

## Daily Reflection on Scripture Week of January 15 New Year's Message



Two weeks ago we began the New Year with passages of scripture on forgiveness. Of all the things we need to learn in life, there is probably nothing more important than learning how to practice forgiveness.

Every one of our personal stories tells of some hurt in our lives. To be hurt is unavoidable. But instead of wallowing in the hurt and allowing the hurt to control how we see others and ourselves we are called to follow Jesus as people of forgiveness.

The Bible story this week is about a circle of self-declared “righteous” people picking up stones to throw at a woman who was in the middle because she was being judged for making a serious mistake with her life – she had committed adultery. Many times we are the ones in that circle with stones in our hands. And yet Jesus enters the story and says to throw the stones at another only if you have not made serious mistakes in your own life. If you have no sin, then go ahead and throw stones at those you think are sinners.

The point of the story is clear. Instead of belonging in the circle with stones in our hands, sometimes we are the woman in the middle, guilty of more “unrighteous” behavior than “righteous”. When we see ourselves there, and hear the words “You are forgiven”, then we are less apt to pick up stones to throw at another. We understand what it is like to be forgiven and that can make us more forgiving people.

This week we go back to the same scriptures we read two weeks ago. However, the reflections and the sacred pauses are different. They are quotes from a variety of people from a mixture of backgrounds showing that the need to both give and receive forgiveness is not bound to any one belief system. It is an all-important thread that runs through all our stories. As Christians Jesus is our guide as he daily embodied forgiveness.

As you read the reflections try to focus on your own story of forgiveness. Remember those times when you have been forgiven by another and how those times might positively impact your story from now on.

If you would like to receive the Sacred Pause on your phone, text ‘crossroads’ to 41411.

### **Sunday, January 15, 2017**

*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.*

**Reflection:** *“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.”* Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Sacred Pause:** *“It's one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, to forgive. Forgive everybody.”* Maya Angelou

### **Monday, January 16, 2017**

*Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

**Reflection:** *“Never does the human soul appear so strong as when it foregoes revenge and dares to*

*forgive an injury.*" Edwin Hubbel Chapin

**Sacred Pause:** *"I can have peace of mind only when I forgive rather than judge."* Gerald Jampolsky

### **Tuesday, January 17, 2017**

*Colossians 3:13 Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.*

**Reflection:** *"Instead of hating, I have chosen to forgive and spend all of my positive energy on changing the world."* Camryn Manheim

**Sacred Pause:** *"If you haven't forgiven yourself something, how can you forgive others?"* Dolores Huerta

### **Wednesday, January 18, 2017**

*Luke 23:34 Even if a person wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns and asks for forgiveness, you must forgive."*

**Reflection:** *"Forgiveness is not always easy. At times, it feels more painful than the wound we suffered, to forgive the one that inflicted it. And yet, there is no peace without forgiveness."* Marianne Williamson

**Sacred Pause:** *"Carrying a grudge is a heavy burden. As you forgive, you will feel the joy of being forgiven."* Henry B. Eyring

### **Thursday, January 19, 2017**

*Luke 24:47 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."*

**Reflection:** *"One of the most lasting pleasures you can experience is the feeling that comes over you when you genuinely forgive an enemy - whether he knows it or not."* Orlando Aloysius Battista

**Sacred Pause:** *"Nothing enables us to forgive like knowing in our hearts that we have been forgiven."* Lewis B. Smedes

### **Friday, January 20, 2017**

*Matthew 6:12 Forgive us for the ways we have wronged you, just as we also forgive those who have wronged us.*

**Reflection:** *"When you hold resentment toward another, you are bound to that person or condition by an emotional link that is stronger than steel. Forgiveness is the only way to dissolve that link and get free."* - Katherine Ponder

**Sacred Pause:** *"It's not an easy journey, to get to a place where you forgive people. But it is such a powerful place, because it frees you."* Tyler Perry

### **Saturday, January 21, 2017**

*John 8:7b "Whoever hasn't sinned should throw the first stone."*

**Reflection:** *"Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will bear many fruits, here in this world and the life to come."* Henri Nouwen

**Sacred Pause:** *"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."* - Louis B. Smedes