

to remember it all. That is the answer to all our wrong doing but especially for our own unforgiveness.

If we confess it to God and forgive those who have done wrong against us, He will take it away and wash us clean from the effects of it all. How many people are full of bitterness, full of anger and resentment? It is all because they have not forgiven the person who has offended or injured them. They have no peace.

If we come to God however and ask His forgiveness and His help to forgive, he removes the bitterness from our souls and brings peace. No more revenge, no more hatred, just the love of God in its place. Jesus has showed us the way in His own life and it is His mercy that allows us to forgive others. Peter, the apostle, when confronted with the rightness of the Lord Jesus and his own sin, cries out that he is "A sinful man". That is how we all are in the sight of God until we have been forgiven.

When Jesus was on the earth a lady, the Bible tells us she was a sinner, probably a prostitute, came and wept at Jesus' feet and He forgave her sin. He then said to those around, "Those who have been forgiven much, the same love much".

If you have unforgiveness in your heart and are troubled with bitterness, come to Jesus. He will forgive you and help you to forgive others. You will then know how much you have been forgiven from, and be one who loves Jesus much, and serve Him all the rest of your life.

The man in Northern Ireland who lost his daughter was a Christian. He had sought and received forgiveness from the Lord Jesus and loved Him much. Maybe that was the secret to his life and why he was able to so amaze many when his daughter was killed, saying "I forgive them". When you know Jesus' forgiveness you too will find the grace to forgive also, and live a life in peace without any bitterness at all.



You can pray this prayer.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I realise I have much bitterness and unforgiveness in my life. It is against others but is in many ways against You. You have shown great forgiveness and I ask you now to come and forgive me for my sin and take away all my bitterness and unforgiveness. I forgive those who have done wrong against me. Thank you Lord Jesus. Please help me to live a life pleasing to You and keep me from being unforgiving in the future. Thank you.
Amen



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Forgiveness

Some years ago in Northern Ireland a young lady was killed in a bomb blast. Unlike many relatives of those killed in the troubles in that country the father of the young lady stated quite openly that he had forgiven his daughter's killers. Such was the unusual manner of his behaviour it made news headlines. The man was interviewed to see if he was genuine and to discover why he had chosen the way of forgiveness.

It was all such a difference from the bitter recriminations that usually follow the murder of a loved one. Expressions of hate and the desire for revenge are so often made with the anger of the grieving relative clear for all to hear.

So many people have their lives ruined by bitterness and unforgiveness, something tragic happens in their life and they cannot seem to let it go. Maybe, as above, it is the loss of a loved one, or someone has betrayed them, or cheated them. The injured party is just so full of bitterness it comes out when they speak and in fact affects every area of their lives. They find no peace and possibly seek medical help in the way of tranquilisers or anti-depressive medication to try and dull the pain.

The man in Northern Ireland was a Christian. He belonged to an evangelical-type church in the province and his testimony was that God had forgiven him his sins and so he was

prepared to forgive those who had killed his daughter. It was an amazing act of grace or kindness on the man's behalf but he said that "God had enabled him

to forgive". Of course he would never forget his daughter and there was much sorrow at her loss but there was not the bitterness of unforgiveness or seeking for revenge. This allowed the man to get on with his life, giving thanks to God.

Jesus Christ talked much of forgiveness when He was on the earth. The famous Lord's Prayer which almost everyone knows, at least in the Western World, has as one line "Forgive us our trespasses, or sins, as we forgive those who trespass, sin, against us". So in the most basic prayer we are required to ask God for forgiveness. It is also required that we forgive others also for the wrong they do against us. That was the principle applied by the man who lost his daughter. Jesus said also "If you do not forgive, your Father in heaven will not forgive you". Why? Unforgiveness is in itself sin or wrong doing and against the principles of a forgiving God. If we hold onto unforgiveness we hold onto sin and although God would love to forgive us He can't, because we hold onto the thing He wants to take away

Be tolerant with one another and forgive one another whenever any of you has a complaint against someone else. You must forgive one another just as the Lord has forgiven you.

Colossians 3:13

from us. When we forgive, we let go and God can then forgive us too.

Jesus, when He was on the cross, demonstrated his own teachings with his request "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing". Jesus showed that what he taught worked in His life. He was no hypocrite but He ensured that when he died there was no bitterness in His heart. This was even though He had done nothing at all to deserve being crucified.

David, the King of Israel, when he realised the awful sin he had committed in ordering the death of Uriah because David had committed adultery with Uriah's wife, asked for forgiveness from God. He understood that "Against You only have I sinned". He asked for mercy and received it from God. David realised that in reality all sin is against God who is the judge of us all. Our man who lost his daughter asked God for mercy for her killers too.

All of us have fallen below the standard of God's requirements for our lives, - all but Jesus that is. He demonstrated His supreme love in the forgiveness he showed. The whole world needs God's forgiveness. But because of the death of the Lord Jesus and all our sins being placed on Him instead of on ourselves, we read, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to wash us clean from all the wrong doing in our lives". Once we are forgiven God takes away our sins, our consciences no longer need

