Forgiveness

(All prophecies are Jesus speaking)

Giving the gift of forgiveness

Why must you forgive another when you have been so horribly hurt and wronged by their actions? Why do you have to give that painful offering of yourself, that forgiveness that seems to as good as absolve them from the harm they've done to you? Why do you have to let them off the hook like that?

Why is it even in your court at all? Shouldn't they be on the spot, the one having to make things right and do everything they can to somehow try--maybe over years, or maybe forever--to make amends for what they've done? Why, on top of everything else that's happened to you, do you have to be the one to force out these most difficult of words: "I forgive you"?

Have these questions been on your heart? Can you relate to these feelings? I know you can, because these feelings are common to everyone who has suffered deep hurts or wrongs. You feel hurt, cheated, and devastated. And you feel that if it weren't for the actions of others, you would be fine, even happy now. You're being told to forgive, and as much as you know it is a good idea in theory, in reality you are having such a hard time bringing yourself to agree, much less say those words. I want you to know that I understand.

Forgiveness is one of the hardest things to do. It is not only bearing the pain, but going beyond that to say that you won't harbor ill feelings toward those who caused the pain in your life. But no matter how hard it seems at the moment, I promise that you will feel better and your situation will improve after you take this step.

The most important thing to understand is that this isn't about the other person or party; this is about you. The reason I ask you to forgive, no matter what the hurt, is not only because the other person needs your forgiveness, but because you need to forgive.

You also need to understand that forgiveness isn't a comment on the past; it's a preparation for the future. It's true that "sorry doesn't fix it" if you're talking about the hurt that happened to you, and neither does forgiveness undo what was done. Forgiveness won't change the past, but if you can extend forgiveness, it does fix the future.

The reason is simply that two wrongs can never make a right. Although evil or wrong has been done to you, you have no part in that evil unless you refuse to forgive, and thus allow the negative event, whatever it may be, to make you an accomplice of sin by harboring hate, bitterness, anger, or revenge in your heart.

One wrong can grow into another if it is not stopped. Though you might feel justified for how you feel, and though you might have every "right" to feel as you feel, it doesn't change the fact that anger, resentment, and hate are works of the Devil and, no matter how justified they may seem, they will cause sin and evil in your heart if allowed to continue there. To allow these sins to flourish in your heart because harm has been done to you is to allow this negative event to harm your spirit and eventually ruin your life, if it is not stopped.

Forgiveness is a vital antidote to the spread of poison in your spirit as a result of some wrong or evil that is done to you. Only forgiveness stops the advance of sorrow, sin and negativity through your life. Forgiveness immediately begins to work as an agent of positive change--one which can, in time, reverse all the damage and set everything right again. Forgiveness is the key that helps the wrong of another not to become your wrong as well, and that saves your heart and spirit from damage, regardless of what other damage you have sustained.

If harm touches everything in your life--but your spirit chooses to forgive, and thus remains pure and strong--any damage done to you can be reversed, driven back, and in time you can rise above anything. But if you choose not to forgive, it is as if the harm touches your spirit as well, and the hurt you've experienced begins to poison your soul. [1]

My heart aches to see the heartache that you have felt, for I feel the pain, the anger, the regret, the remorse, the feeling of being hurt, of being angered by the faults and mistakes and even the sins of others. I know how this hurts, and I know that it's the nature of man to want to retaliate, to want revenge, to fight against forsaking and forgiving and putting these things completely behind you. For to truly forgive and forget is one of the most difficult things for any man. This is something that can only be done through Me and through My Spirit. For this is My Spirit--My Spirit is love; My Spirit is forgiveness.

The whole reason that I came to Earth and lived and died in human flesh was for the very purpose of unjustly suffering, being hurt, so that others might have life and love, and so that you, My children, might be able to extend forgiveness one to another. For only through Me can you be freed from these roots of bitterness that the Enemy seeks to use to entangle your heart, that he seeks to wrap around you so that you become stuck and cannot move further in your service to Me.

I'm here for you, waiting to lift this load of bitterness, anger, and deep sorrow--this burden that you've been carrying around. Just stop, sit down, take it off, and give it to Me. Just say, "Jesus, take this. I don't want it anymore. I'm tired of it." I'll take it, and I'll throw it away. I'll make it disappear forever, so that you can once again feel the brightness and lightness of My love and the happy joy of My Spirit as you serve Me and work for Me.

I'm here, waiting to wipe it all away and make clean the slate of your heart and mind. Just ask Me. Just say, "Erase it all, Jesus. White it out." I'll send the refreshing rain and the clean, white snow of My love to cover the bloodstained ground, made so by the wounds and the hurts and the pain. I'll make you whole again.

Just reach out for Me. I'm here, and I love you, and I want nothing more than for you and I to be able to fully and deeply rejoice in each other's love and fond embrace. That's what I live for and breathe for. That's what I want and desire, and that's why I chose to come to Earth, to endure the pain that I did, so that I might be able to help you in your times of pain, that I might help you out of it and over it, and that we might enjoy wonderful, blissful love together, now and forever. [2]

Make the choice

No amount of analyzing, no sorting through right and wrong, no attempts to tally up and apportion blame, nor the anguish of heart, the anger, or the bewilderment, will ever bring the answers your mind and heart seek. It will never be "right" enough; it will never be "fair" enough to bring the healing you need.

Healing comes through making the choice to forgive, for when you forgive, you are choosing to open your life to the miracle of My love. Then I can come in and wash away the confusion, anger, grief, and anguish of heart, mind or spirit. As you choose to forgive, you are inviting Me in to begin the healing process in your heart, mind, and spirit.

This place of forgiveness is not a place you reach through reasoning, trying to work things out in your own mind, or waiting for time to work it out. In fact, time can work against you, as the longer your mind remains in a troubled, confused state, and the longer you harbor any resentment or anger toward another, the deeper are the grooves in your spirit, and the more difficult it is to choose to forgive.

Start by putting in My hands each and every troubled thought and emotion, any resentment, anger, anguish, confusion and hopelessness. Call on the keys of Heaven to help you to take each thought and feeling that you are experiencing and to leave them in My hands--knowing that I will take care of them, that I will make all wrongs right, and that I will use every circumstance that touches your life as an instrument of good.

I've promised that they which love My Word would have great peace, and nothing would offend or stumble them (Psalm 119:165). Claim that promise for your own, for it is your right to have great peace, no matter what circumstances come your way, no matter what hurts you experience.

Ask Me to help you to forgive. Tell Me that you want to forgive, you choose to forgive. Don't wait for a big feeling of relief or supernatural strength to come over you before you make the decision. Make the decision by faith. Choose to forgive, knowing that no matter how much you feel the opposite, once you make the choice to forgive, then I can come in and make it reality for you. I can begin to heal your spirit, and the gift of forgiveness can begin its miracle in your life. [3]

"As God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us …"

Remember that as you forgive others, I also forgive you. You are human and you err, and you need forgiveness. When you are faced with the choice to forgive someone, it's your turn to give others a little of what I have given you. You have certainly needed forgiveness in the past, and you no doubt will need to be forgiven again in the future.

Don't compare someone else's "bigger offense" with what you perceive as your minor ones, and therefore feel, "Well, I never did something that bad." I don't look at things that way. My forgiveness and My love know no boundaries with you. Remember that as you make the decision to forgive others.

Whether big hurts or small ones, the key is to not hold on to the past, to the hurt, or to the wrongs that were done to you, but rather to forgive. By forgiving you are not saying that what was done was okay or all right, but just that you are not going to carry the burden of anger and bitterness with you. You trust Me enough to put it in My hands and then to let it go. [4]

Forgiveness is for you

What if the person who hurt you has never apologized or shown signs of being sorry for what he did? I think you know the answer. Forgiveness is for you and for your heart and spirit, and the same principles apply whether the other person has sought to make amends or not. If you don't allow My forgiveness to bring healing and closure, then your spirit will be wounded, your mind will remain troubled and confused, and your heart will not be whole. You will become a victim of your circumstances, rather than rising above through My miracle-working power.

Although it may not seem possible to reconcile forgiving those who do not seek forgiveness, remember that the ability to forgive is for you, so that you can find healing, closure, and peace in your life, regardless of the choices that others make or don't make.

Your ability to forgive and rise above is a great testimony of My love. If you make the choice to forgive, you will find that this "cross" carries you to new heights never before reached, where you will be able to touch the lives of others and be a living testimony of My power. [5]

Even the worst of wrongs

I know how difficult it can be to forgive someone who seems undeserving. You're only human and it is so tough to extend forgiveness to someone who seems ungrateful and unapologetic. But even under the worst of circumstances, with the worst of people and the worst of attitudes, forgiveness can still be given--especially if it is given in My Name--because there is no sin that I can't forgive, and there is no sin that you can't forgive if you forgive in My love. Of course, if there is no repentance and no remorse on their part, they may not find My mercy and My forgiveness. But it is still there for them should they choose to accept it.

It is the same with your forgiveness. Even if those involved are the most unapologetic, diabolically evil individuals

alive, it is still a sin for you to choose to withhold forgiveness toward them. It's as if you tie yourself to a sinking stone, saying that you won't be rescued until the stone is. It's foolishness!

Save yourself through extending forgiveness, and thereby unchain your heart from the sins of others. If they accept that forgiveness and if they repent, then they too can be saved and restored to fellowship with Me, and eventually with you. If they choose to continue in unrepentant wickedness, then they will continue sinking in sin, but at least you haven't sunk there along with them.

That is why I implore you to offer forgiveness even to those who have purposely and knowingly hurt you--even to those who aren't sorry for what they have done. It's to save your own life and heart and sanity and happiness, and also to preserve your communication with Me.

Do not worry that you are absolving others of their crimes when you forgive. They stand before Me, and I know and try the hearts. Your forgiveness will not save them from My judgments or chastisements or retribution, whether on Earth or in the afterlife. That is between them and Me.

But you can forgive even those who are not repentant. You can free yourself from all the burdens of sin and the past through the act of loving forgiveness. Forgiveness immediately frees you, wipes your slate clean, protects your heart, and restores you to the fullness of My presence. Regardless of what the other party does, you have saved yourself. You have preserved your own heart and happiness and you have made it possible for My Spirit to work with you to restore your life to a good condition, to give you back what you have lost, or to compensate for the losses and work all things together for good. [6]

Fair judgment and recompense

There is the matter of retribution and just recompense, and let Me state for the record that while I forgive, I also mete out just recompense. One does not negate the other in My realm and in My jurisdiction. Yet it does in yours. You as a human do not have the capacity to both forgive and judge. But I can. In the end, everyone is rewarded for their deeds, whether good or evil. I forgive sin, and I grant salvation to anyone who will accept it. But as you know, I also judge according to one's works.

If you have been wronged by another, you can trust that I know the intentions of their heart, and they will be judged accordingly--whether in this life or in the life to come. If you trust Me, if you believe in Me, then you can fully leave any and all thoughts of retribution or recompense, of judgment and fairness, in My capable hands.

I will be the judge, and you can be assured that there is fair judgment in the end. And, furthermore, just as those who harm and hurt others will be judged, likewise those who endure hurt or harm at the hands of another will be recompensed by Me, whether in this life or in the life to come or both.

So, again, forgiveness is primarily for your benefit. When you forgive one who has injured or damaged you, you gain healing, and you stack up reward and recompense for yourself at the same time. [7]

Forgive, that you may be forgiven

A danger in not forgiving, a loss that you stand to incur, is the loss of My Own mercy toward you, My forgiveness for the wrongs in your life. In order to be forgiven, you must also forgive (Matthew 6:15). Because I have forgiven you, you now owe that same forgiveness to others.

Even if the wrongs done against you can never be justified, can your wrongs be justified, if not for My mercy? Though you may feel as though what has been done to you exceeds any sin you have committed yourself, can you meet the perfection of the law on its terms without My salvation? Haven't you sinned--and will sin in the future--and haven't you needed, sought, and accepted My unconditional forgiveness? (Romans 3:10, 23.)

No matter what someone owes you because of what they have done to you, the fact remains that you owe Me more than anyone else could ever owe you. Only I have forgiven enough and atoned enough to save not just your temporary body or earthly happiness, but your immortal soul from eternal condemnation and separation from God. I gained this right through My sacrifice for you. What I have forgiven you for is greater than any forgiveness that could ever be demanded of you--and I won't go back on that forgiveness. You are Mine forever, saved and redeemed. But the debts you incur from this point on--and you will, for none are without sin--will be treated like you treat those who are indebted to you. Thus, if you want My continued forgiveness, you must give forgiveness.

Vengeance is Mine, and I will repay (Romans 12:19). The one who has harmed you will stand before Me and My justice. Your forgiveness will not absolve him in My eyes--only his own repentance and efforts at restoration can do that. And neither will your withholding of forgiveness cause Me to punish him more harshly if he has truly repented and sought the mercy which is his right as well as yours through My death on the cross. What I want to impress on you is that whether you choose to forgive or not will not affect My treatment of the other person, but it does affect you. [8]

To forgive the unforgivable, forgive right away. Forgiveness becomes harder once you have let yourself become hardened or resentful toward a person or a situation. The more you hold on to it and let resentment and anger linger, the harder your heart will become and the more inflexible your wall of defense will be. Learn how to say, "I forgive you" just as easily and quickly as you feel you could say, "How could you?"

Be ready to forgive. There will always be something to forgive or someone who needs forgiveness. That is what I came to Earth to do, to forgive those who had hurt or who had sinned. Once I died on that cross, forgiveness was a free gift.

There will be things done to you in your life that you will feel will be unforgivable. How can you forgive someone who has intentionally hurt you? It's not easy, but there is a way: You ask Me to put enough love in your heart for that situation; you ask Me to fill your heart with understanding and compassion, and you remember the day that I died for you so that your sins, or anything wrong you do in this life, could be forgiven. Then you turn around and say, "I forgive you."

The secret is to do it right away when your heart is still soft from the punch or the hurt. It may seem cruel of Me to expect that of you, but I know you can do it. I have made enough grace available to you. I have it right here to give to you. All you have to do is open your heart to it. [9]

It's about you and Me

You ask if, when you forgive, you're saying that you're okay with what happened, even though with all your heart and soul you disagree with what took place, you hate it, you can't stand it, and you would get even with the one who caused it if it was in your power. And what if the individual is not repentant? What if they're not sorry or haven't shown any signs of remorse or wanting to make things right? What if they are continuing to hurt others? Must you still forgive?

The first step to take is to forget about the other person, to try to forget about the loss, and look to Me. Remember that I reign in your life, that I love you, that I died for you, and that you are in My care. No matter what has happened to you or hurt you, you are Mine, and I can make things right again. Remember that this life is only a vapor, only for a little while, and that the suffering of this present time isn't worthy to be compared with the glories of the world beyond (James 4:14; Romans 8:18).

Fix your thoughts on Me and meditate on My power, greatness, and love, until you are confident of My love and care for you despite what does or doesn't happen to you on Earth. Remember that although I would love to make your life a paradise of only good, that is not the point of your life, and that "in the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). Remember this, so that you don't become angry at Me for how I have or haven't intervened in your life. If you feel angry at Me, tell Me so. That's okay. I want to hear from your heart, even if it is a confused jumble of sorrow and anger. I'm here for you, even if you feel angry at Me.

It really helps if you are secure in the knowledge that I love you and can work all things together for good in your life, that I do all things well. You'll find extreme praise and extreme faith very helpful. Adopt the attitude of "though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job 13:15). You don't have to know why, you don't have to understand My actions or seeming lack of actions; you only have to believe that I am love, that I do all things well, and that I will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).

If all you can do is repeat "God is Love" over and over until you come to believe it, then that is a start. Remember that this is a matter of faith, not proof. The knowledge that I am here, that I love you, and that I care for you isn't something you will be able to prove through circumstances or carnal means. It's a matter of pure faith, a knowledge somewhere in your heart that I am the God of the Universe, and that I am love, and that My love will never fail.

If you believe in My goodness and My ability to make all things right, it will give you faith to forgive. Before you think about forgiving the one who has wronged you, make your peace with Me. You must come to know, like Job, that you can't hold Me to an accounting and ask Me to explain Myself to you, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so are My ways above your ways, and My thoughts above your thoughts (Isaiah 55:8,9).

My promises are there for you--promises of encouragement, comfort, rest, faith, and My eternal, unconditional love. Strengthen yourself in these things until you are fully able to believe in My love and My goodness. Then, while still putting the person and their actions aside, remind yourself of your desire for a pure heart, a heart free from hate, negativity, bitterness, anger, revenge, coldness, or anything else that would separate you from Me.

Tell Me that you want a heart full of My light and My purity. Tell Me that you want a heart full of love. Think on how you desire and will need My mercy in your future, how you will need My forgiveness time and again, and that you don't want to be denied that. Contemplate how you don't want to be separated from Me in any way, or have any dark or closed-off portions of your heart. Remind yourself that you desire nothing but full oneness and communication with Me, with no part of your life given to the Enemy or his works.

Once you have decided this and you truly desire it, then forgiveness comes into focus. It's not about telling anyone that you're okay with what they did. It's simply a sacred act between you and Me, an acknowledgment of My love and goodness, and a desire to have nothing in your heart that isn't of Me. It's giving someone else what I have already given you.

Then you can genuinely express from the heart that you forgive what has happened. You express--in words or in your heart--that something has happened to you, something sad or difficult or even terrible, and although you don't like it, agree with it, or want it, you choose to forgive the person who caused it, to forsake any anger toward them, and to act as though they owe you nothing, because you are erasing the debt they have to you.

Although you may remember for some time, you will not resent. Although you will still feel pain for a while, you will not retaliate. Although you may be crushed and it will take time for your spirit to mend, you are surrendering to My love, and thus for God's sake, and for your own sake, you extend them forgiveness in the Name of Christ, Who also forgave you.

This is an act of superhuman proportions. It is one of the hardest things you will ever do. But once you make this decision to forgive, even in the quietness of your own heart, the liberating power of this act will immediately become apparent to you. You will be free, you will be right with Me. Although you will still be in pain, the evil of the action will no longer have a hold on you. You will have risen above and opened the door to restoration.

When you see it this way, it doesn't matter whether the other person is sorry, or whether they meant to do it or not, or whether they have made appropriate reparations or not. It's not about them. It's about you and Me. [10]

A life-giving miracle

Forgiveness is humanly impossible, unreasonable, illogical, and in diametric opposition to the carnal mind and human nature. For this reason, it is one of the highest manifestations of supernatural love, and in the heavenly realm is considered a greater miracle than physical healing, supply, or turning water into wine. Forgiveness takes reaching out for supernatural love and perspective and allowing it to course through your being and do the humanly impossible.

What was the most powerful testimony of the first Christians that brought converts in by droves? It was their forgiveness, their ability to face cruel and unjust deaths, to even watch their children die at the hands of their persecutors, and yet to forgive. The more cruelly their oppressors treated them, persecuted them, and harmed them, the stronger their faith and forgiveness blazed forth and set fires in the hearts of others. This was a miracle of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, sent to heal their hearts and allow them to touch the supernatural. Forgiveness and love are so much greater and more powerful than anything that can hurt or harm.

Forgiveness is so rare in this world. And especially when it's coming from someone who knows Me and loves Me and is filled with My Spirit and able to witness of it, it is an overpowering testimony of My love.

Forgiveness has little to do with the circumstances, the gravity of the offense, or the attitude of the offender. When you are faced with the unforgivable, I know how hard it can be to believe that forgiveness is the miracle needed in the situation. If you have suffered a terrible tragedy, or someone dear to you has undergone the unthinkable, forgiveness is likely not the answer your mind is searching for, nor will you feel that it will be the solution, bringing healing and closure and understanding.

Your heart is heavy and feels that it may never be light and joyful again, and it's so hard to find hope or to understand why something so painful occurred. It's hard to envision ever being whole again. Circumstances have been permanently altered, and the damage or hurt can't be undone. A child that has died due to a drunken driver will not be in your arms again until you come Home to be with Me; a loved one that was handicapped due to the mistake of another will never be physically whole in this life; even a lost opportunity, a financial mess, lies or slander spread around that has permanently affected your life and opportunities--all of these are things that "sorry doesn't fix."

I know how difficult it is in these circumstances to see forgiveness as the miracle needed to heal the situation, because you know it won't change the circumstances or turn back time. It won't bring back a lost loved one; it won't rewind the film of your life and undo what has happened, or take away the suffering and possible long-term consequences.

Looking at it from that angle, forgiveness can seem to be nothing more than an exercise in obedience, something you do because you know that it is your duty. I even instructed you to love those that hate you, to do good to those that persecute you (Matthew 5:43-48). And yet, while you may start with a simple act of obedience, as you take that step you will find that forgiveness is a miracle, a life-giving miracle that not only works in your heart to heal it from every hurt, wound, or burden, but that also restores life, hope, and joy to the one who forgives.

Forgiveness will take the hurt, the tragedy, the harm, and the burden in your heart, and cover it with My healing balm. Your heart will not be the same as it was before the hurt, but it will become whole again, a stronger heart, filled with the secret joys and depth that forgiveness will bring. [11]

It's not easy to forgive, but it strengthens you

I know how hard it is to forgive. Taking the step to forgive is a sign of great strength--strength in Me, and strength of character. You're choosing to give even when you feel you have nothing to give. But it is in forgiving that you find all things restored to you--your happiness, your joy in life, your healing, and the renewal of your spirit and the fading of the hurt.

The ability to forgive is a sign of strength of character. It's not easy. It's a conscious decision of your heart. It requires mustering all the strength you have, and leaning hard on Me for the strength you cannot find in yourself. In fact, if you look at the situation logically before you make that choice, it probably seems impossible--that's how hard it is.

But it's not impossible, because I'm here to help you, and I have limitless love and strength to give you. I want you to forgive because I want you to heal, I want you to be happy again, and I want you to grow stronger through the experience.

Isn't that the case with everything in life that makes you stronger? A hallmark of strengthening is that it's not easy to go through. It pushes you to new limits. Forgiveness is no exception.

When you are hurt, you have to choose what you'll do with that hurt. You can forgive and go on stronger than ever, or you can hold on to it and try to maintain, and eventually you'll grow weaker. When you choose to forgive, you find that I repay all that you have lost. When you choose not to forgive, you find that the strength and good in your life slowly slips away from you.

Know that I look with great love and compassion upon you when you face a situation where you must choose to forgive. I know how hard it is. But I also know how beautiful your life will be and what strength of character will result when you come through it. So lean hard on Me, and find Me very present to help you. [12]

Do it for yourself

Forgiveness is not necessarily something that you do for the other person. Yes, most people are happy to know

that you have forgiven them. But something that holds many people back from forgiving is that other people have not sought forgiveness, or perhaps don't feel that they need it, or don't realize how badly they've hurt you. So you feel that they don't deserve your forgiveness, which of course keeps you from giving it.

However, that's not how forgiveness works. Forgiveness is for you too. Forgiving the other person helps you. Forgiveness is the biggest step you can make in leaving the past behind.

If you don't forgive someone, then you are stuck. You are held back. You are the one suffering, and you are the one feeling angry, bitter, and in some cases, even hateful. These feelings can eat you up. They don't help you. They make you miserable, and in some cases these feelings will even alter your personality and the way you relate to others. So holding on to anger, bitterness and resentment hurts you.

Forgiveness helps you, for it allows you to let go of all that and to move on. There is often not a whole lot that can be done about the past and past hurts, but if you carry those burdens and that bitterness with you, then you not only have a bad past, but your present becomes soiled, unhappy, and terrible as well. [13]

A healing potion

The greatest benefit and blessing of forgiveness is upon the person who forgives. When you are wronged or harmed by another person or group of people, your spirit suffers damage and needs restoration. Whether the pain or abuse was physical or emotional or both, when you are the object of another person's ill will or wrong or even evil actions, there is harm done to your spirit. That is due to the simple fact that I made humans to love and be loved, and I made it so that positive or negative forces between people have an effect. Love is creative, whereas malice and hatred and lack of love are destructive.

That also applies to the effect your forgiveness has on those whom you are forgiving. When you forgive someone, you make it that much easier for them to repent and receive My forgiveness and make things right in their own life and heart. They can still do that whether or not you forgive them, but by forgiving them, you make it easier for them to come to Me.

It is human nature, and a spiritual law, that an injury that is done to you hurts you--not just on the surface, but deep down. It affects your spirit. And the solution, the healing potion, is forgiveness. There are other factors that will speed your healing--such as My love, My Word, My comfort. But you cannot find full healing until you forgive. It's not something that can be quantified in terms of logic, but it is something that can be proven--and has been many a time. It is a spiritual law, a spiritual power. The main role of the spiritual power of forgiveness is as a healing agent. Love creates. Salvation redeems. Forgiveness heals and restores.

There are a thousand questions that come to mind when you are dealing with wrong or injury that was done to you. But when you find yourself in a position where you have been harmed by the wrongs or mistakes of others--whether in a small or large way, whether by intention or mishap, and no matter what the complexities and nuances--the solution remains wrapped within the package of forgiveness. There is simply no other way to fully heal the wounds of the spirit and to restore it and make it whole.

This is not an oversimplification. There are often other factors, needs, and decisions that an individual will have to face. There can be many steps toward healing, and some may involve communication and understanding in the form of finding out what happened, or enlightening other parties as to what happened, dialogue and discussion and reconciliation to various degrees. There are also times when the greatest manifestation of forgiveness is silence. The steps to be taken are a very personal matter and are something that each of My brides must find through communing with Me.

But the choice and act of forgiveness is the vital ingredient. The rest of the things you can do play a minor part in comparison. They are supporting agents, or ways to enact the forgiveness, or to assist in the healing. Forgiveness itself, however, is a choice of the heart. It is a conscious act of the spirit. It is a channeling of divine power. [14]

Forgiveness stops the hurt

The fact is that the act of harm that you have suffered isn't truly over and you can't start to heal until you have granted forgiveness to the one who caused the harm. Until that time, the harmful act is continuing to strike at you, like a dagger slowly pushing deeper into your body. Forgiveness stops this hurt.

Forgiveness, no matter how painful, rescues your soul and saves your spiritual life. It says, "My body and emotions may be hurt, but I choose to forgive so that I can heal--and in so doing I will protect my spirit." Forgiveness allows the hurt to end, for it to damage you no further, and gives you space to heal and reverse the damage.

Although your hurt is great, forgive anyway. The act of the one who hurt you will continue to hurt you, and will always go on hurting you, until you have forgiven them. Don't you want to stop the damage?

I know that the call of "fairness," anger, hate, and revenge is strong. I know that it seems so easy to slip into the poisonous life of retribution and "an eye for an eye." It seems the easier thing to do is to believe that the responsibility is not on you to forgive, but to instead enjoy each blissful thought of retribution, and to never let that person have the relief of your forgiveness. But this is not the answer. This is hurt that will go on hurting, a knife that will only plunge deeper.

The more you resent someone, the more what they did to you will hurt you and damage your spirit. This wound will never close, and its poison will someday ruin your life. So much has already been taken from you; don't be tricked into losing what you have left. So much wrong has already been done; don't compound it. Take back your life and reclaim your happiness. You do this by choosing to forgive. [15]

Reclaim your joy!

Forgiveness? Oh, how that thought stings. Forgive the hurt? Yes, My love. I am not saying that the person was right or wrong, I'm just asking you to forgive. This is the very first and possibly the hardest step to healing. Forgiveness doesn't take away the pain immediately, but it brings Me into your life and leads Me to the hurt and opens the way for Me to begin healing you.

Forgive. Forgive, even if it hurts like the very fires of Hades! I will close the doors of Hell and seal the breach so that Satan may have no more sway within your heart. A hurt kept within you is a flame of Hell that burns deeper with time. A concealed and unforgiven hurt never grows better on its own; it requires the soothing balm of forgiveness to quench the fires of Hell and to bring deep healing and peace.

If you'll let Me pour the balm of forgiveness on the fires, you'll find that they are lessened each time you say, "I choose to forgive." This does not mean that there isn't a very painful wound, but it does say, "I choose to treat this wound and to let it heal so that I can be strengthened."

Forgiveness isn't passive retreat; it's an aggressive move forward in the battle for your joy. Forgiveness is harder than just burying it deep inside, but it is the braver and nobler thing to do, and it will allow Me to start healing you.

Don't try to close the wound without forgiveness, for the longer you wait, the deeper it will burn, and the harder it becomes to heal. The longer you harbor hurt, the more chance there is for resentment or bitterness to set in, further injuring your spirit and making your life more difficult.

Sometimes you look at the wounds and hurts you've received and you think that bearing them bravely is just part of living for Me. But I want to help you heal! And to heal, you must forgive. Please let Me heal you. I wish to bring you great joy so that your heart is overflowing with the joy of being Mine. To be Mine is to be happy. I wish for all My children to be overwhelmed by joy in being Mine. [16]

It won't ever be "fair," but forgiveness will make things right in your life

Talking about forgiveness when you have been hurt or wronged is difficult and painful for most people; thinking about it can make your stomach knot and your skin crawl. That's because you are associating the pain, the wrong, and the injury with the forgiveness. You are putting them both into the same equation--but it's not really an equation. You can't compare a beautiful, wonderful and loving gift with an unkind, unloving and hurtful act, nor should you try.

In order to free yourself to forgive, it helps to pull yourself away from this perspective. Don't even associate the forgiveness with the deed. Don't put one on one side of the scale and the other on the other. It's not a scale. The two sides won't ever balance. It will never be "fair." That's not really the point. The forgiving is for you. The forgiveness is how you will be healed.

The balancing and the restoration of equity and fairness, the retribution and judgment, is Mine to mete out--and I will. Leave that with Me. Don't allow yourself to think on it, for it will only retard and delay the healing that you could have. If someone has made you suffer, why should you add to your suffering? When you brood on harm and injury, when you stall on forgiving, you are prolonging and adding to your own suffering. When you forgive, you are expediting your own healing.

This is the bottom line of what's in it for you. This is a spiritual law and a spiritual truth: Forgiveness brings healing. It's something you can't fully understand until you do it. You don't have to understand it before you do it. It only requires that you make the decision. It is an act of the will, a positioning of your heart.

Forgiveness is by faith. It is a choice that you make. When you make the choice to receive Me into your life, to accept salvation, you don't work it up; instead, you say, "I believe. I accept. I receive." The choice to forgive is very much the same. You are faced with an awareness and you make a choice. And in making that choice, you are choosing to open yourself up to receive a supernatural and miraculous gift from the heavenly realm, for which there is no complete carnal explanation.

Forgiveness is not mind over matter; it is heart over matter--and not your heart, but My heart. Forgiveness is the opening of a portal to Heaven, through which flows love, redemption, cleansing, healing, restoration, and renewal. [17]

Forgiveness is not an emotion

Forgiveness is not an emotion. It's not something you do because someone is deserving, sorry, or has changed. That's what makes it so special and so powerful.

To forgive is a choice. It's an act that is a step toward happiness, a step toward freedom from the weight of resentment that hurts you and those you love. When you carry around hurts that you haven't forgiven, that weight will crush you. It will destroy your emotional health and eventually control your life. Letting go of the hurt is the most difficult thing you can do, but you are the one who benefits the most from it.

I can set things straight, work in others' lives, and change them--and that will help them, but it won't help you. I want to help you too, and that is why I call you to forgive. I want to relieve you of the pain. I want to help you to let go of the memories that bring sadness or anger. I want you to forgive, because I know that forgiveness is the only way to freedom, happiness, and growth.

When I was tortured and killed, it was unfair. I brought love, kindness, health, life and freedom. I didn't feel like forgiving My disciples for abandoning and denying Me, or the crowd for humiliating Me and mocking Me, or those in power for condemning an innocent man, or the soldiers for making a sport of the execution and putting Me through the pain of torture before death.

I had committed no sin. My human emotion seared through Me and I felt that they should feel what they were putting Me through. "Father, forgive them" were some of the most difficult words I ever said in My life on Earth (Luke 23:34). That moment of forgiveness was not because I felt like it. It was an act of will, followed by a moment of relief, for I had passed that test.

So I do understand, but I can also see the future and the happiness and freedom that will be restored to you once you make the choice to forgive. Save yourself from the continued pain and grief and crippling that comes from holding on to hurtful experiences, and leave them with Me to take care of in the way that I know is best.

Trust that I am with you and really do love you. Know that the best way that I can help you is by encouraging you to leave the past behind and to look with faith to the future. Let the memories make you more understanding of others, a better friend, a better parent, a better partner, a stronger disciple, and I will bring the healing that you so desire. I will make your heart better. [18]

Finding the beauty for ashes

When you choose to forgive, it helps you to more quickly reach the realization and peace of knowing that everything that comes your way in life is for a purpose, even the bad things. Your experiences in life, and the choices you make through them, make you into what you are now and what you are to be in the future. When you experience loss, sadness, and difficulty, it can make you a better person, someone with more depth, more love, and more understanding. You understand the hard things in life, you understand pain, and it enables you to empathize with others and their pain. You understand, and you feel for people. You also realize that these times of pain and difficulty, while hard, are not something to be avoided at all costs, for they shape you and make you what you are.

However, if you refuse to forgive when you are hurt, and thereby entertain resentment and possibly bitterness, then you aren't able to benefit and to receive the beauty for ashes (Isaiah 61:3). The effects instead are the opposite; they are negative, and they don't have the same healthy effect on your life.

When you have forgiven someone, you are not saying that you have forgotten the bad, but you are saying that you are not holding it against them or against Me. You are saying that you are willing to walk on to the brighter future that I have for you, that you are letting go of the past and its pain. You are saying that you trust My love and My hand in your life, and that you believe that there must be a purpose and a reason. You acknowledge that it may be difficult to forgive, but you know that through forgiving I can perform the healing in your life, and you want that healing.

Don't feel bad if you don't feel like forgiving. That's human; that's normal. And even if you feel that initially you are just doing "lip service" by saying that you forgive, that's okay. That's the first step. You have to start somewhere, and by saying that you are willing to forgive, even if you haven't yet sorted everything out in your heart and mind, you are saying that you are willing to let Me begin My work in your life of making you the person that I want you to be.

Another key to being able to forgive, or at least to make that first step of deciding that you will forgive, is not dwelling on the past and on the bad. Don't repeatedly relive the details and how the situation hurt you. Ask Me to help you put it behind you and to supernaturally transcend the physical, the human, and the natural reaction to keep reviewing it. By putting it behind you, you will benefit from that divine gift: forgiveness. Then, as you forgive others, I help you, and I heal the wounds, and I soothe the pain. I truly do make things all better. [19]

Healing takes time

Making the choice of forgiveness is often only the first step in the healing process. The pain isn't automatically washed away. You wish for it to go away, and you want to go forward and leave the past behind, but the pain continues to haunt you. One reason this happens is that you are prone to reexamine the situation to find a way it could have been avoided. Or if the situation is continuing, you are tempted to reexamine it to see how you can bring it to an end. Or random things remind you of it even when you're trying not to think about it, and it keeps bringing up the hurt you feel. There are many reasons why the hurt could keep popping up for some time.

Don't let your mind wonder why I allowed it to happen to you. "Why me?" Don't let the Enemy throw accusations at you about how you should have done things differently, and then you wouldn't have suffered the hurt from others. Close the door on trying to figure everything out and take the high ground by saying, "I forgive you."

If it helps you to take a stronger stand, say it out loud. When it hurts, say, "I forgive you," or, "I forgive so-and-so," naming the person you forgive. Don't feel ashamed if you must say this over and over. If you continue with this exercise, the time will come when you will no longer be tempted to mull over the situation and wonder how things could have been handled better. You will only remember to forgive. Forgiving the person or persons who wronged you will become your new habit, which will replace the habit of mulling over the painful occurrence.

I promise that as you do, My love will pour in with such power that you will one day be able to look at that painful situation as the catapult that propelled you to unknown heights of faith, love and peace.

But it takes action. Forgiveness is not a passive act. Be militant. And don't be afraid to say it out loud--not necessarily directly to the one that is hurting you, but out loud in a way that it confirms to yourself that you are taking that stand. "I forgive you. It hurts, and I don't like it, but I forgive you." As you choose to forgive, you will be delivered from the worst part of the pain, the corrosion that comes from mulling over a situation. And soon, the act will no longer be able to reach your heart, and you will be filled with heavenly love that fully heals the wound.

Such is the power of active, militant forgiveness. [20]

I watch over each of My children with great love. I give them what they need. I give it to them at the time that they need it, and in the way they need it, and I make no mistake. I even use the mistakes of man to bring about My perfect will. For I know and understand the thoughts and the intents of the heart of every man. And though two people may never understand each other, and though some may never understand why one acted a certain way, and thus may find it hard in themselves to forgive, yet they can find relief from bitterness and find the strength to forgive by coming to Me and putting all things into My hand.

All things in your life are from Me. Do you think that I could not protect you and keep you from all harm if I wanted to, if that was the big plan of creation? Of course I could. All power is given unto Me. But I allow difficulties, pain, heartache, disappointment, mistreatment, injury, misuse and abuse. What I mean is, by not preventing it, I allow it. Therefore it is from Me, from My hand, because I did not raise My hand to stay it.

This is the foundation principle to getting over hurts of the past: You must believe that all in your life is from Me, in that I allowed it. If you can't receive this and have it strongly and ever in your heart and mind, then the temptation is always there to blame someone. People want to blame others. That's why it costs so much sometimes to forgive and forget.

When you forgive, you are releasing someone of the blame. And if you're holding on to that blame and self-righteously wanting to make others pay and suffer, then there is no forgiveness. The more of these emotions there are, the harder it is to realize that whatever the experience in question, it was from My hand, allowed by Me, even if not ordained or preferred by Me. To allow something when it is in your power to stop it is to take it as your own. Therefore, when I allow something, the act of not preventing it makes it as good as from My Own hand.

When you truly lay these bitternesses upon My altar, when you truly commit them into My hand and receive and accept all things as from Me, then I'm able to work a miracle in your heart and life. I'm able to pour My healing elixir of love into your heart in full measure. I'm able to soothe and heal and mend. I'm able to bind up the broken heart and make it a more loving, compassionate, tender and giving heart. I'm able to make you a stronger, better person, a more powerful channel and vessel of My love, and a pillar that others may lean on.

For when you lean on Me and when you cast yourself on Me, you're leaning on the greatest and most powerful source of wisdom, strength, help, grace and love. You're tapping into the divine resources, into the power that created the universe; and with this power, nothing can defeat you or discourage you or stop you. With Me, you are mighty in spirit, and no attack of the Enemy, no trial or tribulation, no act by another person, can move you. For I am the Rock, and My way is perfect. My Words are tried and proven, and I have never forsaken those that have put their trust in Me and cast their cares upon Me. [21]

As has been said, and rightly so, "to forgive is divine." It is truly a supernatural thing to be able to grant forgiveness when you have suffered harm and when severe pain has been inflicted upon you by another. It is difficult enough when the wrong or injury done to you is the result of another person's mistake or negligence; it is all the more difficult when it is the result of outright malice and evil.

I know what it's like to be wrongfully hurt. I know abuse. I know suffering. You know the story of My life on Earth. You know what evil men did to Me, at the instigation of yet other evil men. You've read the Bible. Most of you have seen the movies and gotten a good idea of the extreme agony and torture I endured. You've thought and meditated on the sacrifice I made in dying for you. My example of forgiving those who tortured and killed Me, of the pardon I granted them, is often referred to. But think about it for a minute; meditate on it, and on what it means to you.

You know that I came to Earth to save you, to take your sins on Myself, to redeem you so that you could be reunited with Me and My Father, to die so that you might have eternal life. My coming to Earth, My suffering for you, My atonement for your sins was the ultimate act of forgiveness. My act of suffering and dying in your place was a choice made out of love--love for each individual that makes up humanity.

That love was not limited or selective. That love was for all. That love even included a love for those who tortured and executed Me, and a love for those who loved Me but fled in My hour of need. I forgave them all. And throughout history, I have accepted and forgiven anyone who has come to Me to receive My salvation.

Forgiveness, while not easy, is simple. Salvation and forgiveness are both a part of My divine nature, and a part of My nature that you can share in. Salvation is a miracle. Love is a miracle. Forgiveness is a miracle. And in many ways, all are one. When you accept salvation, you accept My love, and you accept My forgiveness; and you also receive divine power to help you to love and forgive others. [22]

My love supersedes all else

The beauty of My love is that it holds absolutely no grudges, no bitterness. When I wipe the slate clean, it really is perfectly clean, white as snow. And while this might sound illogical to your carnal mind, because you know that I've set rules in place that make you responsible for your actions and that sometimes require that you face consequences, yet My love is heavenly and magical and transcends earthly logic.

I do have balance, in that I do judge and reward according to your actions on Earth, but My love supersedes all else. I would never make you feel guilty or unloved for some past mistake, no matter how great. Any tears you shed when we meet face to face won't be because I'm putting condemnation in your heart.

It is written that love is patient. Love is kind. Love doesn't boast or put herself above others. Love is not easily provoked, thinks no evil. Love rejoices only in the happiness of others, never the pain (1 Corinthians 13:4-6).

One more thing is that My love is a miracle. It truly is! Human love is not strong enough to forgive and forget, no matter how hard one tries. Getting past hurt and moving on is a wonderful thing, but to truly forgive takes a miracle of supernatural love. So reach out for it and receive it. My love is one of the most beautiful and life-changing gifts you can receive, but one that is asked for far too rarely.

So many want to hold on to their hurts. Some feel that holding on to and reminding themselves and others of their hurts somehow makes them more worthy of My love. They gather the memories of these hurts around them and use them as a wall to buffer them from further hurts, or from growing closer to others.

My loves, bringing these hurts into your bosom will not bring you comfort, but only pain in the long run. They will eat at you and eventually bring you down, and destroy the beautiful person that you are. You don't need these things in your heart and life. I love you for yourself, and I don't need a reason to love you as truly and wholly as I do!

Won't you ask for My love and forgiveness to fill your life too? It's humbling to receive it, because it means letting go of anything from the past that you've been holding on to. When you receive the gift of My love and forgiveness wholly, you might find yourself naked and stripped of your trips and any walls that you've put up around yourself.

That infusion of My love might have you walking around feeling a little intoxicated because of all the love you feel for others, and all the happiness in your heart that's just bubbling over. Gone will be the negative things in the past that used to have a bearing on your future, which shaped your thought patterns and reactions. You'll be ready to move forward to new and better things.

You'll have a fresh start and a new outlook, one that might seem so ridiculously positive and happy and full of love, that to the carnal mind it'll seem almost silly. But My love is so far beyond the natural and the normal! It's crazy and it's outrageous and it's daring and it's beautiful! You can experience it if you want to. I love you! [23]

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