

Walking in Forgiveness

Needing to be forgiven and finding grace

by Faith Simone



Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

—Colossians 3:13 NLT

For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

—Matthew 7:2 NLT

Making the decision to forgive can be daunting. Forgiveness seems unappealing, perhaps even irrational. Why should we forgive someone who's obviously in the wrong? Why should we let the person off the hook? What if the offender doesn't even have the decency to request our forgiveness in the first place? Are we expected to offer such a gift to someone who doesn't even know they need it?

The answer to these questions is simply this: we forgive because we are forgiven.

I won't pretend I've always had such a lofty view of this humble state of walking in forgiveness. I used to be the type of person who would hold a grudge until it hollered. I kept record of every wrong, and hoped I would have a front row seat when the Lord exacted revenge. I wanted to see the people who offended me suffer. I wanted to stand firm in my belief that those who did wrong were swiftly and strongly punished.

Then I became a person in need of forgiveness and everything changed. In truth, I became a person *aware* of my overwhelming need for forgiveness. On my best day, I'm in need of God's forgiveness. On my own I can never measure up. Walking into the fullness

of this realization changed me and the way I related to other people. It changed the way I viewed people who were walking out this life to the best of their ability. People who were beautifully and humanly flawed, just like me. People to whom grace exemplified through me may be the only glimpse of God they ever see.

A part of me always thought that to extend forgiveness was a sign of weakness. I assumed that people would view me as a doormat and take advantage of me. But a funny thing happened when I opened myself up to choosing grace: people surprised me by rising to the occasion. My decision to offer grace gave space for the best in them to shine through.

It's rare that someone does wrong and feels no remorse. Most people feel awful when they fall short. Showing forgiveness gives them permission to be a better version of themselves, just like accepting God's forgiveness gave me permission to be a better version of myself.

I forgive because I am forgiven. It's cyclical, beautiful and redeeming. My gift to others became a gift to me. The same is true for you, dear friend. The grace you choose to extend to others is available to you without limits.

Faith Simone's passion for writing began as a young girl. She is a poet, playwright, novelist, and blogger, and she is passionate about using her gift of writing as a tool to help promote humanity, understanding and compassion. She shares her personal thoughts on writing and tips for authors on her website, FaithSimone.com.