

# A Mandate to Forgive (Forgiveness)

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## **Prayer**

*May the strength of God pilot us, may the wisdom of God instruct us, may the hand of God protect us, may the word of God direct us. In Jesus Christ's name we pray. Amen.*

## **Scripture**

Colossians 3:13

## **Context**

One of my favorite foods to enjoy with family and friends is pizza. However, I find that in some instances it is difficult to satisfy everyone in the group. Each person has toppings that they like and some that they are not so fond of. Most of the times we are able to reach a consensus but there are some occasions when there is an individual who just will not budge. In many ways working in the church or in a family can be like ordering a pizza. We have to make allowances for others in order to preserve unity and enjoy the benefits of the group. Sometimes we may get just what we want and at other times we may have to endure anchovies and pineapples.

## **Exegesis**

Paul reminds the Colossians that as believers they were recipients of God's Grace. Because of the sacrifice of Christ and for his sake God completely and totally forgave them of their sins. Central to Paul's argument for forgiveness is the recognition of two things. First: we are all imperfect. The scripture teaches us that "everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard" (Romans 3:23 NLT). Secondly: a tremendous debt was paid for us by Christ on the cross that we are unable to repay.

## **Conversation**

This knowledge should humble the believer in such a way that it enables them to have compassion and tolerance for others' shortcomings. It is important to note that forgiveness is throughout the scripture and is a mandate not a request.

## **Questions**

1. How do we prepare our hearts so that we can forgive others?
2. In what ways does forgiveness promote unity in the body of Christ?
3. When we forgive others how does it impact our relationship with Christ?