

## Forgiveness

Did you ever have something weighing heavily upon your heart? Years ago, a friend said something very hurtful to me. It changed our friendship. I became distant and cold towards her, no longer trusting. I realized recently that I had to take this off my shoulders. I spoke to Pastor Don about it, and he gave me some direction about it and also said, "Don't forget, forgiveness is a gift you give yourself." I thought about this and realized she probably didn't even remember what she had said or as so often happens when we hurt someone, she had rationalized it and saw it just as a blip in a friendship that had grown cold. I prayed about it and left it at the altar remembering our Pastor's words. Two weeks later I tried to pick it up again and realized I could not remember who it was that I was angry with or what they said. It was gone. I cannot pick it up again. God has taken away that hurt, and I thank him for that. I look at friends and think "was that who it was" and then think No, they would not have hurt me so. Then I realized what a gift God had given me because I am on a clean slate with all my friends and even though the scale doesn't show it, a weight has been lifted from my shoulders. God has forgiven me much and now he has forgiven me for carrying a grudge that weighed me down. Whose sin was greater? Her, whoever she is, for her remark that hurt me so, or me for carrying her careless comment for all these years. I let her sin become my sin. We have a God who calls us to forgive others, or us when we carry someone else's sins on our shoulders and nurse them and let them grow until they become our sin.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.

Lord, we thank you for another day, be with us in all we do. Forgive us for when we fail, and may we be forgiving towards others and may we forgive ourselves. Be with our Pastor and bless his ministry and be with his family. Be with our Staff and Leaders, bless their work and guide them. Be with our church may we serve our community and each other. May we serve those who serve in other countries and in mission projects here and abroad. Be with those who hunger for sustenance and for those who hunger for your word, may we serve them. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve, may they know your comfort. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Grace Epperson