



J U L Y 2 0 2 5

CARMEL MONTHLY

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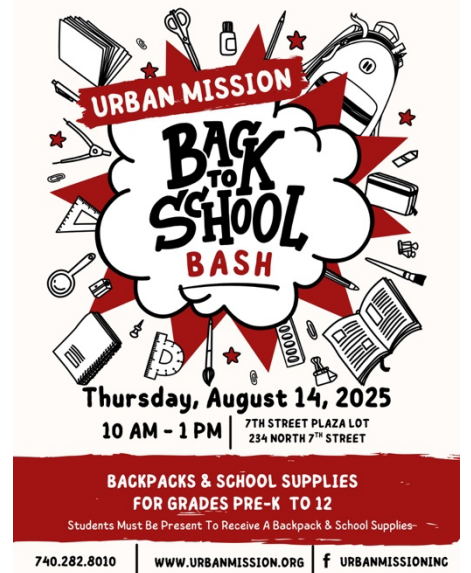
What Forgiveness Is and Is Not

There are many definitions of forgiveness, but a simple one is to surrender the right to hurt others in response to the way they've hurt us. Forgiveness means refusing to retaliate or hold bitterness against people for the ways they have wounded us. It is a unilateral act, not conditional on the person being repentant or even willing to acknowledge what they have done.

Forgiveness is not saying that sin does not matter. It is not approving of what the other person has done, minimizing the offense, or denying we've been wronged. Forgiveness is acknowledging that the other person has sinned against us and may never be able to make it right. The apostle Paul writes, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). If God in Christ forgave us, then forgiving someone cannot mean diminishing the wrong they've done. God could never do that with sin and remain just. Forgiveness does not always mean reconciliation or restoration. And it does not require restoring trust or inviting the people who hurt us back into a relationship.

Forgiveness is unconditional, but meaningful reconciliation and restoration are conditional (in the gospel and in human relationships) on the offender's genuine repentance, humble willingness to accept the consequences of his actions, and a desire by both parties to work on the relationship. Forgiving people also does not mean they will not experience consequences for their sin. When we forgive them, however, we leave those consequences to God, who says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay" (Romans 12:19). This does not mean we may not pursue legal action, if warranted, against someone who has hurt us.

In certain circumstances, that may be vital for the rehabilitation of the offender or for protecting other potential victims. Forgiveness is costly. In the Bible, it involves shedding blood (Hebrews 9:22). Sacrifice. Death. Honestly, the first step of forgiveness still often feels like death. I want to cling to my right to be angry and often resent being asked to give that up. It all seems so unfair. My flesh still demands some type of retribution. My resistance shows me I need God's help to understand forgiveness and to truly forgive.



July National Holidays

- 1 – Canada Day
- 1 – National Postal Worker Day
- 2 – World UFO Day
- 3 – Stay Out of the Sun Day
- 4 – Independence Day
- 5 – National Bikini Day
- 6 – International Kissing Day
- 7 – Global Forgiveness Day
- 10 – National Kitten Day
- 11 – All American Pet Photo Day
- 13 – Embrace Your Geekness Day
- 14 – Bastille Day
- 15 – Give Something Away Day
- 16 – Guinea Pig Appreciation Day
- 17 – World Emoji Day
- 18 – Nelson Mandela Int. Day
- 20 – Moon Day (Apollo 11 Landing)
- 21 – National Junk Food Day
- 22 – Hammock Day
- 24 – National Cousins Day
- 25 – National Hire a Veteran Day
- 26 – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Anniversary
- 27 – National Love is Kind Day
- 29 – National Lasagna Day
- 30 – International Day of Friendship
- 31 – National Avocado Day



