

CHIEF

MINISTRIES

May 2025

Rejection is the deepest hurt in life. Whether it's from a parent, spouse, teacher, or friend, rejection cuts to the core. To avoid it, we spend much of life chasing acceptance—trying to please parents, peers, neighbors, and even people we don't like. We buy things we don't need with money we don't have to impress people we don't even know. This drive to be accepted influences our choices: the clothes we wear, the careers we pursue, and the lives we live.

Think back to your childhood. How many times have you done something silly or foolish just to be accepted by the crowd? This desire for approval doesn't fade with age—it only becomes more sophisticated. Yet there's a myth about the relationship between perfection and acceptance: *If I can be perfect, then everyone will accept me.* But this just isn't true.

When it comes to perfection and acceptance, there are three things that absolutely *are* true: One, no one believes you're perfect. Two, you'll never be perfect. Three, even if you were perfect, not everyone would accept you; even Jesus—who was perfect—was despised and rejected.

There is nothing you can do that will make everyone accept you. But we still *want* to be accepted, we want to be loved, and we want people to see our value. And there's good news: You can find that acceptance in God through Jesus. God settled the issue long ago: *"He saved us because of his mercy, and not because of any good things that we have done. God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gave us new birth and a fresh beginning. God sent Jesus Christ our Savior to give us his Spirit. Jesus treated us much better than we deserve. He made us acceptable to God and gave us the hope of eternal life"* (Titus 3:5–7 CEV).

If you've invited Jesus into your life, God sees you as acceptable, no matter what you've done. It's not because of your achievements, but because of His grace. 1 Peter 2:9 reminds us, *"But you are God's chosen and special people"* (CEV). That's a life-changing truth! God *chose you* to live with Him forever. That's where your value comes from—not from others' approval. There are 8 billion people on earth; it's okay if a few people don't like you.

Let this truth free you: God not only loves you, but he likes you, too. If He knows all your flaws and still accepts you, why chase the approval of others? Psalm 27:10 says, *"Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me"* (NIV). So why am I going there this month?

Well, John 3:16 says; *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."* (NIV). Not only does God see you as acceptable and valuable, He also sees you as deeply lovable. The verse doesn't say God loves only beautiful, intelligent, or perfect people. It says God loves the world—all of us. That includes you. Jesus essentially said, "I'd rather die than live without you." That's how much God loves you. Isaiah 54:10 says, *"The mountains and hills may crumble, but My love for you will never end. . . . ' So says the LORD who loves you"* (GNT).

God's love has two key characteristics you must never forget:

- **God's love is consistent.** God isn't moody or fickle. His love doesn't depend on good or bad days. A woman once shared how her mother's moods kept her guessing, one day she'd get a hug from her, the next she'd be ignored or worse. God's love isn't like that. He loves you with unchanging, steady affection every single day.
- **God's love is unconditional.** God's love doesn't say, "I love you if . . ." or "I love you because . . ." Instead, God's love says, "I love you. Period." His love isn't based on your performance; it's based on His

character. God's love says, "You're mine. I made you. I saved you. I redeemed you. I want you with me forever." God's love is absolute and doesn't change. You'll never need to earn it.

Doubting God's love leads to trouble. In fact, every time you sin, it's because you doubt His love and think you know better than He does. You can build your life on these two truths: God loves you consistently, and He loves you unconditionally. He will never stop loving you, no matter what. That's a foundation you can trust forever.

You will, inevitably, be hurt in this life. And many of those hurts will be intentional—the direct result of what people say about you or do to you. In fact, any time you read the word "forgiveness," you might call to mind certain heartaches, hurts, and problems from your past. The memories still feel fresh because you've been hurt deeply. When you're hurt, it's often hard to consider forgiving the perpetrators. But the Bible gives one very important reason you need to forgive: You forgive others because God forgave you.

The Bible says in Ephesians 4:32, "*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you*" (NIV). Thinking about how much God has forgiven you will help you be more forgiving of those who have hurt you. The opposite is also true. If you don't believe and accept in faith that you've been forgiven by God, you'll likely have a hard time forgiving others. If you struggle to forgive other people, consider whether you truly believe God has forgiven you. You can talk to Him about any doubts you have.

Look at it this way: God has completely wiped your slate clean of sin because of what Jesus did on the cross. Everything you deserve to be punished for has been cleared away because God has forgiven you. When you accept this truth, it becomes increasingly difficult to hold a grudge against someone else. Remembering God's forgiveness toward you can make it easier to let go and forgive others, as He *has* forgiven. So, let's look at what it means to be forgiven.....

Forgiven. It's a word that's easy to overlook. If you've been in church or around Christians for very long, you may have heard it so many times that you don't even stop to think about it. But today I want you to take a few minutes to think about what it really means to be forgiven—and to be "forgivable." Ephesians 1:4 says, "*Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes*" (NLT). Before God created you, he knew every mistake you'd make and sin you'd commit—even your worst moments. But He still chose to make you, to love you, and to forgive you—to make you "*without fault in His eyes.*" That's the good news of grace: If you receive Christ, your sins are erased. Yet most of us struggle to believe it. Why? Because we often think God is mad at us. When something goes wrong in our lives, we ask, "Why me, God?" And we imagine God responding, "Because you made Me angry!" But that's not how God operates. Isaiah 43:25 says, "*I am the God who forgives your sins, and I do this because of who I am. I will not hold your sins against you*" (GNT). Unlike us, God doesn't hold grudges. Romans 8:1 confirms, "*There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*" (NIV). God doesn't replay your sins. He erases them.

If you've committed your life to Christ, here's what has changed for you: the moment you accepted Jesus, everything shifted. You become a part of God's family, and your sins are gone. This is why Jesus came, to save you from judgment and to secure your place in God's family. You're not waiting for forgiveness; it's already yours. But what about those that I am hurt by, you ask? Well, God commands us to forgive as we have been forgiven....so when we choose NOT to obey, yes, it is a choice! Unforgiveness leads to resentment, leading to bitterness.

When you hang on to resentment (bitterness), it will always hurt you more than anyone else. Resentment is self-destructive and counterproductive. Resentment just makes no sense. If anyone ever had a reason to be resentful, it was Job. He was a godly man who had everything he could ever want—wealth, fame, and a great family. One day, he lost it all. Enemy nations killed his livestock. All of his children died in a horrific storm. He got a terrible disease. He literally lost everything he had, except for his wife, but then in his darkest moment, she said to him, "*Why don't you curse God and die?*" (Job 2:9 GNT). Then a group of his friends came along and said, "Job, it's all your fault." But right in the middle of a lot of bad advice-giving, one of his friends shared a word of wisdom. He insisted that growing resentful was a bad idea. He said to Job, "*To worry yourself to death with resentment would be a foolish, senseless thing to do*" (Job 5:2 GNT). Job's friend was wise. He knew—even in the midst of such great heartache—resentment wouldn't help. In fact, it would just make things worse.

If you think back through experiences in your own life, you'll probably agree. Have you ever done things you regret when you were caught up in resentment, and maybe even progressed to the point of bitterness? Maybe you said something like, "I'm going to get him back!" Then you did something foolish to get even. When you give in to resentment, you end up acting in self-destructive ways. You hurt yourself much more than those you're holding grudges against. Resentment makes you miserable. And it never ends with you getting what you want. So why hold on to your resentment for one more minute? Let go of resentment today. Choose to forgive and enjoy living in the freedom that forgiveness brings. Here is a story I came across that prompted this month's newsletter. Hope it brings it all together for you, or at least gives you some points to ponder.

In January 1956, five American missionaries headed to Ecuador's rainforest. They were visiting the Huaorani tribe, which anthropologists said was the most vicious, violent society on earth. As soon as the missionaries exited their plane, they were speared to death. The brutal murders of these men, who included Nate Saint and Jim Elliot, made news around the world. A couple years later, Elisabeth and Valerie Elliot (wife and daughter of Jim Elliot), and Rachel Saint (sister of Nate Saint), moved into the Huaorani village to minister and show love and forgiveness. Eventually, the tribe's leader and other men who participated in the missionary murders became Christians. The forgiveness Elisabeth Elliot, Valerie Elliot, and Rachel Saint modeled only makes sense when you have been forgiven by God. So, once you've experienced God's forgiveness, how do you forgive? You do the four things these women did:

- **Relinquish your right to get even.** This is the heart of forgiveness. Romans 12:19 says, "*Don't try to get even. Let God take revenge*" (CEV). Even if you think you deserve to retaliate, don't. Trust God to take care of any repayment. This can be a hard one, but obedience is better than sacrifice, true devotion to God is reflected in a humble heart, willingness to surrender one's own will, and trust in God's guidance, rather than just performing rituals or making sacrifices.
- **Respond to evil with good.** How can you tell when you've completely forgiven someone? When you can pray for God to bless the person who hurt you. The Bible says, "*Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you*" (Luke 6:27-28 NIV).
- **Repeat these steps as long as necessary.** Peter asked Jesus in Matthew 18:21, "*How many times should I forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough?*" (CEV). Jesus replied, "*Not just 7 times, but 77 times!*" (Matthew 18:22 CEV). Sometimes forgiveness has to be continual.
- **Rescue others with the Good News of God's forgiveness.** Once you forgive the people who've hurt you, you're free to share the Good News of God's forgiveness with them and with others. The apostle Paul invited people to accept God's forgiveness this way: "*God was in Christ, offering peace and forgiveness to the people of this world. . . . We speak for Christ and sincerely ask you to make peace with God*" (2 Corinthians 5:19-20 CEV).

If you've been holding on to pain caused by someone else, don't sit another day in your resentment. Ask God to help you work through your hurt and forgive those who've hurt you. Then you can move on to the life you were created to live!

- Have you been in a situation where you've had to forgive someone "*not just 7 times, but 77 times*" Matthew 18 says? What gave you the strength to do that?
- Who in your life needs to hear God's message of forgiveness, peace, and salvation?

Praying for all of you and believing God to reveal those you need to forgive as you walk this journey in obedience and freedom.

Blessings and peace be with you always,

Ms. Chief (aka Ms.G)

If you want to know more about CHIEF Ministries or would like to be a part, please go to www.chiefministries.com

Christ's Heart In Every Felon



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