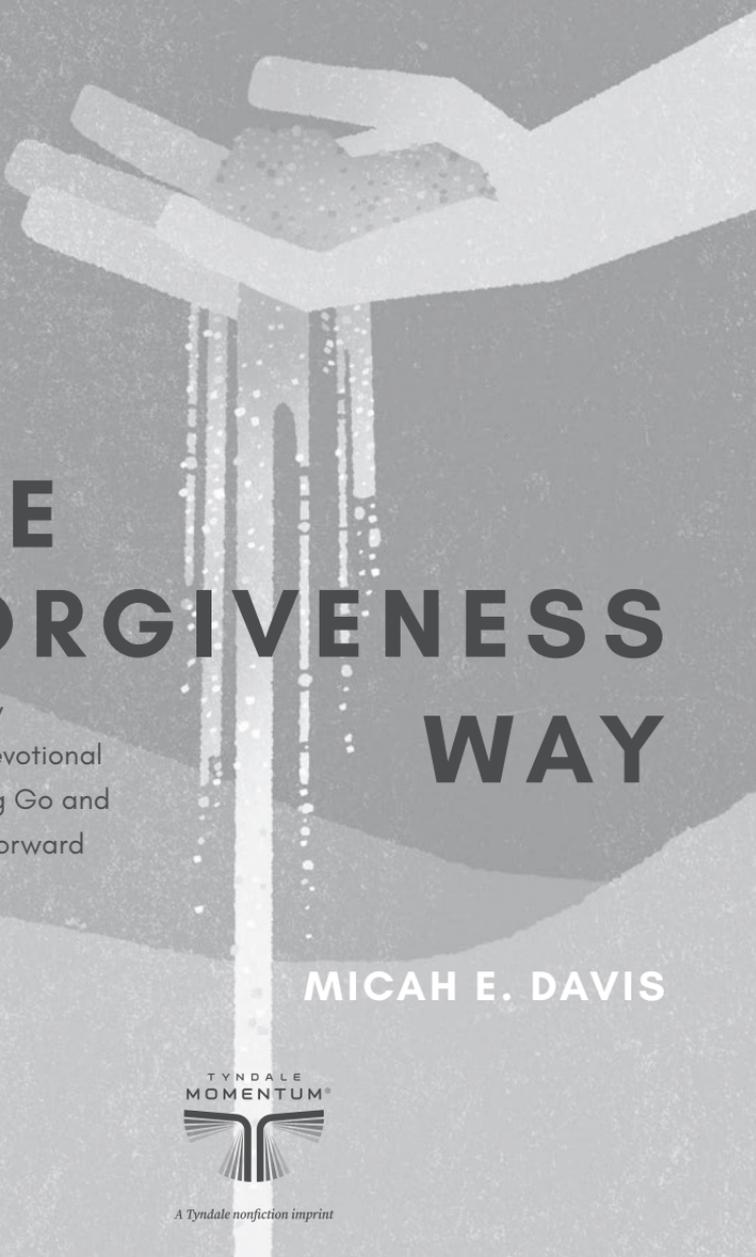


# THE FORGIVENESS WAY

A 40-Day  
Prayer Devotional  
on Letting Go and  
Moving Forward

MICAH E. DAVIS



# THE FORGIVENESS WAY

A 40-Day  
Prayer Devotional  
on Letting Go and  
Moving Forward

MICAH E. DAVIS



*A Tyndale nonfiction imprint*

Visit Tyndale online at [tyndale.com](http://tyndale.com).

Visit Tyndale Momentum online at [tyndalemomentum.com](http://tyndalemomentum.com).

Visit the author online at [micahedavis.com](http://micahedavis.com).

*Tyndale*, Tyndale's quill logo, *Tyndale Momentum*, and the Tyndale Momentum logo are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Ministries, registered in the United States of America. Tyndale Momentum is a nonfiction imprint of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois.

*The Forgiveness Way: A 40-Day Prayer Devotional on Letting Go and Moving Forward*  
Copyright © 2026 by Micah Davis. All rights reserved.

Cover and interior illustration of hand with falling sand by Olivia Jensen. Copyright © 2025 Tyndale House Ministries. All rights reserved.

Author photo by Garrett and Mikaela Hoppes, Copyright © 2024. All rights reserved.

Cover design by Dean Renninger

Interior design by Brandi Davis

Edited by Claire Lloyd

Published in association with the literary agency of The Steve Laube Agency.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, *New International Version*,<sup>®</sup> *NIV*.<sup>®</sup> Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.<sup>®</sup> Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from The ESV<sup>®</sup> Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version<sup>®</sup>), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from *The Message*, copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers.

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version,<sup>®</sup> copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The URLs in this book were verified prior to publication. The publisher is not responsible for content in the links, links that have expired, or websites that have changed ownership after that time.

For information about special discounts for bulk purchases, please contact Tyndale House Publishers at [csresponse@tyndale.com](mailto:csresponse@tyndale.com), or call 1-855-277-9400.

ISBN 979-8-4005-0144-9

Printed in China

32	31	30	29	28	27	26
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

# CONTENTS

PROLOGUE: Proceed with Caution *vii*

## PART I: Forging Others

- DAY 1: Family Matters 3
- DAY 2: Training Wheels 8
- DAY 3: Sibling Rivalry 12
- DAY 4: Called by Name 16
- DAY 5: The Place of Honor 20
- DAY 6: Kill Keyboards with Kindness 24
- DAY 7: Beginning the Process 28
- DAY 8: A True Friend 33
- DAY 9: A Father Who Never Fails 37
- DAY 10: In His Hands 40
- DAY 11: Forgiving and Letting Go 44
- DAY 12: Set Free 48

## PART II: Asking for Forgiveness

- DAY 13: Speak Life 55
- DAY 14: Confession 59
- DAY 15: Ask 63
- DAY 16: Come into the Light 67
- DAY 17: A New Marriage 70
- DAY 18: Falling Forward 73
- DAY 19: A Vision for Couples 78
- DAY 20: Not Too Late 82
- DAY 21: Rewriting the Script 86

### **PART III: Forgiving Yourself**

- DAY 22: Seen, Known, Loved 93
- DAY 23: Failure Isn't Final 97
- DAY 24: What If? 101
- DAY 25: Out of the Dark 105
- DAY 26: Flip the Script 110
- DAY 27: Grieving Who You Wanted to Be 114
- DAY 28: Gratitude 117
- DAY 29: Embrace Who You've Become 120
- DAY 30: The Friendships You'll Gain 124
- DAY 31: A Vision for Heaven on Earth 127

### **PART IV: Forgiving God**

- DAY 32: Chosen 135
- DAY 33: Wounds Transformed 140
- DAY 34: The Big Question 145
- DAY 35: The (Daily) Choice Before You 149
- DAY 36: Covered by Grace 153
- DAY 37: A Vision for Singles 156
- DAY 38: A Haven for the Broken 160
- DAY 39: A Vision for Healing 165
- DAY 40: The God Who Forgives You 170

**EPILOGUE:** What Is to Come—A Table  
Where All Are Welcome 176  
Thanks 181

**APPENDIX A:** Verses on Forgiveness 183

**APPENDIX B:** The Backpack 185  
Notes 187  
About 194  
What Next? 195

Prologue

## **PROCEED WITH CAUTION**

Every day after basketball practice in college, I would slowly make my way to the athletic trainer's room where a giant, swirling pool awaited. From the outside, you might imagine it to be a relaxing hot tub that would bring relief and relaxation. But as you ventured closer, you would see the sign: "Cold Water Immersion Tub: Proceed with Caution."

This sign emphatically clarified that what was ahead would not be relaxing or enjoyable. However, as time went on, I found post-practice ice baths to be a necessity.

Basketball is a physical sport. At its highest level, you are competing with athletes who require you to match their full exertion of energy over and over and over again. Practicing with twelve physically primed men involved running, jumping, and swinging at full speed for two hours on a daily basis, which left many of us bruised and battered. The training room was where recovery took place.

The initial plunge was a sensation I never got used to or looked forward to. But I knew that it was necessary to experience the healing I longed for. Over time, I found that the cold water immersion tub

## THE FORGIVENESS WAY

was a healing agent. The bumps and bruises I accrued on a daily basis felt much better after fifteen to twenty minutes in the ice bath. The cold water soon became a tranquil oasis.

---

Life is also a physical sport requiring recovery. You are competing with people of all shapes, sizes, backgrounds, and giftings for meaning, purpose, and recognition. At least, that's what life wants you to think. The rat race of life convinces us that we must scrap, claw, and fight for what we think we deserve. In the midst of that pursuit of happiness, many of us end up bruised and battered in the process.

But there is a way forward.

A way that heals.

And it is the way of forgiveness.

If you struggle to forgive, you aren't alone. In the last two decades of my life, I've had to work through the process of forgiving as I've watched father figure after father figure fail. I've felt hurt, betrayed, and abandoned.

And yet . . .

I have witnessed God—the great healer—show up time after time. Out of the pain has come healing—and forgiveness. I share more about this journey in *Three Strikes, You're Forgiven: Encounter a God Who Wants to Redeem Your Past, Restore Your Present, and Transform Your Future*, and out of that work has come this one. A

forty-day journey exploring the process of forgiveness, reconciliation, and redemption.

And so, here we are. For whatever reason, you've decided to pick up this prayer book on forgiveness. My guess is, it's because you're searching and longing for anything that may offer healing to the pain inside your soul.

Friend, you are immensely brave for taking the plunge into the icy waters. And though we may not know each other well, before that initial sensation convinces you to jump out, I would invite you to trust the words my trainer told me: "This is safe. You're okay. This is what's best for you. This is how healing takes place."

Let the cold tub become an oasis for your soul. It may be uncomfortable, but it is not unbearable.

The Catholic writer Ron Rolheiser notes, "Before we die, we need to forgive. We need to forgive those who hurt us, to forgive ourselves for not being any better than those who hurt us, to forgive life itself for some of the things that it dealt us, and, not least, to forgive God for the fact that life is unfair, so as not to die with a bitter and angry heart."<sup>1</sup>

The way forward is forgiveness.

To forgive others.

To ask for forgiveness.

To forgive ourselves.

And to forgive God himself.

## THE FORGIVENESS WAY

It's far easier said than done, but it is possible when we look to the cross.



Jesus can transform our wounds into scars. This process reminds me of the beautiful art form known as *kintsugi*.

The origins of *kintsugi* art are unknown, but legend has it that in the late fifteenth century a shogun named Ashikaga Yoshimasa sent a damaged Chinese tea bowl back to China to be fixed.<sup>2</sup> The returned item was an aesthetic disaster, and—seeking to innovate—the craftsmen began to tinker with broken ceramics in an effort to repair damaged products.

Eventually the craftsmen developed the art form of *kintsugi*. Taking broken ceramics, they would carefully, delicately mend these fractured pieces back together with hints of gold. Over time, their intent moved away from restoring these pieces to their original state. Instead, the artisans began purposefully highlighting the damaged areas—“scars,” as they've come to be known.<sup>3</sup>

Do you see where I'm going with this?

*Kintsugi* art is a beautiful representation of the journey of forgiveness. Inevitably we wound and hurt others and are in turn wounded and hurt by them, shattering relationships and trust. Yet as we mature in Christ, as we encounter the weight of our sins and also the depth of his grace, we are healed. We are mended. We are restored. We are forgiven. And in that, we are afforded the ability to forgive.

My friends, our lives all have potential to be *kintsugi* art pieces. They tell a story, not of perfection but of redemption. Our lives show others how—through Jesus—beauty is possible in brokenness. How devotion can develop out of despair. How pain can be transformed into purpose.

Your *kintsugi* piece isn't finished yet. In fact, it's just getting started.

God wants to use you, every part of you—your flaws, hurts, wounds, pain—to change this world as we know it. To help bring heaven on earth.



So how do we begin the process of forgiveness? It starts with an invitation—and the invitation is a simple one each day. Forgive.

Forgive those who abandoned you when you needed them. Forgive yourself for the anger you can't seem to let go of. Forgive the person you will one day be who makes mistakes of their own. Remember, I said it was simple, not easy. But the opportunity before us is massive.

In a world of cynicism, we have an opportunity to prophetically witness to those around us regarding what people of compassion are like. In a world that focuses on failure, we can envision the power of reconciliation.

It's going to require bravery and courage to come afresh to these pages each day, to meditate on these words as if they are a mirror reflecting the brokenness in our own lives, not a microscope to focus on the failings of others. It will take courage to pray fervently

## **THE FORGIVENESS WAY**

for Jesus to heal the fractured pieces of your life. Your hurt is valid. Your pain is real.

But we serve a God who wants to redeem all the past hurts you've endured, restore your present self with the dignity and value you inherently carry, and transform your future into one that breaks generational chains of bitterness and resentment.

Healing is possible. It's going to require some grit to absorb the initial shock and discomfort of the icy waters we're sinking into. But on the other side? On the other side is the life you've always longed for. A life of freedom, peace, and love.

So, let's dip our toes in, together. My hope and prayer is that over time we trust Jesus—the Wounded Healer himself—enough to fully immerse ourselves in the beautiful but backward way of living that he offers.

The way of forgiveness.

PART I

# Forgiving Others



Day 1

## **FAMILY MATTERS**

---

Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Elihud, Elihud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

**MATTHEW 1:14-16**

Options. So many options.

We have enough choices to make nowadays that we've even labeled the phenomenon of our modern moment. When choice becomes overwhelming, it can be called choice anxiety.

But there is one choice that none of us get to make. And that is our family of origin.

For some, our family of origin elicits feelings of immense gratitude or joy. For others, in a world full of divorce, separation, and relational strife, our family of origin has brought more pain and heartache than perhaps any other facet of life.

You did not choose the mother who gave birth to you. The mother whose struggles you and your siblings may have watched firsthand as young children. The mother who was stronger than you knew.

## THE FORGIVENESS WAY

You did not choose your father. The father who may have spent more time at the office than in the backyard. The father who worked too hard to provide.

Perhaps there were too many milestone moments when Mom or Dad (or both) weren't there. Or perhaps they did show up for you, imperfect but present.

Maybe you had to grow up far too early. You became the man or woman of the house and had to protect others when you needed protection. You had to provide and put food on the table when that should have been provided for you. Or maybe you were overly protected, unable to learn and grow in the ways that you needed to despite your parents' best intentions.

Your childhood may have been a dream. If that's the case, I encourage you to pause and pray a prayer of gratitude! Family who cares for one another well is a blessing. That is—unfortunately—not the norm.

For many of us, the family we didn't choose is a source of pain, and in some cases, the difficulty is exasperated by the proximity we maintain.

The parents who drink too much host extended holidays.

The sibling who is argumentative still lives nearby.

The aunt who disapproves of your spouse is always at that annual family get-together.

The proximity (or lack thereof) might be a constant reminder of these family dynamics.

I can't pretend to know why you were born into the family you were. But there is Someone who does. And he wastes nothing. The invitation before you is to trust in a God who can use all things for good.

Easier said than done? Sure.

But nonetheless necessary. Pain that is not transformed is transferred. Right now, your relationships are being affected. You may not realize it, but you may even be establishing similar relational patterns that will only continue the generational cycle that you are a by-product of.

However, that can change. Today.

But not all at once.

This is a slow process. We're only at the beginning of our journey. This may be a prayer you need to return to, day after day, for weeks or months, if not years.

You did not choose the family you were born into. But you can choose to chart a new course, to go a different direction. To recognize what was of value and what you don't want to repeat.

That way is a difficult route to traverse. But on the other side is the freedom, joy, and contentment that you've been longing for.

Every day of this forty-day journey together, I'd like to invite you to take action through prayer. I hold firmly to the conviction that prayer changes things. And so, I encourage you to invite Jesus into the dark spaces of your life. To let the Prince of Peace reign where anxiety has ruled. To speak words of life into places of lament.

## THE FORGIVENESS WAY

So, my friend, I encourage you to make the choice.

Choose forgiveness.

Choose redemption.

Choose to love the family you did not choose.

### Prayer

---

*Jesus,*

*I did not choose the family I was born into, but you did.*

*Why? I hope, in time, you will reveal that to me.*

*Until then, I'm asking that you heal the past hurts that I cannot understand and give me grace to see the ways that my family did show up for me.*

*The ways that they let me down, I offer to you.*

*Thank you that I can learn from my family of origin which choices I do or don't want to repeat.*

*To write a new story in my own life, I know that I must make a different choice. For the ways I've been burdened or blessed by my family . . .*

*I choose to believe that you, God, are near.*

*I choose to believe that you, God, are just.*

*I choose to believe that you, God, hold truth.*

*I choose to believe that you, God, can heal.*

*God, you invite me into your family when I trust in you.*

## FAMILY MATTERS

*You instruct us to call you “Father.”*

*I trust there is intentionality behind that vernacular.*

*You are the perfect parent.*

*You hold me where I've been dropped. You protect me where I've been exposed. You fight for me where I've been forgotten.*

*Help me to become more and more like you—full of joy, peace, and love.*

*If I'm tempted to focus on flaws, help me to pursue reconciliation.*

*If I'm tempted to repeat generational patterns, help me to pursue healing.*

*If I'm tempted to put my family on a pedestal, help me to put you first.*

*Help me to love and forgive the family I did not choose as you love and forgive me.*

*Amen.*

Day 2

## TRAINING WHEELS

---

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

**JAMES 2:12-13, emphasis mine**

The curb was cracked. It was roughly four inches high, rounded, and in rough shape. It seemed primed for my bicycle tire to hit it at just the right angle to send me over my handlebars.

At three years old, this was my first ride without training wheels, and my dad told me I was ready. He told me he would be right there to catch me if I stumbled. But I had caught on quicker than he thought, so he let me go.

Then came the curb. And a crash. And pain.

The crash itself hurt enough, but I didn't realize at first the subtle messaging that had been embedded into me that day. I came to subconsciously believe *I'm not safe. Danger and risk should be avoided.*

That was a long time ago, but to my dismay, I am often more like that younger version of myself than I like to admit. Rather than getting up right after a fall, I'm often tempted to take the easier route and avoid the risks God might be calling me to. That's what pain does. It creates deeper layers within you that take far longer to heal than the initial event.

Like hitting a curb, forgiveness can be painful.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of forgiveness is that there's no formula to it. If there were a step 1-2-3 process, you wouldn't be reading this. We'd all be experts.

But forgiveness is more complicated than that, isn't it?

It's less of a formula and more of a fire. It's messy, uncomfortable, and almost never linear. Typically, forgiveness involves taking three steps forward and two steps back. There are good days, and there are hard days. However, as I heard John Mark Comer say at a retreat, "You can either allow the fire of life to burn you out or to burn you clean."<sup>1</sup>

The hurt we accrue over the course of time becomes like bruises. They're hardly noticeable until they're poked or prodded. And then the pain is incessant . . . until they're healed. The only way to get rid of a bruise is to give it time. Momentary pain in exchange for genuine healing.

See, it's true. It is less painful to avoid forgiveness than to go into the fire. Like riding a bike with training wheels, there's minimal risk involved if we play it safe in our relationships. But there's so much that is missed out on in the long run. And the pain of

## THE FORGIVENESS WAY

relational conflict later on will far outweigh the few bumps and bruises accrued in learning how to forgive.

So, take off the proverbial training wheels. Allow God to meet you in your pain. Feel the burn. Because the fire is a crucible that has the potential to burn you clean.

### Prayer

---

*Lord,*

*I would like to spend a few moments recalling times that I've seen your faithfulness.*

*I invite you into these moments.*

*You already know that I've experienced pain in my past . . .*

*I invite you into these moments, too, Jesus.*

*Help me to acknowledge your guiding hand in both.*

*Allow me to recall the deeper messages that were embedded into my body and soul from these experiences.*

*Separate the truth from the lies.*

*Dignify my experience but also detangle my feelings of hurt or remorse.*

*Father, I understand that this journey of forgiveness is like entering a crucible. It is not for the faint of heart.*

*But I deeply desire healing. And I know that can only come through the fire of forgiveness.*

*Grant me the courage that forgiveness requires. It is a fundamental*

## TRAINING WHEELS

*loss to incur, a debt that you're asking me to offer free credit toward—in exchange for freedom.*

*You are not asking me to do anything for anyone that you have not first done for me.*

*So, help me get to a place where I believe and trust that mercy triumphs over judgment.*

*Refine me in the fire, Lord Jesus. I long to become like you.*

*I know the first step toward forgiving is where I must begin to become perfect, as you—heavenly Father—are perfect.*

*Amen.*

Day 3

## SIBLING RIVALRY

---

The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

**GENESIS 4:6-7**

*Watch this! Watch this! Watch this!*

*No, watch THIS!*

Any parent can envision this scenario. Two siblings fighting for your attention as they show off their newest-learned skill. But for many of us, our children’s actions can bring up our own painful memories of being overshadowed, overlooked, or seemingly forgotten.

Whether you have siblings or not, we’ve all vied for someone else’s attention. Usually, this attention-seeking includes competition.

The fight to be noticed by your boss over other coworkers for a promotion.

The struggle to find a spouse or have children when it appears that everyone else has already started family life.

The pain of comparing your life to other people's and feeling that you come up short.

If we're honest, the pain of such rejection—whether from others or ourselves—can leave a searing mark on our soul. And in the midst of this, we are offered a choice.

In Genesis 4, Cain and Abel bring forth offerings to the Lord. Cain offers the firstfruits of the soil, and Abel offers fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.<sup>1</sup> Two brothers vying for their father's attention. The Scriptures note that the Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering but did not on Cain and his offering. Why? Hebrews 11:4 says, "By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did."

So, in what surely felt like rejection, Cain had a choice to make: He could choose to believe the best or the worst about God. And God seems to be ahead of Cain in clarifying this. He asks Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

There are moments in life when—for whatever reason—we seemingly receive the short end of the stick. This can occur justifiably or unjustifiably. Either way, rejection is a part of life. The question before you and me is this: How will we respond when we feel like we've *lost*?

When she gets the promotion over you?

When your church community doesn't treat singleness as a gift?

## THE FORGIVENESS WAY

When they get pregnant on the first try?

God tells Cain that if he does what is right, he will be accepted. But God doesn't say that Cain will be rewarded, favored, successful, or picked first. Sometimes, we are overlooked—never by our heavenly Father, but certainly by our earthly families, our employers, and our heroes.

As you reflect on the moments throughout your life when you've faced rejection, how have you responded? Cain makes the fateful mistake of responding in anger and bitterness. His contempt for his brother is rooted in pride—Cain is convinced that he deserves the praise Abel is getting.

Often, those decisions aren't up to us. When we do receive the praise, the attention, or the credit, we should graciously and humbly receive it. But when our efforts aren't acknowledged? We should continue to choose what is right, knowing that we are accepted by a heavenly Father who loves and sees what others do not.

Those who idolize the attention of others can end up desperate enough to kill for it—as Cain did. Those who forgive the people who have overlooked them experience a peace and joy that can only be found in the secure identity of a son or daughter who has full trust in their Father.

Give your offering faithfully; trust that if you do what is right, you will be accepted; and let forgiveness—not bitterness—wash over your soul.

## Prayer

---

*Adonai,*

*You know what it is like to be outright rejected.*

*Often I feel that I have done the right thing but have been unjustifiably overlooked.*

*Jesus, would you please bring these instances to the surface of my soul now, and—one by one—would you help to extend forgiveness to anyone I am holding resentment toward?*

*God, I confess that I have also done the right thing with the wrong motive in my heart. I must ask for forgiveness for the ways that I have allowed pride to transform into bitterness when I have not received what I believe I deserve. I know that you give good gifts and bless us beyond what we deserve.*

*Even when I'm not, you are faithful.*

*Even when I don't believe, you hold me securely.*

*Even when I reject you, you love me.*

*Jesus, there is no one who understands rejection more than you.*

*Yet, even as you experienced rejection, you offered forgiveness.*

*So today help me to do the same.*

*Help me to forgive the individuals who seemed to forget me.*

*Help me to notice the ways that sin—and its trap of bitterness and cynicism—is crouching at the door of my heart.*

*Help me instead to pursue reconciliation, secure in my identity in you.*

*Amen.*