

# *Forgiveness*

A 10-DAY FAMILY STUDY

BY: VIVIAN BRICKER



Growing up, my family wasn't very good at forgiveness. Rather than extending forgiveness, my family would hold resentment and grudges against one another. In this way, nobody ever truly understood or accepted forgiveness. Saying you were sorry to someone in my family wasn't positive; you would be met with a comeback of: "If you were sorry, you wouldn't have done it."

As one could imagine this is not a healthy family dynamic. Bad things happen and we have to be willing to forgive others. Holding onto unforgiveness does not make us a "superior" person as my family liked to teach. In truth, holding onto unforgiveness will only cause our life to suffer. Rather than holding onto resentment, we need to forgive others.

*Through this 10-day Bible study, we will learn how to forgive as a family. Parents and children can benefit from this Bible study and be brought closer together. It might even help you let go of unforgiveness in your own heart toward your children or spouse. Allow God to guide you through this Bible study and bring any worries or concerns to Him each day in prayer.*





**Day 1:**

## **Forgive as the Lord Has Forgiven You**

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

As Christians, we need to forgive each other just as God has forgiven us in Christ Jesus. This means we cannot keep holding grudges against those who have hurt us. What they did is painful and hurtful, but we do not need to hold anger and resentment against them. Instead of viewing forgiveness as a “cure all,” we need to see it for what it actually is.

Forgiving others means that we are choosing to give the situation over to Jesus. It does not mean that what they did is okay nor does it mean that what they did is forgotten. Rather, it means you are choosing to release these painful feelings to the Lord. Try to remember this truth when you are having trouble forgiving others. Choose to be kind and compassionate to others, and forgive them because of the goodness of the Lord.

# *Challenge Questions:*

- Are you holding unforgiveness toward anyone today? If so, are you ready to give these feelings over to God?
- The Father has forgiven our sins by the work of Jesus. How does this make you view forgiveness in a different light?
- Forgiveness does not mean what they did is okay or forgotten. Does knowing this help you to forgive more freely? Why or why not?



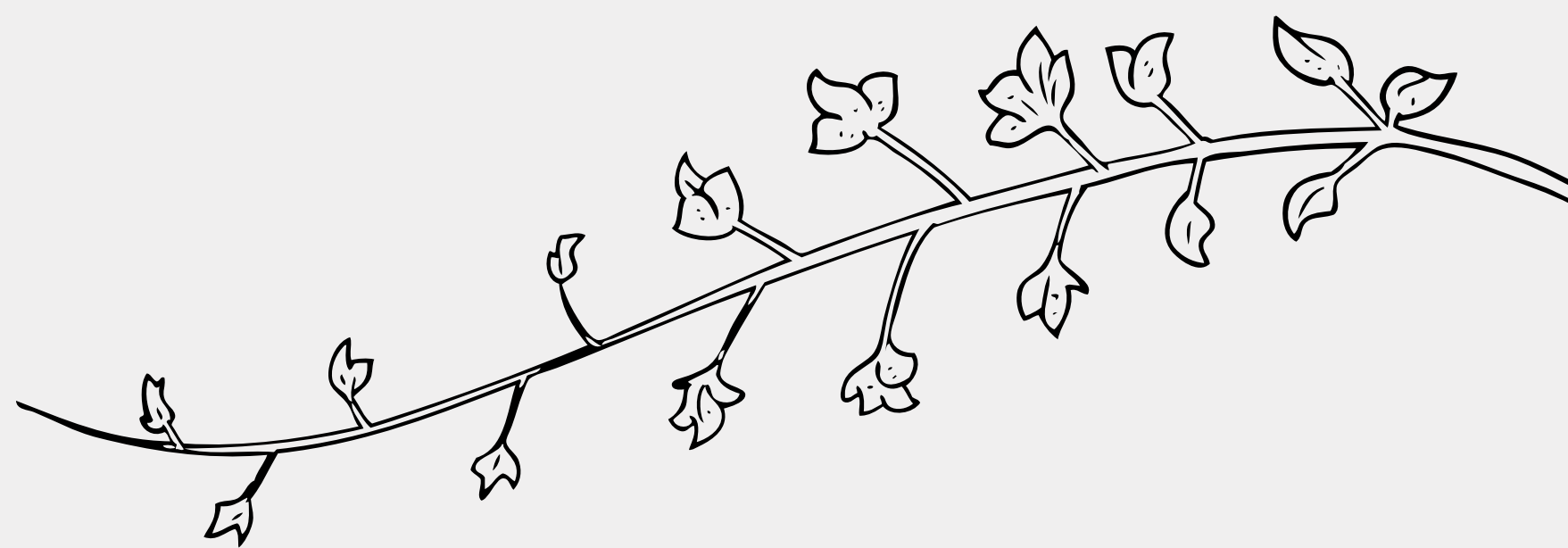
## Day 2:

### If We Do Not Forgive Others, the Father Will Not Forgive Us

*“But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:15)*

As a family, we need to learn that if we do not forgive others, the Father will not forgive us our sins. While our sins have been forgiven by the blood of the Lord, we are told in Matthew 6:15 that we still need to forgive others. As individuals who have placed faith in Jesus, we have already seen the terrible things He has forgiven us for. With this heart of empathy, we must also forgive those who have wronged us.

Since God has forgiven us of so much, we don't need to hold unforgiveness against others. If we do not let go of unforgiveness, it will impair our relationship with the Father. Instead of having a strong relationship with Him, we will see it beginning to crumble and suffer. We can prevent this from happening by forgiving others and releasing this pain to Him.



# *Challenge Questions:*

- Extending forgiveness is hard. What do you think you can do to help it become less difficult?
- Knowing Jesus died in order for us to receive forgiveness changes us. How does this help you to forgive others?
- Have you seen how unforgiveness has damaged your walk with God? How can you change this?





## Day 3:

### How Many Times Should I Forgive Others?

*“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times’” (Matthew 18:21-22)*

As we progress in our Bible study, we need to acknowledge the importance of how often the Lord wants us to forgive those who have wronged us. Through Matthew 18:21-22, we see Peter ask the Lord how many times he should forgive others and the Lord tells Peter that once, twice, or seven times is not enough. Jesus tells Peter that he needs to forgive his brother or sister seventy-seven times. When the Lord says seventy-seven times, he is referring to an unlimited amount of times. In other words, Jesus tells Peter that he needs to always forgive others. The same rings true for us—we are called to forgive others. While this can be challenging, the Lord will help us. The more we cultivate our walk with Him and our relationship with Him, the easier it will become to forgive others. We will be able to hand these feelings over to the Lord and trust Him with the outcome.

# *Challenge Questions:*

- How many times have you forgiven someone? Did it go up to seventy-seven times?
- How do you think Peter felt after Jesus' answer? Do you think he felt differently than how you are feeling now? Why or why not?
- How can you practice the Lord's teaching in Matthew 18:21-22 today?





# Day 4:

## Bear with One Another & Forgive

*“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you”  
(Colossians 3:13)*

As the Apostle Paul tells us in Colossians 3:13, we are to bear one another and forgive each other. We are called to forgive as the Lord has forgiven us. This is a weighty lesson to place on our shoulders, yet it is what we are called to do. If we hold unforgiveness toward someone, we need to give the matter over to the Lord. Just as the Lord forgave us, we need to forgive the person who has hurt us.

We will not have the “upper hand” if we continue to hold onto unforgiveness. Holding onto unforgiveness will only make our Christian walk and our life suffer. There is true beauty in forgiving others and teaching our children to do the same. Training our children when they are younger on what forgiveness is and how to actually forgive others will help them in their adult years. It will help them become more mature and grow in their Christian walk.



# *Challenge Questions:*

- Who can you bear with and forgive today? Is it a family member or someone else?
- Forgiving, as the Lord has forgiven us, is hard. What are some steps you can take to help prepare you to forgive anyone you hold a grievance against?
- Choosing to forgive shows great maturity. Does knowing this change the way you feel about forgiving others? Why or why not?



# Day 5:

## We Need to Turn to God For Forgiveness

*“Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.’ And you forgave the guilt of my sin” (Psalm 32:5)*

We cannot study forgiveness apart from taking a look at God’s forgiveness. As fallen sinners, we need to turn to Him for forgiveness. We cannot receive forgiveness apart from placing faith in Jesus and asking Him to forgive us of our sins. As Psalm 32:5 states, David confessed his transgressions to the Lord and he already knew the Lord would forgive him.

God also will forgive our sins when we turn to Him. Even though we have been given forgiveness by the Lord, we must also still ask Him for forgiveness. Whenever we sin, we need to ask for forgiveness, repent, and trust God with the consequences. While our sins will be forgiven, we cannot run from the consequences of our own actions.

Through the consequences, we can see the Lord’s mercy as well as the pain of sin.



# *Challenge Questions:*

- Have you ever asked God for forgiveness? If you haven't, do you think you will today?
- Confessing our sins can be hard. Does it help to know that you can bring your sins to God in prayer and directly ask Him to forgive you of your sins?
- Finding forgiveness in the Lord is a beautiful blessing. How can you give thanks as a family for this forgiveness from God?



# Day 6:

## God Extends Forgiveness to Us

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9)*

In addition to seeing the need to confess our sins to God, we also need to take great comfort in knowing He extends forgiveness to us. As the Apostle John tells us in 1 John 1:9, God is faithful, He will forgive us of our sins, and purify us. All we have to do is to confess our sins to Him. We can do this by going to Him in prayer, being honest about our sins, and accepting His forgiveness.

It is wonderful to know that God will forgive us of any sin. He will also purify us from all unrighteousness. As we focus on these truths, we need to allow it to cause us to lean more into God. By continuing to lean on God, we will see how important it is to forgive others just as He has forgiven us.





## *Challenge Questions:*

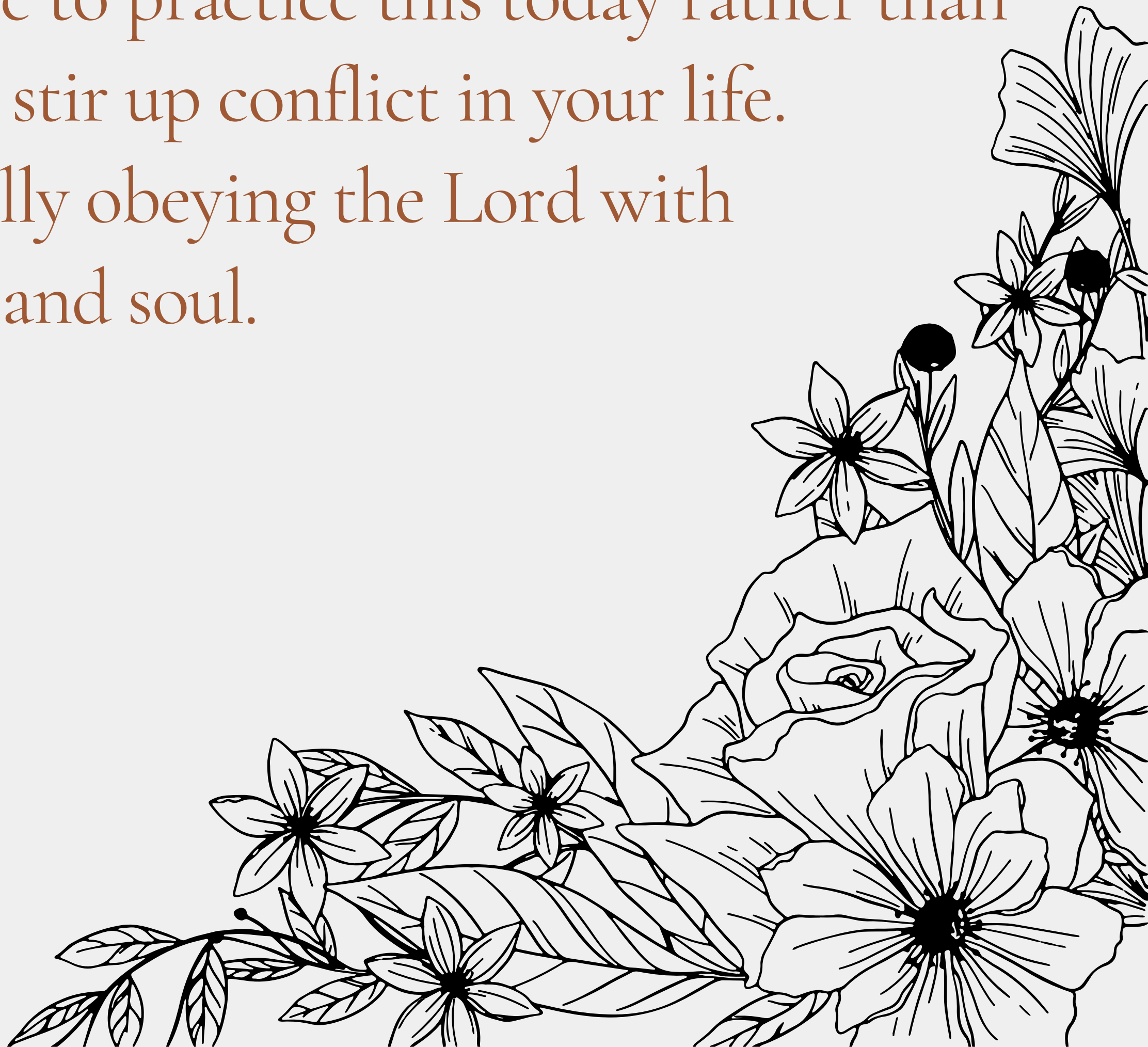
- Which sins will you confess today? How do you feel after you confess these sins to God?
- God forgives us of all sins. Have you ever felt that what you have done is “too severe” for God to forgive?
- God will purify us as we ask Him for forgiveness. Have you already seen this being accomplished in your life?

# Day 7:

## Love Covers All Offenses

*“Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs”  
(Proverbs 10:12)*

Forgiveness is done out of a heart for God. As a family, we need to reflect on who we are holding unforgiveness against. Instead of allowing hate to grow in our hearts, we need to allow love to cover all wrongs. This will help us as a family unit as well as individuals. Choose to practice this today rather than allowing hatred to stir up conflict in your life. Loving others is fully obeying the Lord with our hearts, minds, and soul.



# *Challenge Questions:*

- What does your family normally choose: hatred or love? How can you change this to be love?
- Love covers all wrongs. Have you seen this displayed in your own life?
- What are a few ways you can practice extending love instead of hate today?





# Day 8:

## To God Belongs Mercy & Forgiveness

*“The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him” (Daniel 9:9)*

As followers of the Lord, we need to follow His example. Daniel 9:9 tells us that God is merciful and forgiving despite the rebellion that has roared against Him. Since this is true, we need to be merciful and forgiving, too. Even if people are mean and hurtful, we need to follow the Lord’s teaching. We need to extend mercy and forgiveness to all people, even those unworthy of our forgiveness.



# *Challenge Questions:*

- How can you be merciful and forgiving today?
- Being merciful and forgiving can feel as though it is against our nature. How can you find hope in God to help you to be merciful and forgiving toward others?
- Not everyone will be apologetic when they hurt us. How can you forgive them anyway?

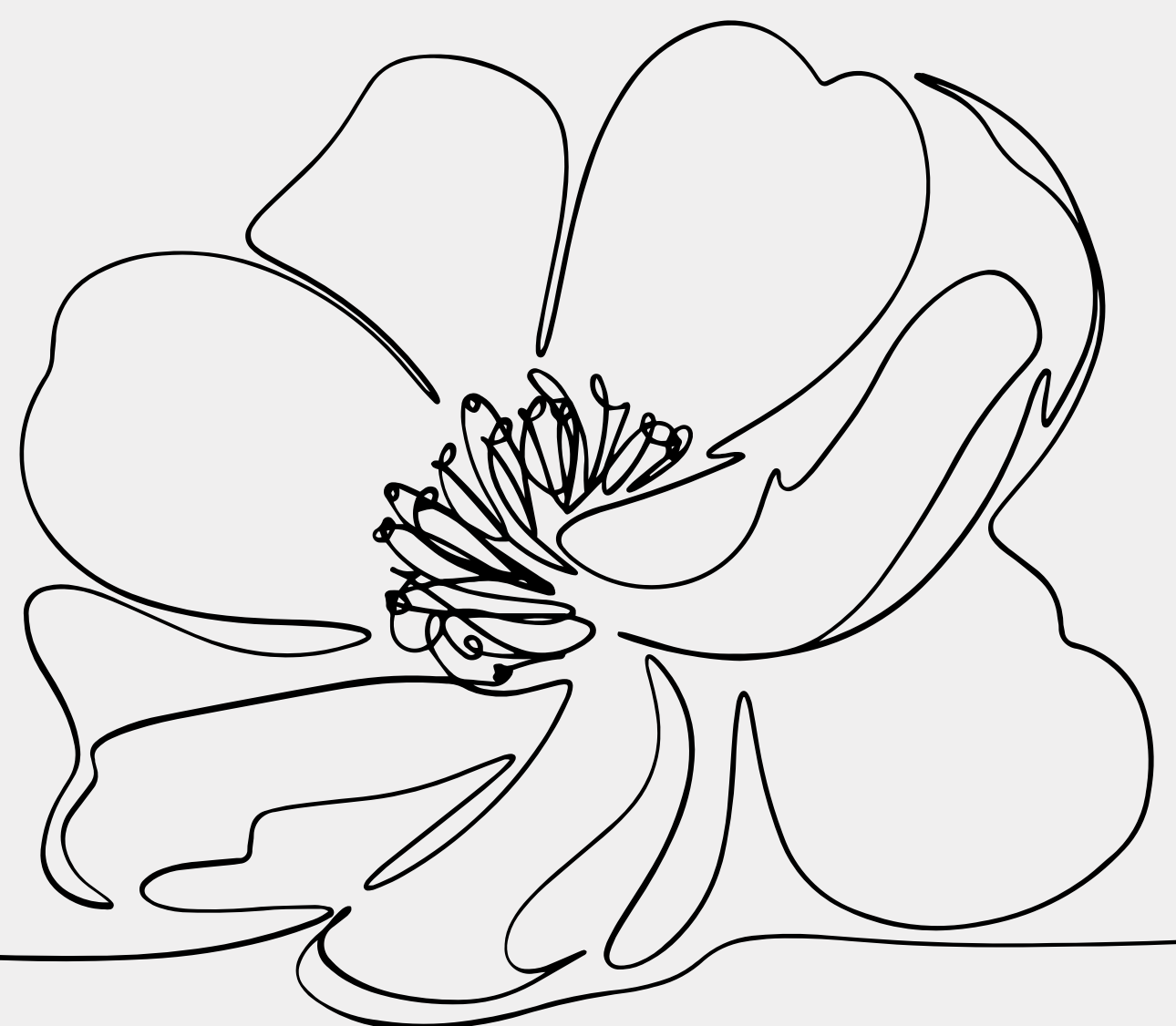


# Day 9:

## The Importance of Repentance

*“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord”  
(Acts 3:19)*

After truly learning forgiveness and accepting it from the Lord, we need to have a heart of repentance. True repentance means seeing the sin as God sees it—completely terrible. When we see sin in this way, we will not want to commit the same sin again. Sin hurts God and as Christians, we should never want to hurt Him. He is the One who has provided us with forgiveness and we must show our thankfulness for Him by turning away from our sins in repentance.



# Challenge Questions:

- Turning away from our sins in repentance shows we are truly sorry about our actions. How can you turn away from your sins today?
- Repentance can be hard, but it will be worth it. Can a family member help you on the days you are struggling? If so, who would this be?
- After understanding the importance of repentance, it can help us be more thankful for God. How can you show Him you are thankful for His forgiveness today?

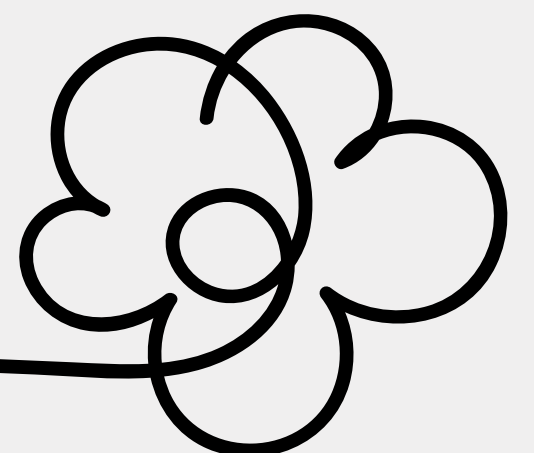


# Day 10:

## Forgiveness Brings Us Closer to God & Others

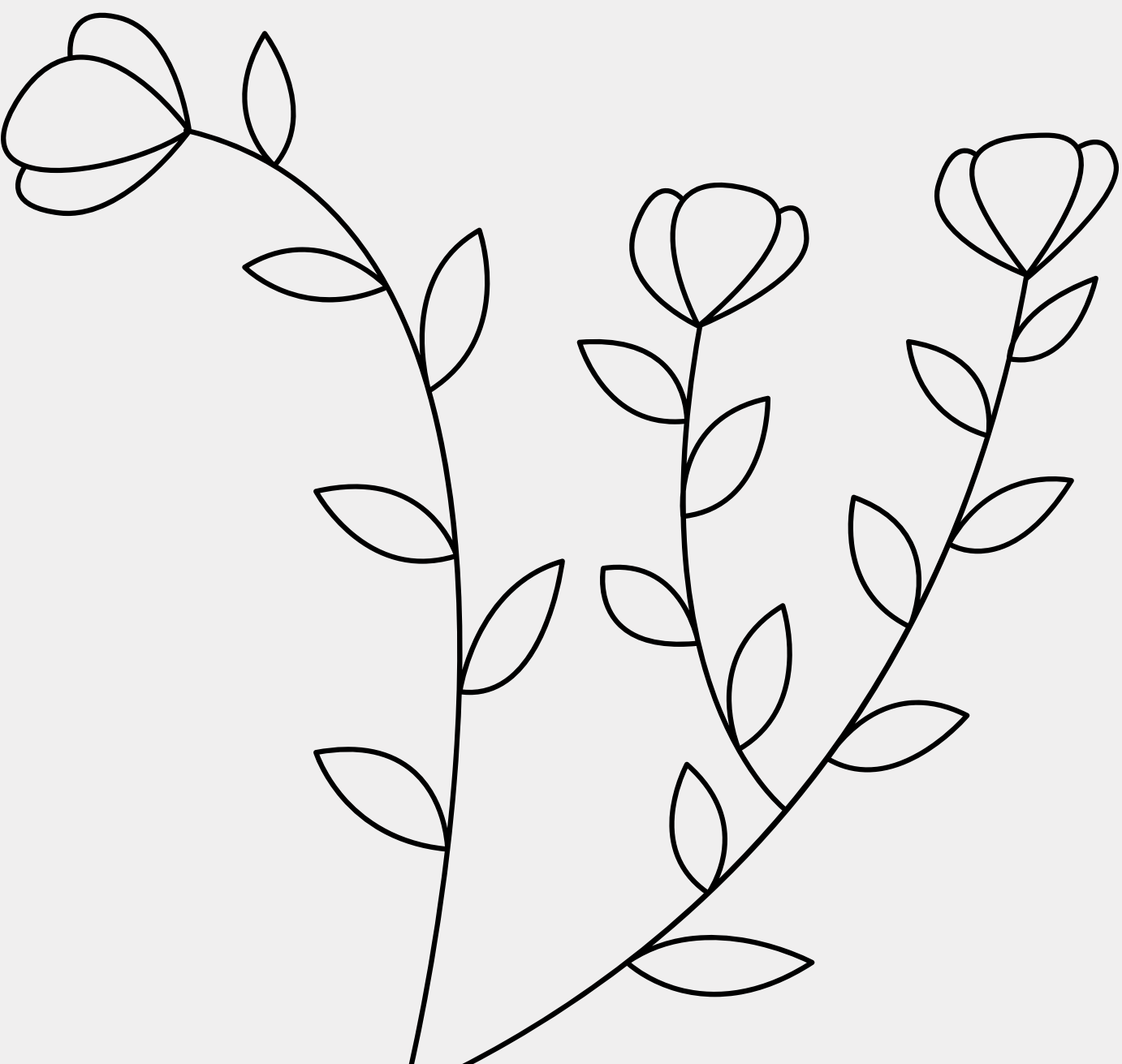
*“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24)*

For our final day, we are reflecting on Matthew 5:23-24 and the importance of forgiveness, which brings us closer to God as well as to others. The Lord teaches us in Matthew 5:23-24 that we need to forgive our brother or sister and be reconciled to them before we offer a gift on the altar. In modern day, we can interpret this to mean that before we do anything for God, including worshiping Him, praising Him, or going to Him in prayer, we need to forgive those who have wronged us. In this way, we can be brought closer to God because we have chosen to abstain from unforgiveness and it has also brought us closer to others because we have extended forgiveness to them.



# *Challenge Questions:*

- Who are you holding unforgiveness against today? Before you go to the Lord in prayer or praise, choose to forgive this person.
- Forgiving others will bring us closer to God. As you start forgiving others more consistently, how do you think your relationship with Him will improve?
- In the same way, forgiveness will bring us closer to others. How do you think your relationship with others will improve?





# *About the Author:*

**Vivian Bricker** loves Jesus, studying the Word of God, and helping others in their walk with Christ. She has earned a Bachelor of Arts and Master's degree in Christian Ministry with a deep academic emphasis in theology. Her favorite things to do are spending time with her family and friends, reading, and spending time outside. When she is not writing, she is embarking on other adventures.

