



# Marriage Growth-Track

## Week 5 - Day 5

### Golden Rule

by Brian and Susan Moore

*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*

The Golden Rule in its original form. Been forgiven? Give as you have been given. Nothing more; nothing less. This is what we see in this verse:

- Moving forward and forgiving means leaving the past behind;
- Forgiveness is a means to an end of bitterness in our heart;
- Jesus showed forgiveness even to those who persecuted Him – to the point of death

The closeness, the familiarity, just the regularness of life—whatever you call it—all lends itself to lots of opportunities for frustration between a husband and wife. Major difficulties aside, it is often the daily frustrations of life that can weaken even the strongest of relationships. Marriage is a hard relationship—the whole 24/7-ness of it all—but with intentional and honest communication, small things can be prevented from becoming bigger, more threatening, issues.

Most marriages begin with bright futures, full of hopes and dreams for a promising future of blissful love. Before long, however, small disagreements, unresolved issues, and unmet needs lead to diminished communication. It simply becomes more trouble than it's worth to bring up what bugs you, so you don't. Eventually, it's easier to ignore the breakdown in communication; isolation follows, and the relationship suffers significantly.

The divide continues to grow to the point of separate expectations and hopes for the relationship. Where once you held a shared vision moving forward, now there exists two sets of hopes and dreams, two sets of a preferred future, two ideals—each with little connection to the other. Intimacy undoubtedly suffers and compounds the problem.

To move beyond this impasse requires one, though preferably both, partners, to accept their role in the demise of the relationship, to seek the forgiveness of the other, and to consciously and prayerfully work towards loving their spouse as deeply and

committedly as they want to be loved. When we love our spouses as Christ demonstrated His love for us, a world of hurt and pain are resolved and trust and security are greatly deepened.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Why do you think it is difficult to forgive those who have hurt you?
2. How can extending forgiveness heal a relationship? How might it heal the other person? How might it heal you?

**Action Steps:**

Learn how to Forgive someone by:

1. Realize and admit your part in the conflict.
2. Ask Jesus, the ultimate forgiver, to empower you to forgive, remembering that He has forgiven you.
3. Decide that you don't want to keep on letting that person hurt you by holding the grudge.

**Prayer:**

*Dear God, we recognize that we are sinners and are undeserving of forgiveness, yet You forgive us, not because we are good, but because You are good. Soften our hearts to those who have hurt us so that we can completely forgive them and move forward. Help us to identify those whom we have harmed and seek their forgiveness. We submit our will to Your will and desire to love like You love us.*