

Forgiveness is a lifestyle

God forgives us whether or not we change- his forgiveness keeps on coming, but we stay outside of healthy relationship with Him as long as we choose sin over relationship.

Likewise we should be quick to forgive no matter how many times we are sinned against, but if someone else continues to sin against us our relationship will be damaged.

- Forgiveness does not mean that what they did to you was right
- Forgiveness does not mean that they “get off free”
- Forgiveness does not mean you give up all your rights

Unforgiveness:

- Does not hurt the one who harmed you
- It hurts only you and binds you in a prison and holds you prisoner
- Opens **doors** of access to the enemy, and causes you to have bitterness, hatred and anger
- Blocks the fullness of God in your life

Extending forgiveness does the following things:

You get to step out of the way and let God have a direct line to with you

- It means you are relieved of the burden you have been carrying
- It frees you from a prison of torment, Isaiah 61
- It closes a **door** which allows the enemy to have access to you

It allows you to say:

“I choose to give grace” “I choose to let this person go into God’s hands”

“I am not going to be their judge” Mercy triumphants over judgement James 2:13

Captives vs. Prisoners

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me. To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted. To proclaim **liberty to captives** and **freedom to prisoners**. If we don’t forgive we are holding ourselves in a prisoner. Isaiah 61

	Captive	Prisoner
<i>Appearance</i>	Held against their will	Held against their will
Prison	Enemy’s	Ours
<i>Reason</i>	‘Slimed’	Unforgiveness
<i>Effects</i>	Temporary	Permanent & progressive
	Usually emotions/ affect	May be physical, spiritual or affect

Old Testament relationship through law sin demands payment.

New Testament (new covenant) relationship with God head based on love, mercy and grace, sin paid in full by Jesus, debt removed.

What we have found is that a “captive” is simply someone who has been “slimed” and a “prisoner” is someone who is locked into unforgiveness. “Captives” are people who have been affected negatively by the spiritual atmosphere around them in the environment they have encountered.

“For our struggles is not against flesh and blood, but against rules, against powers, against world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12”

People who have been taken captive (or slamed) get free by just a simple prayer of "brushing off." It happens all the time. But when you start to feel that you are not free with these simple prayers, you need to start looking into what is affecting you. It may be possible you have moved from being a captive to being a prisoner. Matthew 18 a parable explains how we become prisoners. Because the servant is unwilling to forgive.

Scriptures:

Matthew 18:21---35 this is the story of the servant, who would not forgive. After he was forgiven much, the master tells him; *"shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant Just as I had on you?" In anger his master turned him over to the jailers (tormentors) to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."* (v.33---35)

Matthew 6:14---15 *"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

Luke 6:37 *"Do not judge and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."*

Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the prison door behind which we have been jailed.