

## **Wash Park Location**

Ephesians 4.30-32

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Forgiveness is the Pathway to Grace

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. - Galatians 2.20

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. - Psalm 103.12

Forgiveness vacillates like this. It has fits and starts, good days and bad. Anger intermingled with love. Irregular mercy. We make progress only to make a wrong turn.

Step forward and fall back. But this is okay. When it comes to forgiveness, all of us are beginners. No one owns a secret formula. As long as you are trying to forgive, you are forgiving. It's when you no longer try that bitterness sets in. - Max Lucado, *Forgiveness and Entrusting Justice to God*

<http://www.faithgateway.com/forgiveness/#.WvCiwmaZM0o>

Luke 15.22-24

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As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace." - Luke 19.41-42

Forgiveness is difficult for us because it pulls against our concept of justice. We want revenge for offenses suffered. But we are told never take our own revenge (Romans 12:19).

"Why should I let them off the hook?" We protest. You let them off your hook, but they are never off God's hook. He will deal with them fairly - something we cannot do. If you don't let offenders off your hook, you are hooked to them and the past, and that just means continued pain for you. Stop the pain; let it go...your need to forgive isn't an issue between you and the offender; it's between you and God. - Oswald Chamber, *The Choice of Forgiveness*

Forgiveness mirrors the generosity of God whose ultimate goal is neither to satisfy injured pride nor to justly apportion reward and punishment, but to free sinful humanity from evil and thereby reestablish communion with us. This is the gospel in its stark simplicity - as radically countercultural and at the same time as

beautifully human as anything one can imagine. - Volf, Miroslav, Free of Charge, p 161

### **Uptown Location**

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“Grace is God’s acting in our lives, to accomplish what we can’t do on our own.” - Dallas Willard, Interview with John Ortberg, 2012