

HOW CAN I FORGIVE? GIVING FORGIVENESS

This study is designed to help you understand the meaning of forgiveness, and show you the path to giving forgiveness to those who haven't asked for it or don't deserve it. Forgiveness is a key principle to practice as a part of the believer's lifestyle.

Read the following verses. Isaiah 53:6; Hebrews 9:11-14; 22-28; 1 Pet.2:24; 3:18;

1. Why does God forgive you?
2. How much sin did Jesus' sacrifice cover? Hebrews 10:10-14; 1 Jn.2:1-2
3. How much does God forgive you? 1 Jn. 1:7-9
4. List the things these passages say God does with our sin. Ps. 32:5; 103:12; Is. 43:25; 2 Cor. 5:19; Heb. 10:17
5. Write out your understanding of what it means to be forgiven.
6. Now look it up in a dictionary and write out the definition that most closely matches what you hear the Bible saying God does for you.
7. What does the Bible say about forgiving others? Matt.18:21-22; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-13
8. On what basis are believers to forgive others?
9. Why are believers told not take vengeance? Rom. 12:18-21
10. What advice does the Bible give about our response to evil doers? Ps. 37:1-8
Make a list of the different things we are told to do, and told not to do.
11. What warnings do you see here about possible problems if you don't leave things with God?
12. What other warnings do you see in these next passages about problems from unforgiveness?
Matt. 6:14-15

Matt. 18:23-35

Eph. 4:30-31

Heb. 12:15

13. Which of these problem areas from unforgiveness can you see in your own life?

14. On a **separate** piece of paper list people who have hurt you that you still feel resentment, pain, or anger toward. Next to their name list how they have hurt you.

15. What does the Bible say about love and keeping accounts? 1 Cor. 13:4-8

Forgiveness is an act of faith taken in obedience to God and His Word whereby I release those who have harmed me from an obligation to repay. I choose instead to place their sin in God's hands and trust Him to properly resolve the problem. *Forgiveness is NOT saying that what happened was OK. It is saying it was wrong. It is NOT saying that what happened didn't hurt me. Forgiveness is not reconciliation to friendship. Forgiveness is releasing the matter from my control to God's.*

Forgiveness is saying I believe that the blood of Jesus covers all sin including those who have hurt me. Therefore I choose to forgive not because they deserve it, but because Jesus fully paid for their sin even as He paid for mine. ***I forgive because I am forgiven.***

16. *Read Phil. 4:13. Claiming His strength as your own to obey His Word take the next step.* For each person on the list pray a prayer from your heart similar to this:

“Father, thank you for sending Jesus to pay for all the sin of all people. Thank you for forgiving me of all my sin. I choose today to forgive _____ (offending person) for _____

_____ (offense to you). I believe you died for _____ (offender's name) sin. I accept your sacrifice as fully sufficient for You and for me. I reject fretting, vengeance, and bitterness as patterns for my life. I am sorry for trying to handle this my way. Thank you for the victory I have in Jesus Christ. Amen! _____ (offender) I choose to forgive you.

If thoughts of this offender or their offense again come to mind; thank God you have forgiven them.

17. There are further steps to reconciliation that God may be guiding you to take. Read Matt. 5:23-24 and Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1. What do you see these verses saying about resolving problems?

If you need further help seek the counsel of a Care Group leader or pastor about what further action would be appropriate.