

Print this email out. It is meant to be a guide for your time of prayer.

Pray Psalm 139:23,24:

- 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
24 Point out anything in me that offends you,  
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

Have you noticed yourself being more irritable or impatient or having to wade through relational conflicts in greater measure since we started praying this prayer. Could it be that this is an answer to your prayer? God is revealing “junk” in your heart (bringing it to the surface), so you can let Him deal with it.

Take time to listen. If God reveals anything, write it down. Ask God to reveal the heart behind anything He shows you (e.g., pride, selfishness, ambition, unforgiveness, etc.). Ask Him to help you repent. Resolve to take any action steps He shows you.

Read:

Matthew 6:14-15

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 18:

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” 22 Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 “Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.<sup>[g]</sup> 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.<sup>[h]</sup> 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 So the servant<sup>[i]</sup> fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. 28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii,<sup>[j]</sup> and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ 29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. 31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers,<sup>[k]</sup> until he should pay all his debt. 35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

The forgiveness Jesus calls us to does not mean that we do not experience hurt when wronged. It also does not mean that you don't try to lovingly deal with conflict (see Matthew 7:1-6, 18:15-20 and Proverbs 19:11 for instructions on dealing with conflict). Forgiveness does not mean that we do not set necessary boundaries for abusive situations. Rather, walking in forgiveness means that we do not personally try to make that person pay for their wrongs against us (e.g., If you are going to treat me this way, I'm going to treat you the same way.). We choose to release them from our bitterness and resentment. We need God's help to do this.

How does God's forgiveness of you put your struggles to forgive others in perspective?

Who do you have a hard time forgiving?

How do the passages above offer help and motivation for forgiving the person/people you struggle with unforgiveness?

The silver lining to any mistreatment we suffer is that it provides an opportunity to see what is in our heart. You may have been legitimately wronged, but did the mistreatment you suffered bring your own unhealthy responses to the surface? If you are reminded of an unhealthy response (in thought or deed), ask God to show you what is in your heart and why you have reacted in the way you did. Ask Him to help you repent. Resolve to take any action steps He shows you.

Have your reactions to that person been wrong? Even if you were less in the wrong, go and apologize for the part you played in the conflict. When you apologize, be specific and don't give any excuses.

Pray blessing upon those who you are seeking to release from paying for their wrongs against you.

Listen to "Sing to Jesus" by Fernando Ortega. You can look it up on YouTube.