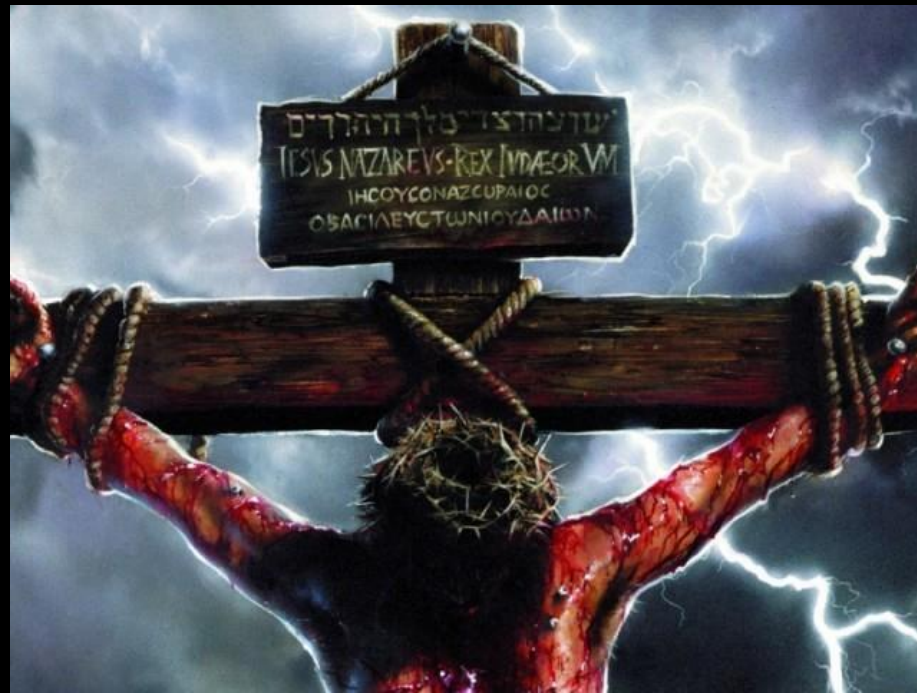
“I could never forgive that person,
they have hurt me too deeply!”

*“If there be therefore any
consolation in Christ, if
any comfort of love, if any
fellowship of the Spirit, if
any bowels and mercies,
Fulfill ye my joy, that ye
be likeminded, having the
same love, being of one
accord, of one mind.”*



How can I forgive
when it hurts so much

“Let nothing be done through strife and vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...”



What are some of the hurts Jesus suffered?

(Isaiah 53; Psalms 22:6-7, 16)

- Despised
- Rejected
- Falsely accused
- Betrayed
- Forsaken
- Mocked
- Physically abused
- Murdered



How has God dwelt with us who have sinned against Him so greatly?

- *Ephesians 2:4-5*
- *Isaiah 43:25*
- *Hebrews 10:17*
- *Micah 7:18-19*
- *Colossians 2:14*



(Ephesians 2:4-5)

*“But God, who is rich in mercy,
for his great love wherewith
he loved us, Even when we
were dead in sins, hath
quickenened us together with
Christ, by grace ye are saved.”*

(Isaiah 43:25)

*“I, even I, am he that blotteth
out thy transgressions for mine
own sake, and will not
remember thy sins.”*

(Hebrews 10:17)

*“And their sins and iniquities
will I remember no more.”*



STOP REMEMBERING
WHAT GOD HAS
FORGOTTEN.

Psalm 103:12

A dark, atmospheric image with a glowing blue orb in the center. A hand is visible on the left, reaching towards the orb. The background is dark with some faint, glowing lines and textures.

(Micah 7:19-18)

*“He will turn again, he will have
compassion upon us; he will
subdue our iniquities; and thou
wilt cast all their sins into the
depths of the sea.”*



(Colossians 2:14-15)

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

How did Jesus command us to respond to those who have wronged us?



“Forgive them...”

The act of forgiveness is only the starting place for dealing with those who have wronged us.

- The initial act of releasing the offender must be followed by a commitment to invest positively in his or her life – *Luke 6:27-31*
- This investment is the key to experiencing emotional healing and wholeness – *“Where your treasure is there shall your heart be also...”*

(Luke 6:27-31)

“But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”

“They don’t deserve to be forgiven...”

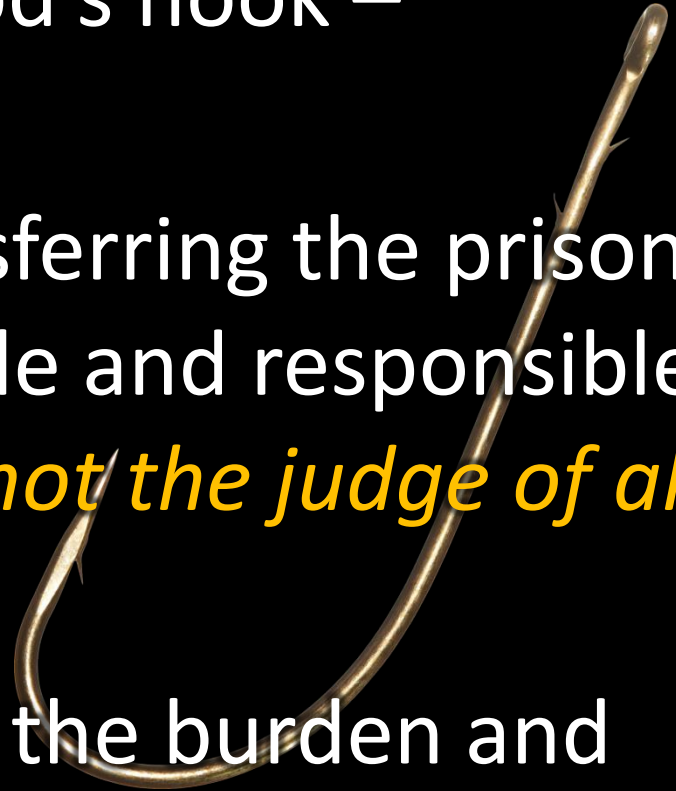
*What did we do to deserve
God’s forgiveness?*

*“But God commendeth His
love towards us, in that,
while we were yet
sinners, Christ died for
us.” (Romans 5:18)*



If I forgive them, they're off the hook!

- Letting your offender off your hook, does not mean that they are off God's hook – *Romans 12:19*
- Forgiveness involves transferring the prisoner over to the one who is able and responsible to meet out justice – *“Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?”*
- Forgiveness relieves us of the burden and responsibility to hold them in prison ourselves -

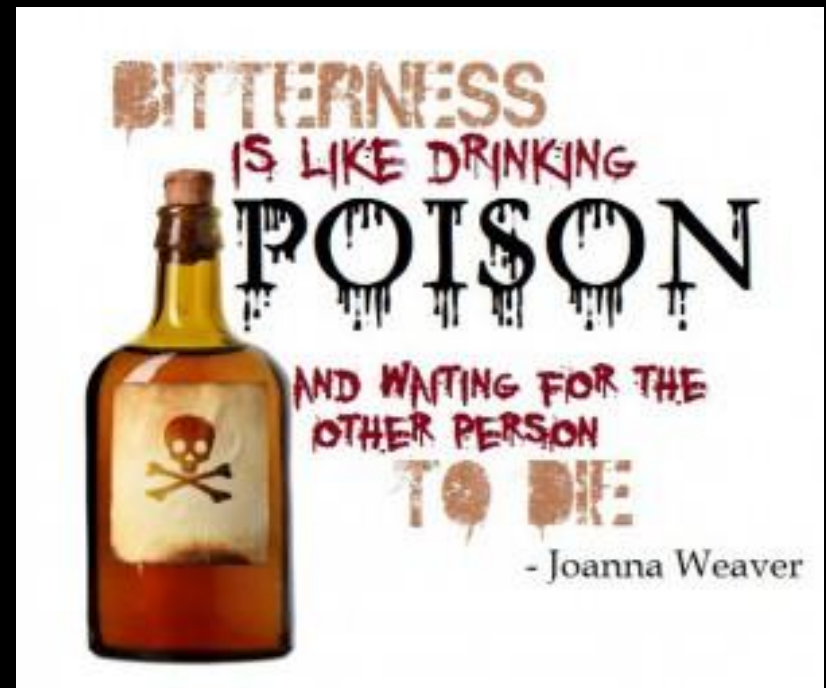




Ask God to search your heart to see if
there is any unforgiveness there.

(Psalms 26:2)

When you think of
the person who has
hurt you, which of
the following
attitudes do you
experience?



Unforgiving spirit

- Emotional churning
- Desire for revenge
- Hard to ask God to bless them
- Hard to see their good qualities
- Want others to know what you know about them (negative)

Forgiving spirit

- Desire for God to bless them
- Desire to see him spiritually restored
- Sense of rest and relinquishment
- Gratefulness to God for that person
- Humbled by how greatly you have been forgiven by God

Why should we extend forgivingness?

- The offender is genuinely sorry for what he has done.
- The offender promises he will never do it again.
- The offence was an “understandable mistake.”
- God commands me to forgive.
- I have been forgiven an infinite debt by God, so I forgive as I have been forgiven.

I am not going to forgive them!

- If you refuse to forgive you can expect the following –

- *Matthew 6:14-15*
- *Matthew 18:32-35*
- *II Corinthians 2:10-11*



(Matthew 6:14-15)

*“For if ye forgive men their
trespasses, your heavenly Father
will also forgive you: But if ye
forgive not men their trespasses,
neither will your Father forgive
your trespasses.”*

(Matthew 18:32-35)

“Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”



(II Corinthians 2:10-11)

“To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

I've forgiven them, but I'll never be able to forget what they did to me.

- When God forgives us, what does He promise?
 - *Jeremiah 31:34* “For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
 - *Hebrews 10:17* “And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”
 - *Psalms 103:12* “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”

How are we to forgive?

➤ *Colossians 3:13*

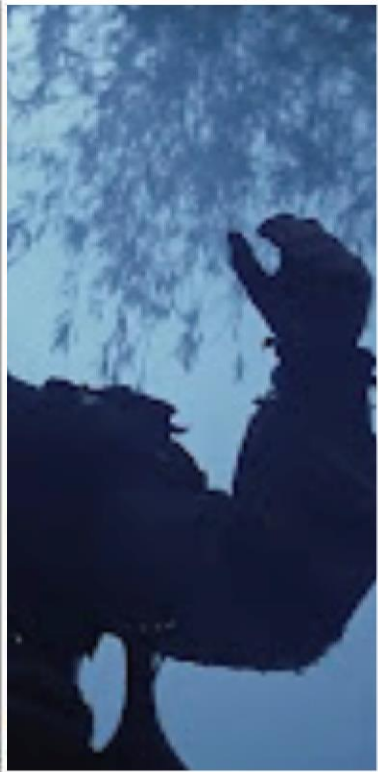
➤ *Ephesians 4:32*



I really have forgiven, but I still struggle with feelings of hurt and bitterness.

- Key to overcome hurts
- Serve your offender





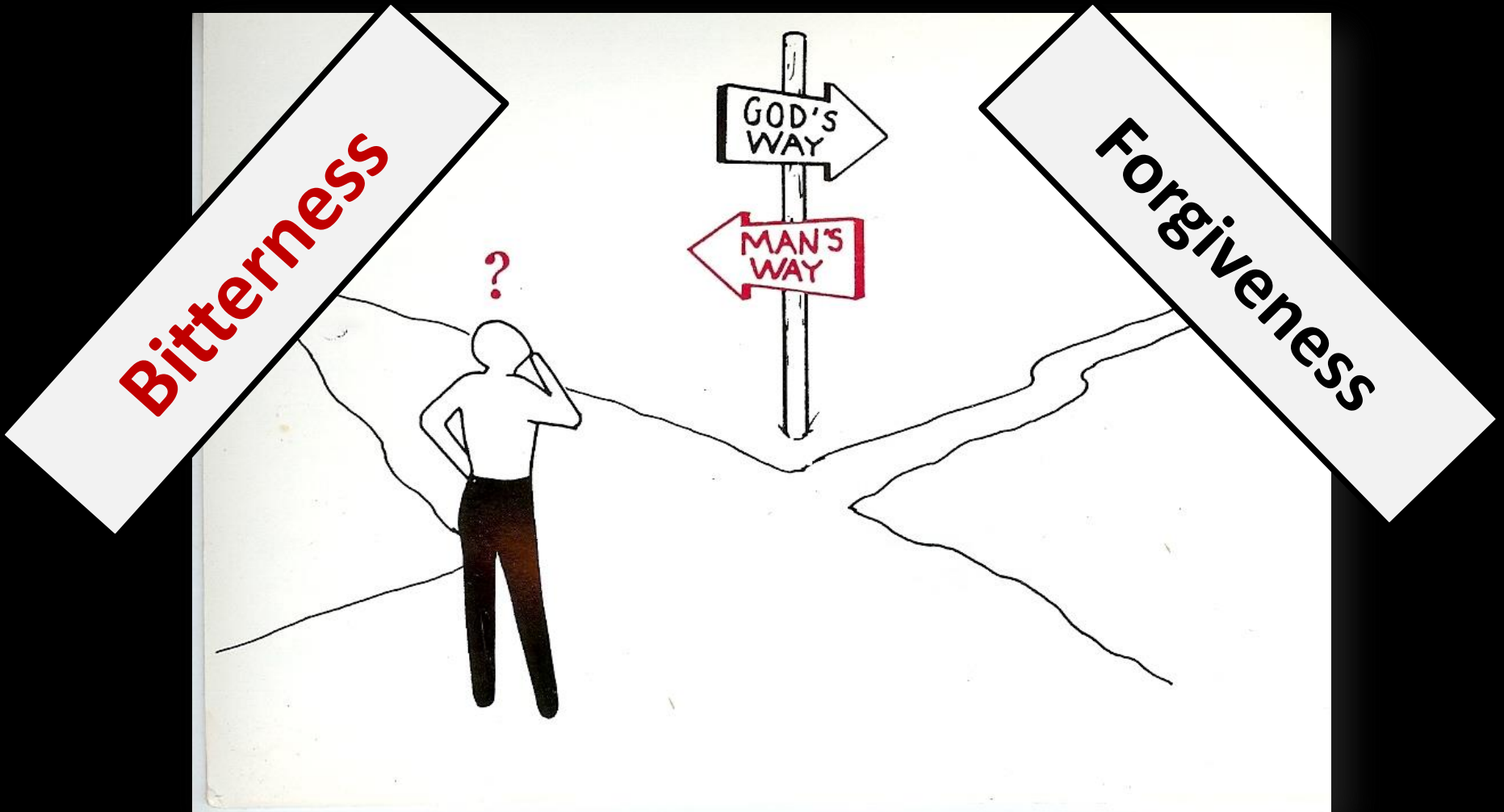
Forgiveness is a choice

- Has God revealed any lack of forgiveness in your heart?
- Do you desire to be set free from the prison of an unforgiving spirit?



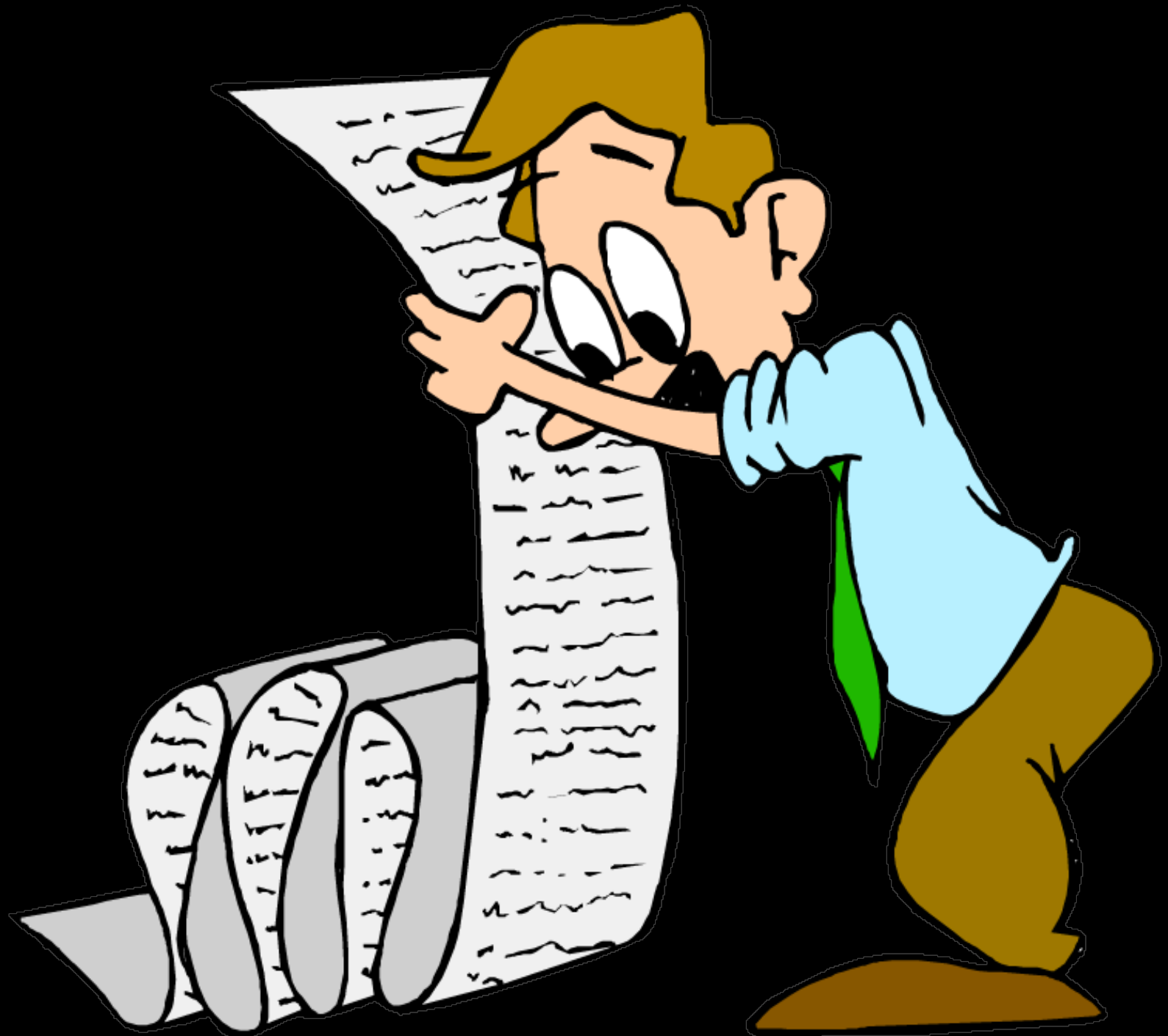
Would you be willing for
God to deal with you in
the same way that you
want to see your offender
dealt with?

Are you ready to choose the pathway of forgiveness?



Steps that must be taken in order to find freedom from an unforgiving spirit

- Make a list of people who have wronged you and that you are bitter towards.
- Ask God to forgive you for your wrong attitude and response to their wrong doing – *1 John 1:9*
- Thank God for each person who has wounded you – *Romans 8:28*



- Confess to your offender your wrong attitude and response, ask them to forgive you –
Matthew 5:23-25
- As Christ has forgiven you, fully forgive each of your offenders –
Ephesians 4:32
- Confirm your love towards them by serving them – *II Corinthians 2:8*

freedom in
forgiveness



FORGIVENESS
IS A CHOICE