

TOPIC: FORGIVENESS

REFLECTIONS OF GOD'S GRACE BIBLE STUDY

I Need a Retry

My brother's children have always called me Aunt Mim (that's a story for another day). About ten years ago, I had taken a trip to South Carolina to visit them for a few days. My youngest nephew, Zane, who was around five years old, was just learning to shoot pool. He was so small that most of the time, he would put a stool next to the pool table so he could reach to shoot. But other times, he would stretch and just do the best he could. This particular weekend, he and I shot a lot of pool. He was so cute. If he made a bad shot, or miscued, or whatever, he would look at me with the sweetest, most innocent face, and say, "I messed up, Aunt Mim ... I need a retry." And, of course, I would give it to him. After he said that same thing to me five or six times in a row, I would look at him and say, "Boy, that's enough retries; it's my turn."

We are that way with God. We give in to a temptation, or we say or do something in anger, or we disobey His leading and direction, or any number of other things, including knowing to do good and not doing it (James 4:17), and when the Holy Spirit nudges our hearts, we look to the Lord and say, "I messed up; I need a retry." God is faithful, and He just looks at His Son's nail-scarred hands. Jesus says, "It's okay, Father; forgive them," and He grants us a retry. But unlike me, who after five or six times said, "No more retries," the Lord just keeps forgiving us and allowing us another chance to do things right. I'm so thankful make another wrong decision, He will give me one more. At the same time, He also expects me to give others "retries" too. When someone does me wrong, hurts my feelings, or talks bad about me, He expects me to forgive them just as I have been forgiven. He goes so far to say that if I don't forgive others, He will no longer forgive me. When someone asks us for a retry (or even harder when they need to ask and they don't), let us be quick to forgive and give them a retry, for it's in those moments that we will have joy unspeakable, peace overflowing, and blessings without measure!

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness though we have rebelled against Him. (Daniel 9:9)

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

For thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. (Psalm 86:5)

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven." (Matthew 18:21-22)

And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32)

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors ... For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:12, 14-15)

DEVOTIONAL STUDY FORM

Date:

Scripture Passage:

Step 1: **Prayer for Insight**

(Check When Done)

Step 2: **Meditation**

Six ways to meditate on a verse:

1. **PICTURE IT!** Visualize the scene in your mind.
2. **PRONOUNCE IT!** Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. **PARAPHRASE IT!** Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. **PERSONALIZE IT!** Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.
5. **PRAY IT!** Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
6. **PROBE IT!** Ask the following nine questions:

Step 3: **Application**

Is there a...

SIN TO CONFESS?

PROMISE TO KEEP?

ATTITUDE TO CHANGE?

COMMAND TO KEEP?

EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?

PRAYER TO PRAY?

ERROR TO AVOID?

TRUTH TO BELIEVE?

SOMETHING TO THANK GOD FOR?

Step Four: **Memorization** (What verse will I memorize?)

Verse: