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# *Help With Granting Forgiveness*

*Chaplain Joy L. Smith*

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## **Why do the work it takes to forgive?**

1. We begin to feel better, as we have less emotional pain to manage in our daily lives.
2. Our relationships have potential to change.
3. We physically release the toxicity that builds up in our cells due to emotional anguish. Hurt, sadness, fear, anger, and bitterness held within does, over time, affect our health. Forgiving ourselves for our mistakes and our poor choices releases the guilt that can do a nasty number on our health.
4. We feel the “atta girl” or “atta boy” over doing what God asks of us. This places us in the Creator’s will and brings a satisfying feeling to our souls. This emotion promotes health: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

## **Points to consider as regards forgiving**

1. Some people think forgiving shows weakness. The opposite is true. It takes a great deal of strength to forgive some people. And, it takes great determination and strength to forgive some things that have happened to us.
2. People often think forgiving means they are condoning bad, hurtful, or spiteful behaviors. The truth is that forgiving a person does not mean the behavior is accepted; not at all. To forgive is to release your soul from the difficult emotions that result when you are hurt or harmed. It means you let God be God. This frees God to work on the person or people involved, especially when you pray for them. Jesus taught not only to forgive, but also to pray for our enemies. To forgive means setting yourself free of emotional bondage.
3. Forgiving is a process. Initially, we set our will to forgive. Later, when old memories surface, or something current reminds us of what happened in the past, we deal with the feelings of hurt, anger, and fear that arise. This takes getting clear about what is at the base of the feelings. Then we tell God, “I give you these emotions. I release them to you. I have forgiven this.” The process takes as long as it takes. We have to be patient with ourselves, doing the work as many times as it becomes necessary.
4. The grace of God fills the soul of a person who determines to forgive all that has hurt or harmed him or her. This brings to us “the peace that passes understanding.” Aside from living in God’s will, nothing else in life can bring this level of peace. We accept God’s peace, even when we cannot understand that *peace can exist within difficult circumstances*.
5. We are not asked to forgive others because God demands obedience. God asks us to forgive others, even our enemies, because we are loved. God wants us to have the best possible life!

## **The bottom line as regards forgiveness**

To have the ultimate in life, means we will seek to live in the kingdom of God. Ours is a spiritual kingdom that Jesus brought to us through His teachings. This kingdom presents a very different way of living from the way usually seen within the world. The kingdom of God is all about loving and being loved. It is about being led by a heart filled with God's Holy Spirit. This state-of-being sees us doing good for our families, and finding ways to serve others through using our gifts, our talents. While making the lives of others better, we are benefiting as well. The joy of the Lord becomes a growing entity in our souls!