
Forgiveness

All of us have suffered some sort of rejection in our lives. I would even dare say that none of us feels we have received enough love. We are trying to restore our whole way of thinking, throwing out our old concepts, and adopting a new vision of love—both what it means and how to practice it. To do that simultaneously is an overwhelming job. Normally when you receive something new, you feel as if you want to get rid of something that you have had for sometime. You want to "clean out your closets" —often in a very literal sense.

We do this spiritually as well. We create an imbalance if we just receive love from God and "pay" nothing for it. That is why we should offer forgiveness to other people, and love others as God has loved us. When we do not see with the eyes of God or extend compassion to those who hurt us, we create a spiritual deficit. We have "built-in" concepts from the past; as youngsters, we were taught by parents whose hearts and love were often imperfect. Even as children, we were deeply hurt by both parent and peer. This caused some of us to become supersensitive and develop the tendency to take offense at things people say and do. Such a behavior pattern may still be a part of us, but it is outmoded and should be discarded. If we can successfully dispense with it, we will naturally receive grace from God, which we can then share with others. It takes changing our entire outlook. Even when we receive a great many blessings from God, we can still be hurt when we do not relinquish those old notions of ours; when we still expect people do not mean well, or when we still feel they want to harm us. To "restore" or transform those feelings, we have to learn how to trust in God and other people. When we can do that, our feelings of anxiety can dissipate and our confidence in others and ourselves can increase. That is how we can "clean out our closets" —spiritually.

Start now. Reject the old ways. If somebody makes a mistake which directly affects you, why not practice forgiveness. Forgive him immediately. Make his day! Realize that he probably did not do it intentionally. Who knows, you may be given the gift of benevolence by someone else. Granting forgiveness *can* create a chain reaction of love, rather than animosity.

A person who cannot forgive his brother or sister experiences stagnation in his spiritual growth. A person cannot humble himself before God if he still has a grudge in his heart against another. If you cannot break through in prayer, check if you feel malice toward someone. Discover if you forgot to grant someone forgiveness. That someone may be in excruciating spiritual pain because you have not acquitted him of his "crime." It is the little sins we commit every day which hold us back from making

breakthroughs in prayer and in loving. Do you owe that precious gift to someone? If you still have a hard time forgiving someone for things he said or did to you, reflect for a moment about unkind things you have said and done to others. That is one sure way to dissolve your resentment. Have you asked *their* forgiveness? Hope that they can forgive you. Then be benevolent—give them yours!

If you cannot forgive a person face to face because you live too far from one another, or for some reason it is inappropriate, conduct such a forgiveness "ceremony" by yourself. Go before God and confess all the details—who harmed you and even why you still feel ill will toward him. Proclaim that you forgive him. Do this for each person. Then take the next step: forget about those grudges. Discard them from your mind and heart, and then they *will* be in the past.

When we are overcome by the power of love and ask someone's forgiveness, that same power of love can also give us the strength to indemnify the situation. The first step is repentance. We need to express our heart to God and assure Him that we really do desire to be pardoned. That in itself is a condition of indemnity. Afterward, we must strive to do better as well as offer restitution for the hurt we caused. Once we are armed with the forgiveness of God, other challenges of life will be easier to face and tackle.

It is crucial to avoid thinking or believing we are *not* forgiven, and then allow Satan to accuse us again and again for those things which have already been absolved by God.

If you make a mistake and sincerely repent before God, you are sure to receive forgiveness. However, another important step is to ask forgiveness from a person you hurt. The action of repentance itself could automatically give you a feeling of relief and *could* make it seem as if you are already forgiven and your debt completely cancelled; actually, you still need to pay indemnity. That "debt" is completely paid *only* after you straighten out your relationship with the person you wronged in some way—be it God, True Parents, superior, co-worker, spouse, child, parent, or friend. It is not enough to simply repent to the person. It is also important to reconcile.

Even though you repent before God, it is still important to hear *the*

words of forgiveness. Just being sorry is not enough. Just hearing the voice of forgiveness "speak" within your heart is not enough. Unless the person you hurt forgives you directly, he may still accuse you in the future. Pray to create the conditions which will unshackle you from the ball and chain of accusation, and make it unnecessary to drag it with you into spirit world. None of us knows when we will die. For that reason, it is wise to clear our conscience and find harmony with people before we sleep each night. This is true not only for husbands and wives, but parents and children, brothers and sisters, and friends. Forgive every person, and at the same time accept forgiveness from every person. Shed the skin of burdensome guilt, and make it possible for others to do the same.

What if you can't or don't *want* to forgive someone who trespassed against you? Perhaps you have come to despise, even hate, a person who mistreated or abused you in some way, and you just want to continue bearing a grudge. Ponder the lesson presented in the Bible about the woman who was accused of fornication. When the scribes and Pharisees discovered her crime, they asked Jesus if they should follow the law of Moses and stone her to death. The unconditional love of God is contained in the probing warning which Jesus used to answer them: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." They were struck in their conscience, and silently walked away from the woman. He said, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." Let's face it. All of us have sinned. And all of us have "fallen short of the glory of God." But that does not stop God from pouring out love to us, even though we do not deserve it and may not perceive it. That does not discourage Him from forgiving us—day after day after day. Can we in good conscience "cast a stone" in the direction of those who wrong us? Should we? Each one of us is human, of unperfected love and heart. And each of us is just as in need of forgiveness as our brothers and sisters.

God cannot arbitrarily forgive our every sin just because He loves us. Unless we offer some payment, it is impossible for Him to pardon us simply because He wants to. The act of forgiveness is not synonymous with the action of paying indemnity, although some form of restitution should always *accompany* forgiveness. A person who receives forgiveness still has to pay in some way for the sin he committed.

God has to do things according to both physical and spiritual laws. If He were not bound by spiritual law, He would have restored mankind directly after the fall. Adam and Eve were still His children and even though

they disobeyed Him, He loved them so much and wanted to forgive them of everything, but by that time, Lucifer had claimed them and demanded to be paid before he was willing to release them. God has had no choice but to set up the conditions that would pay the ransom.

A wound takes time to heal. The person who inflicted the spiritual lesions you bear today may have told you he or she was sorry, and you may have quickly forgiven him. But that action by itself did not automatically make the abrasion disappear; a certain amount of damage was already done. The person who inflicts a wound also pays, albeit in a different way from the one who receives it. Both may recognize the effect of the laceration—whether it is hurt, anger, resentment, or the like—and realize how much hurt it caused. The guilty party may agonize whenever he looks at that wound, especially if he loves the person. That is why some sort of "medicine" or "bandages" must be applied. Spiritual wounds are in need of a "prescription" of indemnity, for that is a major part of forgiveness.

If the element of love is missing from the forgiveness which we are given, we do not receive total absolution. We believe that the essence of God is love, and that His unconditional love is capable of healing any hurt. Unconditional love is definitely powerful enough to extend the gift of forgiveness to someone. A person who tapped the reservoir of God's love and refilled his own heart, can more easily forgive everyone and every situation. Because such a person possesses the love of God, he always thinks the best of every human being; his spiritual vision is not clouded by mistrust. He doesn't see the negative things, but instead tries to understand another's circumstances and gives him the benefit of the doubt. He tries to minimize the other person's offense, and with tender consolation, pardons him of his wrongdoing.

Generally, someone who inflicts spiritual hurt upon another person suffers the most. The barometer that measures his spiritual pain is his conscience. It has to work properly, but in such circumstances, it usually works overtime. The person is anguished by his behavior and feels tremendous self-reproach. It may be hard for him to accept forgiveness once he realizes what he has done. Actually, very few people are able to graciously and completely receive forgiveness. It is far easier to be stubborn and stone-hearted, drive ourselves back into a self-made cage of guilt, and

resolve *not* to accept pardon from another person. Sadly, people as a whole are so suspect of each other's motivation. We don't trust that another person could actually love us enough to exonerate us of our sins. Although forgiveness is perhaps the hardest gift to receive, it is also the greatest present one human being can give to another.

The forgiveness of sin is at the very core of salvation. If our sins are not forgiven, then we can strive to grow close to God as much as we want, but because of those unresolved sins. Satan still claims us. His hold prevents us from living with God. God is just as devastated by this situation as we are. That is why He made such efforts to send the Messiah, the one who comes with the power and mission to forgive sin.

Every human being inwardly feels the need to be released from the burden of sin. It may be unconscious, but intuitively we sense that once our sins are forgiven, we have the go-ahead to invite God in our life and bar Satan from entering.

Once we repent and receive forgiveness, we have to work at accepting that forgiveness. Have you ever heard someone subtly whisper, "You think there is a God? You believe you are forgiven? A lot you know. Believe this: you are *still* a sinner!" That someone is Satan. Who let him in? Actually, you did. Satan can bother us only when we make a base; think back and discover what it was. *Disbelief* is one of the most powerful bases a person can create. Yet *belief* in God and True Parents can turn that base into a launching pad; why not believe, and push the button to blast off Satan! It is a question of trusting in both God and yourself. If you totally accept that God and the Messiah forgive your sins, your faith will set you free.

Forgiveness also involves learning to forget. Push the ugly memories and terrible times away. Replace bad memories with good ones. God is so gracious; He forgets our sins and even adopts a new view of us based on our attitude of repentance and our determination not to make the same mistakes again. He anxiously looks at how we change our lives; our improvements provide Him with new material to use when He thinks of us. Repentance and forgiveness allow us to write new pages in our book of life, and toss out any of the old ones that become soiled.

Each human being has to personally cross the threshold of for-

giveness. He can be led there, pulled there, coaxed or motivated, but it is on his own that each person has to enter God's palace and meet Him. When a person holds a type of "forgiveness ceremony" in his prayer by confessing his sins to God and repenting for them, how can his heart still be filled with stones of resentment and hatred?

It is not simply *you* who forgives another person; rather, it is God who enables you to forgive, and in fact forgives *through* you. The goodness that God bestows to you—understanding, tolerance, compassion, and love—enables you to extend the gift of forgiveness. You might directly—or at least silently—say to the person who offended you, "I understand why you did what you did. I know what you went through and what you suffered because of it. It hurt me, but I forgive you. Please, let's both just forget it." It is easy to forgive if the spirit of God is within you. But if God has been squeezed out of His rightful place in your heart, it is nearly impossible to forgive someone based solely on your own volition. Satan certainly hates forgiveness. He hates the world of purity God is building, and he resents all of us who fight to leave his domain. From this point on, view forgiveness with the eyes of God—with love and patience. As a result of deepening your compassion, your judgment of a situation will be quite different from before. Give the other person a chance at spiritual survival and growth: forgive him. Just forgive him.

Separations come about because of guilt—separations between God and man, and between man and man. If a person feels guilty, he may not be able to talk to his friend because he is too bound up inside from shame and anxiety. Guilt complexes play a real role in human behavior. They are instigated by Satan. They flourish because forgiveness was neither sought nor granted. Yet once a person repents and does receive forgiveness, the mistake is forgiven and should be *forgotten*. If it is not forgiven, Satan can pluck it from the depths of your conscience, dangle it in front of you, and in a taunting voice, remind you that it is still unresolved. The only way to shut up that whining voice is to seek forgiveness and create the conditions necessary to clear up the mistake. Once you have done that, it is important for you to trust God has forgiven you of that sin. If you waver in your faith, a feeling of guilt will regurgitate unnecessarily in your mind time and again.

Accepting forgiveness from God and others is basically a matter of trust. God certainly wants to forgive and forget: if you are still suffering

under the guise of certain sins, realize that He is suffering right along with you. Although we may long to be forgiven and freed from sin, our desire is in no way comparable to His. And He works hard at doing whatever feasible to see that such liberation takes place at the soonest possible time.

Forget about guilt. It does you no good to dwell on your sins. The past is the past. Once it is cancelled, there is no need to bring it up again. Today will pass and become history. If you make a mistake today, repent and then accept the forgiveness granted you. Repent daily for your sins and then forget them. They are voided if you repent with the right attitude. Prayer life is the key, and something that should not be avoided. If you deeply confess and repent to God, you *will* feel liberation in your heart. When I received Jesus, my heart was purified. I felt absolute internal freedom and liberation because I believe the Holy Spirit cleansed my heart. We need to feel the effects of forgiveness not only in our mind, but also in our heart. If your heart really connects to the heart of God, then you will know with surety that you are forgiven.

You can be assured that your conscience still works if you feel uneasy when you do something wrong. But once you no longer feel the prick of your conscience, you are in trouble. I see this as something good. Once you come to the point that you no longer care whether or not you sin, realize that your conscience is quite buried under *unforgiven* sin. Discern whether your conscience is centered upon God, or is mostly activated because you receive accusation from Satan.

It is hard for us to make decisions which are in accordance with the will of God. Humanity has lived in a certain way for thousands of years. We have become used to that lifestyle, yet we work to break loose from the chains that presently still bind us to Satan. It is no surprise that we find it to be a tough job, but then nobody claimed that being liberated from Satan's bondage would be easy.

Unificationists have the chance to receive absolution from original sin through the Blessing. This is not possible by ourselves; the Messiah is the only one who can grant forgiveness of that sin, and he acts as God's representative. It is a job no one else can perform. The Pharisees and priests asked Jesus how he could absolve someone of their sins. They thought only God was able to forgive sins. Those men were puzzled when the man, Jesus, claimed he could do that. The problem stemmed from the fact that they could not recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

Forgiveness of sin is grace from God which we don't deserve. We do not sin only against our fellow man, but also against God. God and Father desire to endow such blessing to us, but they also expect us to live according to God's will once we have been absolved of our sins. Yet no matter how strictly we are able to obey God's law, our obedience does not pay the price needed for forgiveness of our sins. Therefore, God expects us to give a token payment of indemnity conditions.

Some people committed their lives to God at the time they received the Blessing, but did not fulfill the vows they made, and left the movement. This saddens God deeply. Some people looked at their mate and tried to figure out how in the world they were going to live with that person—and put tip with that person—for the rest of their lives. Their viewpoint was purely secular, and they ignored the spiritual reality of the forgiveness of sin that is given with the Blessing. They did not think about the grace from God they as a family would receive in the future. They initially accepted the forgiveness of sins but unfortunately, turned around and sinned once more.

I advise you not to dwell on forgiveness itself. It is given quite easily. The question is what you will do with it. Are you ready to *accept* the gift of forgiveness? Attaining it is connected with the idea of declaring total bankruptcy before God. The next move is to receive it, and then you must decide what to do with it. Only you can determine what effect it will have upon your life.

Does the backwash of the sins you committed years ago still clog your container of love? Do you constantly dwell on problems you have overcome, or the mistakes and sins you committed years ago? Are you still burdened by, and even depressed by, these things? We may seek forgiveness, but once it is given many of us find it hard to take "yes" for an answer! If you repent from the depths of your heart, you will surely receive forgiveness, no matter what the nature of your sin. The next step is to rectify the situation and refuse to make the same mistake again. You are forgiven, but that in itself does not negate the conditions of indemnity you should offer. To be forgiven, you must pay a price.

You are probably the harshest on yourself. Can you forgive *yourself*? God has such tender mercies He wants to bestow upon us; why then do we find it so hard to forgive ourselves? Analyze this situation for a moment. Has your perception and ability to judge drastically changed since yesterday?

Yesterday you couldn't make the right "judgment" that would have prevented you from making the mistake in the first place. After receiving forgiveness, why insist on still berating yourself, or even criticizing the person who forgave you, for forgiving you? Adjudication is actually God's role. We must learn to humbly receive the forgiveness which is extended to us, and also learn from the mistake we made.

It is very easy to condemn a person, but so very hard to forgive. If you *can* forgive a person, you will find the rewards are tremendous. What do you gain if you don't forgive someone, and instead continue to hold a grudge against him? Actually, you are the one who loses. Energy. Love. Even friendship. And you abrogate the trust of that person because you become separated and isolated from one another. All those losses may make you feel rather empty inside. But if on the other hand your heart can sympathize with the person—the circumstances surrounding what he did or said—and then you forgive him, you are the one who will receive the reward. He may not be the only one to shed tears—you might, too. And that will grant you a definite experience with the forgiving heart of God!

If we would really resemble our Heavenly Parent, forgiveness would flow from our hearts, banishing both the grudges we have against one another and the guilt which we continue to harbor. And if our love for God could manifest in a real and tangible way, we might even begin to accept love, friendship, tolerance, and forgiveness from others. It takes a certain inner strength to receive, rather than give, elements of faith and trust. But from my observation, people cannot be true human beings until they also cross that bridge of faith. Without perfecting our hearts, we tend to see each other out of highly suspicious and critical eyes. We become stubborn and harden our hearts when we don't accept the grace of forgiveness, or the gifts of love and respect from others. We self inflict torture on ourselves and are driven to live in chambers that we fashioned from guilt, self-pity, inferiority complexes, and fear. If we continue those practices, all we will do is suffer in this life and most probably the next one as well.

I wonder how often we have felt needed by another human being—*really* needed. In our loneliness, do we often exercise the freedom we have to care for one another? To touch each other with love, to relate to

each other with forgiving hearts rather than hearts filled with caution and suspicion? The very human need to be accepted is intimately linked to the concept of forgiveness. Have you ever been able to forgive another person for his bad temper, his illogicality, or his bad manners? Love is the important ingredient in forgiving another person for his humanness. And it is exactly what we implore God to use when viewing our own very "human nature," when we ask His forgiveness for our sins.

We have the hope that we may receive forgiveness of our sins and be reunited with God again. To receive this gift, however, we have learned we must fulfill certain conditions. We have to do things that will make it clear to both God and Satan what our decision is, and with whom we want to live. The next step is to sever ourselves from the satanic environment. And by far the most difficult is the final step—to separate our heart from Satan.

I am sure each of us repents many times a day, beseeching God for His forgiveness, but do you ever find yourself repenting about the same thing time and again? We must clearly understand how detrimental this practice is. If we repented once, received forgiveness for the mistake, and *accepted* that pardon, there is no need to repent for this yet another time. What must God think when we do? In one sense, repenting about something more than once shows that we don't trust Him. Is it that we wonder if He really heard us? Or if He really loves us enough to absolve that sin? Or do we feel so guilty that we cannot bring ourselves to believe God or anyone else could forgive us of the transgression?

If you committed some wrongdoing against me and confessed it—even acknowledging that you hurt me—I would forgive you without hesitation. But how do you imagine I would feel if you came again tomorrow and repented all over again, and then next Tuesday told me in tears how remorseful you *still* feel about it? I would feel a bit wary because I wouldn't be able to understand why you didn't take me at my word. If I say I forgive you and tell you to forget the situation, I mean it. You may still feel a bit bad afterwards and think, "Oh, he forgave me so easily. I don't deserve forgiveness. I deserve to be punished!" However, that feeling of guilt comes straight from Satan. But he has no right to touch the purity of forgiveness. If forgiveness is not accepted by the recipient, what meaning can it have? God is benevolent. When He forgives you, accept Him at His word, and then try to "sin no more." That is the most responsible attitude.

Not long ago I received a letter from a German member in our move-

ment. He reminded me that about ten years ago he committed what I consider to be a rather small offense. At that time he apologized to me about it. I accepted his repentance and promptly told him to forget it—/ certainly did. In fact, even though I recently read the account of the whole incident in his letter, I couldn't remember it at all. Yet after ten years, that "sin" was *still* on his conscience. In his letter he asked me to state *in writing* that I forgive him. Even when he initially apologized, I couldn't quite understand why he wanted forgiveness because it was such a little thing, something I would not even consider a "sin." But I did not take this matter lightly; I know what it is to be truly sorry for something, so I immediately responded to his letter. I know what it is to need absolution, so I gave him the "proof" of forgiveness he sought.

Although I appreciate his conscientiousness and feel his attitude of repentance is beautiful, he was already forgiven long ago and it would have been better if he had not held on to that guilt. When we either don't allow a wound to heal, or we reopen it, we cause both ourselves and God to suffer the pain all over again. We need to realize the far-reaching effects of forgiveness and feel the grace of God—either directly or through another person—once we are exonerated of our sins.

Receiving forgiveness does not void the indemnity that must be paid. A person who murders someone is sent to jail for his crime. Perhaps that convicted murderer is given the death penalty, yet let us suppose that just before he is to go to the electric chair, he surrenders his life to Jesus. Although God will forgive him of his sins, he cannot just walk out of prison. He will *still* be put to death. Even though he is spiritually acquitted of his sins, he still has to pay the price for his iniquities.

If a person commits a breach of trust in relationship to me, I will tell you honestly that I am very disappointed. I am troubled if I place trust in someone who then breaks that trust. Yet if he realizes his mistakes and tells me how sorry he is, and I can see visible proof of that through his tears, the expression on his face, and the sincerity and remorse in his voice—I will forgive him without a second thought. However, I probably would not trust him soon again with the same task or duties; that would be rather irresponsible of me. Although I forgive him for a certain situation, it would not be wise to consider that he is suddenly one hundred percent trustworthy in that particular area. Trust takes awhile to restore.

If you seek forgiveness and indeed are forgiven of your trespasses, the person forgiving you cannot completely and immediately forget what you did. I am sure that for a time, he would watch how you perform and see

whether or not you improve. To be regarded with such a level of skepticism *is* indemnity, but a price which you definitely have to pay. Although you may not necessarily be "demoted" because of your mistake, you also cannot immediately be "reinstated" and given the same level of trust on the internal level.

I have faced many such situations. I have experienced betrayal by some people who failed to restore the role of Judas. Although I forgave them totally, from that point on I was also cautious and watched that they did not do the same thing a second time.

Many people live their whole lives feeling guilty. Feelings of shame are generated by Satan; they accomplish nothing but to deter a person's spiritual growth and block his relationship with God. There is no reason to feel guilty. Satan just wants us to feel the way he did after he fell from God. He wants sympathy and probably thinks that if all the rest of us feel guilty for something, his crime won't look so bad.

Guilt does not help you grow closer to God. Nor does it help you in your work. I am sure of one thing it does—it *does* depress you, and push you further into Satan's camp. Judge guilt by that kind of criterion. Once you receive the Blessing, there is no reason to feel any more guilt. Being bothered by guilt was a habit which you learned at some point, and which now should be *unlearned*.

Rather than focus on our guilt, we need to feel responsible for sharing the mission and burden of Father. If we don't accept and accomplish our human responsibility, we have a great need to repent. We can start to do that by regarding guilt as a thing of the past. The word "guilt" as we know it today has such a negative connotation. A healthy point of view would be to face our inability to fulfill responsibility with the determination to do better, rather than succumb to feeling "guilty" because we have become slack. It is also a way we accept the forgiveness God so willingly bestows upon us.

If we repent in prayer each day, God absolves our sins. Once we express our resolve to do better in the future, we should forget about the past and go forward. If we can do that, we will be able to accept the forgiveness He grants. That will make us feel spiritually lighter, and more god-like. We must realize how much we insult God and True Parents if we still harbor tremendous feelings of guilt even though we are blessed and have been living for God for a number of years.

The concept of amnesty is one which derives from God. In the books

of the Old Testament God is often vividly portrayed as a God of vengeance, but actually His nature is completely opposite. People of that day were not able to perceive much about His nature, and were basically confronted with only His power and might—He was the Source, the giver of the Ten Commandments. He also gave laws which were specific in their prohibitions and strict in their measures. His law seemed violent—it talked about taking an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But at that time, such rigid laws were necessary to keep the people in line.

It was only through the words and example of Jesus that the idea of a Heavenly "Father" finally came into the picture. Man's understanding about God increased, and we began to realize how loving and forgiving He is. Now Father has imparted the gift of the Principle, and also revealed much more about our God of love. Unificationists generally view God as the Father in Heaven, as an "unlimited reservoir." We have learned of His suffering, that He has wanted to forgive man for sinning and falling away from Him, and that He is desperate for us to understand what a crucial role we have in restoring this world. But Father has also taught us that for God to grant us forgiveness, we must first repent and beseech His pardon.

Every human being wants to be saved and desires to be relieved of the pressure of sin existing within his own soul. Yet are we fully aware that in order to receive forgiveness and salvation, we must also be willing to forgive others? Sometimes it is not easy to forgive someone because our grudge against him is embedded so deep within our heart. But if we resent someone, he is not free. He continues to be burdened by his sin and in need of forgiveness.

It is our obligation to forgive those who sin against us. To be "saved" is not a simple process. It does not just entail opening our heart to the Messiah and becoming his follower. It is not only a matter of receiving the Blessing and creating a God-centered family. We have to think about others—interceding on their behalf. Jesus taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors." Those words were not just for the people of his age; they hold true for us today. All of us need to fulfill our purpose of creation, becoming the true sons and daughters of God. Being forgiven helps alleviate the burden of our sin, which then allows us freedom to advance closer to God and perfection. That passage of the Lord's Prayer outlines the tremendous obligation one human being has for another. Forgiveness is the measure of a loving heart.