



BLIND ————— you owe me an eye

Begin each day this week by praying **THE LORD'S PRAYER**:
"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us
not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (Matthew 6: 9-13)

day ONE

You'd been looking forward to getting a new _____ (fill in the blank) for a long time and you just got it! Your friend asked to see it. But then he/she dropped it (or wrecked it) and now your new _____ is broken. Imagine the emotions racing through your mind and body. **What are your options at this point?** You have the right to demand that he/she replace the item, but you can also refuse that and take on the cost yourself. By bearing the cost for them, you're forgiving them the debt they incurred. Most often when we've been wronged it's difficult, if not impossible, to put a price tag on it. We may have been robbed of happiness, our reputation, personal freedom or opportunities. The person who's hurt, or seriously wronged us has incurred a debt which must be dealt with. **What does Jesus say we're to do with that debt?**

READ Matthew 5:38-42.

How does turning the cheek or offering to go another mile illustrate forgiveness?

If somebody has wronged you, you have the right to demand a debt from them. Forgiveness is choosing to take away a debt that you have the right to demand. It is a choice... as well as an act of pure mercy and grace when we forgive those who have wronged us while taking their debts as our own. Forgiveness doesn't pay the debt on your behalf only to extract payment in some other way. (i.e. "I forgave you and now you owe me.") Forgiveness means the debt has been paid and nothing more is owed to anyone. **THINK** about that definition of forgiveness. **When you forgive, do you consider the debt cancelled or do you hold on to the sense that they still owe you something? Do you mainly offer forgiveness to use it in the future as a bargaining tool?**

PRAY about forgiveness in your life. **PRAY** God will open our eyes to the truth of our beliefs and behaviors surrounding forgiveness.

day TWO

READ Hebrews 12:14-15.

Have you ever held onto something so long that your hands began to cramp and ache from the burden and weight? We become consumed with the thing we're holding and can think of nothing else but the pain it gives. When we refuse to forgive someone who has wronged us, our hearts are burdened by the unforgiveness. Our refusal to forgive translates into contempt for the persons we've chosen **NOT** to forgive. The contempt in our hearts justifies our decisions one by one until we hold forgiveness in contempt. Physically, mentally, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually we become dark, bitter, hardened people. **Has there been a time in which unforgiveness affected you in any of these ways? If so, take time to journal about it. Are you still holding on to some kind of unforgiveness? PRAY** for awareness today. **ASK** God to search your heart and bring to light any unforgiveness you're holding in your heart. **PRAY** that God would protect you from holding forgiveness in contempt. If you know you're holding forgiveness in contempt, **PRAY** He would begin to change your heart toward forgiveness.

"Evil has been done to you – yes. But when you try to get payment through revenge (and refuse to forgive) the evil does not disappear. Instead it spreads, and it spreads most tragically of all into you and your own character." Timothy Keller

day THREE

READ Micah 7:18-19.

Who has wronged you? I'm sure a few names at least come into mind quickly.

THINK back to specific events in your life where you were hurt or wronged by someone -- maybe a close friend, family member, or complete stranger.

What emotions are you feeling as you recall these memories? Anger? Hurt? Sadness? What about mercy? Grace? Forgiveness?

Whom have you not forgiven? Whom do you feel owes you a debt for the pain he/she caused? How has this unforgiveness impacted your life?

How is your relationship with that person?

TAKE some time today to reflect on the unforgiveness in your heart. **MAKE** a list of the names of those you have not yet forgiven and **PRAY** that God would begin to open your heart to forgive them.

day FOUR

Jesus calls us to forgive those who have wronged us, even if they wrong us over and over. We must choose to have a heart for forgiveness.

READ Matthew 18:21-22.

Forgiveness is meant to become a pattern for living. Continue reading verses 23-35.

What's your first instinct whenever someone hurts you? Though the servant was unable to pay his debt, the master cancelled the debt and freed him. **Why? Why did the master say the first servant should have shown mercy to his fellow servant?**

THINK about a time you wronged someone. **Did he/she forgive you? If so, describe what being forgiven felt like. Did you think you deserved to be forgiven? Were you grateful for his/her forgiveness? If he/she didn't forgive you, how did that make you feel? Has this caused you to be unforgiving toward her/him or others? IMAGINE** you've wronged somebody so badly that the only way to pay the debt was death.

Now imagine instead of demanding that debt from you, he/she chose to forgive you and take on the debt you owed. In an act of grace and mercy, he/she took your place and died for your wrongdoing. Jesus took on everyone's wrongdoings/sins and took on the debt we owed -- *the ultimate act of forgiveness*. He died so that we might live. He calls us to do the same for those who have wronged us.

READ Ephesians 4:31-32.

PRAY: Father, as You've forgiven me, I'm to forgive others. Only through receiving Your forgiveness and mercy am I able to do that. Help me to forgive.

day FIVE

READ Psalm 32.

TAKE some time to **REFLECT** and **PRAY**. **REVIEW** the list of people in your life whom you've not forgiven. **PRAY** for them and that your heart would be open to forgiveness. **ASK** God to give you the strength and courage to forgive your past debtors, and those who will wrong you in the future. **THANK** God for the example of forgiveness he has shown us.

PRAY the Lord's Prayer -- in a new light, the light of forgiveness.