

***The Importance Of Forgiveness In Building
Godly Character***



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Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, King James
Version,
Cambridge, 1769.

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Praying for and blessing your enemies is most certainly one of the most challenging things God asks His followers to do. Everything in human nature would rather get even with or hurt the person who has hurt us. But, doing that closes the door to God's blessings, and opens the door to becoming like your enemy. Have you ever noticed that some people judge others for the same thing they themselves do? For example, I recently saw two couples on television discussing their marriages. One wife was ridiculing the other for having an extramarital affair. Ironically, that first wife had her own affair several years before. Hardly seemed appropriate for her to be throwing stones, but she did anyway. And she is far from the only person exhibiting this behavior! People often criticizing others for behavior they themselves do on a regular basis.

There is a way to prevent that ugliness from happening. When we do not forgive our enemies, hold onto bitterness, or even extract revenge, it seems to open a door for us to become like that person we hate. We start doing similar behaviors. You find your enemy critical, and haven't forgiven her for some nasty comments she made to you two years ago? Take an objective look at yourself— are you also critical and judgmental of others? Don't look at yourself through rose-colored glasses, and look at your enemy through a microscope! Be honest with yourself. You might be surprised at what you find. Do not be terribly discouraged though! Once you see that you are guilty of the same behavior, chances are you will be able to forgive your enemy and change your behavior. Understanding why someone behaves a certain way helps us to forgive their bad actions. You may see they were not deliberately trying to hurt you, but merely reacting out of an old wound they had previously experienced. Yes, they may have hurt you, but they were also hurt. And, when we are hurt, either physically or emotionally, we tend not to be as concerned with the feelings of others. Forgiving your enemies isn't some petty suggestion from Jesus. It is pure wisdom that we must follow for our own happiness (ever see a happy, bitter person?) as well as to help us to be the best person we can be to glorify God. Is there anyone you need to forgive? If so, I urge to release your anger and hurt to our heavenly Father! He can heal all wounds. One thing I do when I need to forgive is picturing myself putting the nasty emotions in a

paper bag, and handing them to Jesus. Then, He throws the bag away. It may sound simple, but it is amazing how that simple thing enables me to be rid of my anger!

If Jesus forgave humans of all the sinful, terrible things we have done in our lives, how could we dare to hold a grudge against someone?