

[LEARNING TO BE A FORGIVER]

[excerpt from **FORGIVENESS** by **FRANK DAMAZIO**]

Life isn't fair. Even kindergarteners quickly learn that lesson. Sometimes things happen in life that simply aren't right and aren't fair. These are the contradictions in life, the times when bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people.

What do you do when your family hurts you, your best friend disappoints you, your spouse walks out on you, your employer discriminates against you, your coworkers lie about you? What do you do?

If you are a forgiving person, you take the view that God has used all that has happened to you, both good and bad, to make you a unique person. He has used your experiences to form you into a vessel that He can use to bless others. The heart of a forgiving person believes that God is sovereign in His dealings and that He makes every circumstance work for good—even those that look bad and undeserved at the time. A forgiving person knows that God sent us where we are. God manages all the events of our lives, including the difficult ones. God allows us to go through painful seasons to learn from them.

The forgiving person does not focus on the person who caused the hurt but on the God who brings good from it. Your life does not belong to you, but to a living God who is in control of every situation. That person who harmed you may have been part of your life, but they do not control it. God does. They may have meant to harm you, but God intends to bless you through it.

Make **Romans 8:28** a part of your life philosophy and not just words on paper. “And we know. . .” We *know*. We don't guess. We don't hope. We *know*. We are convinced and no situation that comes against us can shatter that confidence. We stake our life on it.

“We know that all things work together for good.” The Greek word used here is *sunergeo*, which means working together or to engage in an activity together with someone else. It can be translated, “God coworking provides all things for good or so that it is well with them.”

Your circumstances aren't working by themselves, wreaking havoc on your life. God is working with them and using them. He is engaged in activity with your situations to bring good into your life.

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“We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labor] all things work together and are fitting into a plan for good to and for those who love God and are called according to His design and purpose” (**Romans 8:28**, *The Amplified Bible*).

When you go through undeserved or difficult experiences, they will either make you harder or they will make you softer. The same rain that softens the ground can harden it. The same fire that warms a house can destroy it. It is your choice. The way that you respond to the events of life and the situations that you go through will determine your heart condition.