

Week 17
Forgiving (Self)

“If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.” – Ps 130:3f

We often find it a challenge to truly forgive others. Sometimes we revel in holding things against people because we like having a point of leverage. Sometimes we are hesitant to forgive others because they have hurt us and we are not ready to release that pain until they demonstrate that their remorse is at least as painful as the hurt they inflicted upon us. Sometimes we resist forgiving others because if we forgive them then we have to take responsibility for our own unloving attitudes. So long as we can blame the other person for the broken relationship, we can avoid our own sin.

While forgiving others can be challenging, forgiving ourselves seems impossible. It is common to hear people say, “I can forgive others, but I can’t forgive myself.” The Psalmist says, “But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.” This doesn’t seem to make sense until we realize that the Psalmist uses the ancient idea of “fear” to express what we would call “respect” or “honor.” God is honored because he forgives sin, not because he holds it against us. Our resistance to forgive ourselves may indicate that we “fear” God’s punishment rather than “respect” his forgiveness. Fear of God’s wrath causes us to keep silent, to hide, and to separate from God. Embracing his forgiveness allows us to talk, to commune and grow closer to God. “But with you there is forgiveness.” God is merciful and gracious. “Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven” (Ps 32:1). To be blessed is to rejoice and be happy. Guilt may be a strong motivator, but love is stronger. We may think that we will be better if we “hold our own feet to the fire” but God knows that guilt will only control our actions while love will change our hearts.

“But with you there is forgiveness; that’s why I honor you.” Honor and respect God by embracing His forgiveness and allowing it to change your heart.

This Week

- Sit quietly and reflect on those things you constantly beat yourself up over. Where are the places in your life that you have not forgiven yourself? Make a list.
- Pray your list to God and ask that he fill you with the peace that comes from knowing Him. Say to God, “Lord you have forgiven me, and now I release my burden of guilt to you. With you there is forgiveness.”

Week 17

Apr 25-May 1

Sun	<i>What specific action can you do this week related to your growth goals?</i>			25
Hebrews (4)				
Mon	Num 33	Luke 16	Psa 81	26
Tue	Num 34	Luke 17	Psa 82	27
Wed	Num 35,36	Luke 18	Psa 83	28
Thr	Deu 1	Luke 19	Psa 84	29
Fri	Deu 2	Luke 20	Psa 85	30
Sat				1