



## Did I Really Forgive Them?

**Ephesians 4:32: (NASB) *Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.***



Forgiveness is a tough thing. The times we need to forgive are usually the times we are in no mood to forgive. It can be easy to say, "I forgive you" but are those words reflected in my thoughts, emotions and actions? Do I say those words out of mere obligation or to just end an uncomfortable exchange? What does it mean to forgive someone anyway? Does my forgiving someone who wronged me release them from the consequences of the wrong? Is it supposed to make life go on as if no wrong ever happened? Am I still obligated to forgive if the person who wronged me does not care about being forgiven? There are so many questions that can only be answered by understanding how the Bible defines forgiveness.

There are **four key New Testament words** regarding forgiveness. We will begin with the most general description regarding forgiveness and zero in on the most specific meaning. We will give the definition of each word, then an observation of what it means and a scripture for verification.



### Observations:

**Given:** Strongs #5483 *charizomai*; (forgiving) favor

This is broadly used in the sense of having a big heart - not taking away sin:  
Philippians 1:29: (KJV) *For unto you it is **given <5483>** in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

The word *given* is the word that is sometimes translated *to forgive*, meaning to favor someone. It is to put someone into a favorable light again.

**Release:** Strongs #630 *apoluo*; (forgive) to free, relieve, release, dismiss, let die, pardon, divorce

This is broadly used but rarely translated *forgive*:

Matthew 27:17: (KJV) *Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, whom will ye that I **release <630>** unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?*

Luke 6:37: (KJV) *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: **forgive <630>**, and ye shall be **forgiven <630>**.*

The word *forgive* has different shades of meaning. In Luke 6:37 it means "to free, relieve, dismiss, let die, pardon, divorce." But in Matthew 27:17 it says, *whom will ye that I release unto you?* The word *release* is the same word (Strongs #630) that is sometimes translated *forgive* - to send away. Divorce is used as a translation of this word. When someone divorces somebody or something, they send responsibility and interaction with that individual or thing away from them.



**Forgive:** Strongs #863 *aphiemi*; (forgive) to send forth, away

This word is very broadly used - it covers godly and human forgiveness. This word most clearly reflects our forgiveness of one another and is often used regarding Jesus "forgiving" sins:

Matthew 18:21: (NRSV) *Then Peter came and said to him, Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I **forgive <863>**? As many as seven times?*

*How often should I forgive* - how often should I send their sin away from me? This word is broadly and aptly used for forgiveness. We will focus more on this word throughout this episode.

**Forgiveness:** Strongs #859 *aphesis*; forgiveness - freedom, pardon

This word is never used in connection with us forgiving one another. It is only related to the pardon granted through the sacrifice of Jesus, which is the big picture of the ransom being paid for all:

Ephesians 1:7: (KJV) *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the **forgiveness <859>** of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

Matthew 18:21 says, *...how often should I forgive, as many as seven times?* How often should I send their sin away from me? Ephesians 1:7 says we have *redemption through his (Jesus) blood, the forgiveness of sins*. This is an important factor. It is an entirely different word and means "freedom" or "pardon."

**Justification:** Strongs #1347 *dikaiosis*; acquittal (for Christ's sake) - justification

This last word represents the highest form of forgiveness in the Bible. It is ONLY available from God through the blood of Jesus:

Romans 5:18: (NASB) *So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted **justification <1347>** (acquittal) of life to all men.*

The word for *justification* is a very specific word meaning "acquittal." When we are acquitted of something, we are released or discharged from it completely. The forgiveness or pardon through Jesus brings acquittal. There is no longer an attachment to adamic sin.

**God, through Jesus, satisfied justice - a life for a life, which provided true forgiveness or pardon:**

Luke 4:16-18: (NASB) *<sup>16</sup>And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and as was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. <sup>17</sup>And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. And he opened the book and found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup>The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim **release <859>** to the captives, and recovery of the sight to the blind, to **set free <859>** those who are oppressed.*

Jesus said to them: This scripture is fulfilled today before your very eyes. When he came at his first advent 2,000 years ago, he came as a man. He said: I am here to *release the captives from sin and death, to set free those who are oppressed under the rule of Satan*.



The release here is not just an opening of the prison door or being released from feeling oppressed, it is a full pardon, full freedom. It is an opportunity to go on and live without the previous shackles of sin and death and Satan's dictatorial rule.

The context of Luke 4 is about the calling of Jesus. His calling is to pardon, and his sacrifice brings the acquittal. It is important to understand that the pardon for sin comes once we have accepted Jesus. We will develop this further as we go.

### FINDING AND APPLYING FORGIVENESS:



The act of forgiveness takes place on several levels -



the highest of which changes the course of the human race and was the pardon for Adam's sin accomplished in its entirety by the sacrifice of Jesus. Any forgiveness we can offer needs this pardon as its foundation.

Unless we accept this as our foundation, our ability to forgive is going to be hindered.

Forgiveness, by definition, is complex. To learn to genuinely forgive, we need to know exactly what we are doing.

Though we cannot actually "pardon" anyone's sins, can we forgive others like Jesus forgave them?



It sounds remarkable and even uncomfortable to think about forgiving sins like Jesus did. However, there is a similarity in what he did and what we can do. The forgiveness definition we will focus on is that of sending away - sending someone's sin away from you, so it is no longer relevant to your life.

Several times in his ministry, Jesus forgave sins, but was not pardoning the sinner. Here is one example:

Luke 5:18-24: (NASB) <sup>18</sup>And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of him. <sup>19</sup>But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus.

They were on a mission to get their friend in front of Jesus so that he could help him.

<sup>20</sup>Seeing their faith, he said, friend, your sins are **forgiven <863>** you. <sup>21</sup>The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can **forgive <863>** sins, but God alone? <sup>22</sup>But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, why are you reasoning in your hearts? <sup>23</sup>Which is easier, to say, your sins have been **forgiven <863>** you, or to say, get up and walk? <sup>24</sup>But, so that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to **forgive <863>** sins, —he said to the paralytic— I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home.



From the paradigm of the Pharisees, only God could forgive sins through animal sacrifices. They were asking a legitimate question. ...*who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?* Now, of course, they were not being inquisitive; they were condemning Jesus. Jesus responds by telling them he is the Messiah, and says dramatically, *which is easier, to say, your sins have been forgiven...or get up and walk?* He performs the miracle and shows them that he *has the authority on earth to forgive sins.*



**Jesus often recognized faith and "forgave" sins, but what does this mean?**

Jesus was not looking at this person and seeing one who lived a flawed life. Instead, he saw this paralytic man as a son of humanity, mired in the sin and sickness inherited from Adam. The act of Jesus forgiving him gave him a clearer path to God through Jesus.



**Jesus sent this man's sin away and saw him with the godly eyes of compassion.**

This kind of forgiveness did not pardon this individual, but it did push his sins aside so he could be more in line with godliness because of his faith in Jesus.

**Even though we have been pardoned by the sacrifice of Jesus, we also need to have our sins forgiven:**

**1 John 2:12:** (NASB) *I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been **forgiven** <863> you for His name's sake.*

This type of forgiveness, the sending away of our sins - not the pardoning - gives us a clearer path towards God through Jesus. *Your sins have been forgiven you* is the pushing or sending away of sins, not the pardoning. When we sin, we go to God through Christ to ask forgiveness. Our sins are sent away which gives us a clearer path toward God.



**Jesus sends OUR sins away and sees us with the godly eyes of compassion.**

This is based on our heart intention. This is how we want to learn to look at others when they have wronged us.

**FINDING AND APPLYING FORGIVENESS:**



**Any act of forgiveness we hope to accomplish**



**is modeled after Jesus forgiving the people of Israel as he preached, as well as our being forgiven even now.**



Remember, **the pardon** we receive through the sacrifice of Jesus is related to our inherited sin in Adam. This was something we were born with and therefore would die from, until Jesus himself died and gave us a new lease on life.



The **forgiving** - the sending away of sins by Jesus gives us a clearer path to God. When our sins are forgiven, God sees us, but not through the lens of what we have done. We need to strive to stay there.

Once we understand the pardon and the act of forgiving someone's sins, we can now dig into how we accomplish this.



**A Forgiveness "Need to Know":  
As Christians we are called to BE forgiving.**

This is not a job option; it is a job description!

Matthew 6:9-15: (NASB) <sup>9</sup>Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup>And **forgive <863>** us our debts, as we also have **forgiven <863>** our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. <sup>14</sup>For if you **forgive <863>** others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also **forgive <863>** you. <sup>15</sup>But if you do not **forgive <863>** others, then your Father will not **forgive <863>** your transgressions.

We often stop reading partway through the Lord's prayer, but we need to continue to where it says, *if we do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions*. This word, **forgive <863>**, is not the word for pardon, because Jesus pardons us whether we like it or not. This also goes for the whole world; it is just not applied to them yet. This word for *forgive* means the sending away of sins.

**Forgive**: Strongs #863 *aphiemi*; (forgive) to send forth, away

If we are not going send away the sins that are perpetrated upon us by our brother, sister, friend, or neighbor, then God may not send our sins away from Him.

*Forgive us our debts* - that which we owe - not money, but our sins and transgressions committed that take us out of balance with God. This forgiveness is applied to us *as we apply it to others*. Our forgiving attitude towards others will influence God's forgiveness towards us.

We not only strive to be forgiving, but we are also required to be forgiving.

### FINDING AND APPLYING FORGIVENESS:



**Any act of forgiveness requires us to see the recipient differently and NOT through the lens of what they did to us.**



**Rather, we must choose the lens that sees them as the human being they are. This choice can change the course of our lives.**



Check out our CQ Kids videos:  
**WHY SHOULD WE FORGIVE OTHERS?**  
[christianquestions.com/youtube](http://christianquestions.com/youtube)

Jesus has made it perfectly clear that our forgiving others has EVERYTHING to do with OUR highest welfare.


Knowing what to do is good, but it is only a start.  
 How do we begin to do what we know to be right?

Making forgiveness work is tricky. Usually, we need to forgive when we feel emotional pain after being wronged. This pain is NOT easy to conquer. Learning the forgiveness lesson requires focus and an open mind, but applying the forgiveness lesson requires humility, determination and discipline. We need to not just learn it intellectually and have it settle into our hearts, but settle into our life through our actions.

**Forgiveness is the key to action and freedom. – Hannah Arendt**

Without a forgiving attitude, we end up living our lives in a paralyzed state. If we think back on things that happened to us through a paralyzed viewpoint, often it was because we were stuck in that non-forgiving attitude, anger, frustration, pain and trauma. A lot of the experiences in our lives are HARD to forgive. The pain can ripple on forever; it can *change* our life forever - how can we forgive someone for that?

Getting the forgiveness job done:



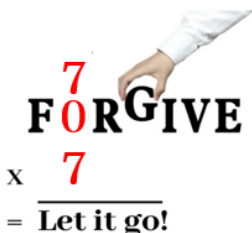
1. Realize that forgiveness will likely require repetitive refocusing:

Refocusing  
 Refocusing  
 Refocusing

**We will have to refocus again and again and again:**

Matthew 18:21-24: (NASB) <sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times? <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. <sup>23</sup>For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him.

If we are counting, we are in trouble! This is another one of those scriptures where many stop without reading the whole thing. We usually read that Jesus said we were to forgive *seventy times seven*. However, then Jesus speaks a parable which drives the lesson home. The slave owed the king an impossible amount to pay back, yet the king is willing to forgive him. The lesson shows us that not only are there many levels of forgiveness, but even in larger or more important things, Jesus is telling us we must have a forgiving attitude. This is hard.





This is why when we began this episode, we spoke of saying we forgave just to cover that base. But in our hearts, we are still bearing the pain, turmoil, trauma and memory. We need to work on this, as it will not immediately go away. Jesus is telling us that forgiveness is a commitment of magnitude and patience!

We next will hear from a real-life struggle shared by a CQ contributor when asked about their experiences with forgiveness:

 **My dad's alcoholism, CQ Contributor**

- *My dad's alcoholism completely drove all his actions and he was unable to be better or different. I intellectually understood that, but I didn't really feel that in my heart until years after he died. I just couldn't understand why he couldn't just choose me and choose life and I was so angry and sad because of that.*

Many of us have had experience with addiction within our families or close friends. These people are in a place where they are not themselves. When this woman's father died, he left her holding an empty bag. She could not understand why he could not choose her and choose life. It made her angry and sad. This is the way the seeds of non-forgiveness are planted. And justifiably so! She felt she did not mean anything to her father. Sometimes we want to be mad because we were so badly treated or neglected.

It is okay to be angry. We need the anger to work through us, but we cannot camp out with that anger for the rest of our days. We must let the anger run its course. We must keep forgiving the impact, as well as the ripples that continue long after the offense. In a lot of cases where it is difficult to forgive, it is because the ripples have continued to impact our lives. Whatever happened may have changed our lives entirely, without our permission, without our knowledge, without understanding why, and here we are with a different outlook on life. Therefore, we need to repetitively refocus. We are called to be forgiving of one another. How do we do this when it is this difficult?



Restraint  
Restraint  
Restraint

2. Realize that forgiveness will likely require repetitive restraint:

Sometimes we want to get back at those who hurt us, or we want to harbor the grudge because somehow this makes us feel better:

Romans 12:17-19: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. <sup>18</sup>If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. <sup>19</sup>Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.



If we are hurt by another, we have to push away the hurt and look on that person, not through the eyes of our hurt, but through the eyes of being a ransomed child of God. This is very hard to do. When we are forgiving someone who has hurt us, we are opening our hearts to let go of the consequences of that sin against us. When we ask for forgiveness, we ask that God not judge us based on what we just did. We ask Him to push our actions away from His focus. Do we do this with others that act against us? When do we look for repentance from them and when do we just forgive? Do we always have to wait for repentance? This is included with our third point:



1. Repetitive Refocusing: dealing with forgiveness
2. Repetitive Restraint: vengeance belongs to God, not to us.



Acquiescence  
Acquiescence  
Acquiescence

3. Realize that forgiveness will likely require repetitive acquiescence to the teaching of Jesus:

**A text that shows the part repentance should play:**

Luke 17:3-4: (NASB) <sup>3</sup> *Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive <863> him. <sup>4</sup>And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, I repent, forgive <863> him.*



Strong's #863  
Reminder

**Forgive:** Strong's #863 *aphiemi*; (forgive) to send forth, away

See more on the topic of repentance in the Bonus Material. It unfolds repentance in a way we do not have time to get into during the podcast.

Jesus says, *Be on your guard...* against yourself! He warns us to watch ourselves, because if our brother sins, we need to have the courage to rebuke him. Again and again, if there is sin, there should be rebuke, but also true forgiveness. The other important point is communication. *Rebuke him* shows there is communication. Too often, when we are hurt, we tend to brood, to hide, to back away from contact with this person. Jesus tells us we need instead to be forgiving. Forgiving is not pardoning them, nor releasing them from the consequences of what they did. It is releasing us from keeping the consequences always before us in the forefront of our minds, which prevents us from clearly seeing or healing from the hurt. This text is about repentance, let us look at another aspect.





**This text says we should love unconditionally:**

**Luke 6:27-31:** (NRSV) *27But I say to you that listen, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. 30Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. 31Do to others as you would have them do to you.*



<u>Luke 17:3-4</u>	<u>Luke 6:27-31</u>
<i>What is the difference between the two texts?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is regarding our brother</li> <li>• This shows communication</li> <li>• This specifically says to forgive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is regarding our enemies – those of the world</li> <li>• This shows persecution</li> <li>• This says to love, bless and be humble</li> </ul>



Why is there a difference between the two texts?

There is a higher level of forgiveness among the brotherhood than with the world. The key is to be forgiving in all cases. What if someone does not want our forgiveness? What if the person feels justified in what they did? Should we still have a forgiving attitude? Yes! Forgiveness is NOT reconciliation. We sometimes think that it should be. We think that after forgiveness, everything should be fine and we will go forward without remembrance of the hurt. But this is not the way life works. The forgiving of someone in the world is not likely to easily bring trust and reconciliation, but we should still forgive because Jesus told us that is the way we should be.

With our spiritual brother or sister, we ought to seek reconciliation because we have a trust basis already established in Christ. We should be able to communicate better with them. Sometimes this is not easy due to personalities. This is the ideal. Remember we are not talking about pardoning the transgression. That is not our job. We are talking about pushing the effects of someone’s sin away from us. This needs to be our focus with everybody.



### Time has softened my heart, CQ Contributor

- *Time has really softened my heart for him, and I also recognize that towards the end of his life, I was very unkind, and I have felt a lot of shame for that, so I have had to ask God's forgiveness for my actions. Again, I know I was young, but I should have known better.*

She says she was young, but she *should have* known better. We have to let the “*should have*” be part of the mistake. Apply it once and let it be done. Acknowledge this, maybe she *should have*, but she did not act on that and now it is done and past. Let it be and let the forgiveness take root. Her father maybe *should have* known better – but how do we know what brought him to that condition? We cannot judge his heart, nor fully understand his situation fully. Some choose addiction through foolishness, some fall into it to hide from the pain in their lives. Regardless, it is tragic.

When we say, we *should have* been better; maybe we should have. But we were not. Acknowledge our failure and strive to do better and move on. This is what forgiveness is for! We need to be able to forgive ourselves as well as others on the same basis.

It is easy to observe someone’s sins against us or our frustration over our own poor response to the sins through the eyes of he or she *should have*. Jesus did not see sin through the eyes of *should have*; rather, he saw it through the eyes of compassion and was therefore able to fix it, forgive it and send the sin away.

1 Peter 2:21-24: (NASB) <sup>21</sup>For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in his steps,

We are going to focus on this example and relate all of this to forgiveness.

#### Here is Jesus’ example and the steps we need to follow:

<sup>22</sup>who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth; <sup>23</sup>and while being reviled, he did not revile in return; while suffering, he uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to Him who judges righteously;

There was no rebuttal, no revenge from Jesus. Not to mention, everything that was done to him, the horrible accusations, scourging and mockery were all unjust. Yet he left the judgement and vengeance to God.

<sup>24</sup>and he himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by his wounds you were healed.

*So that we might die to sin and live to righteousness...* This means we need to rise above sin because we are dead to it. Lack of forgiveness is sinful, so we need to do our very best to forgive. We are not going to do it perfectly, and it might not go well the first time, second time...or 26th time! This does not mean we should not put our heart and soul into it.

What was the example of Jesus?

- † To love without thought of it being returned.
- † To give without reciprocation.

- † To suffer without retaliation. This is the hardest one.
- † To rely entirely on the Righteous Judge. Vengeance is God's!

### FINDING AND APPLYING FORGIVENESS:

 Forgiveness 

**Any act of forgiveness we hope to accomplish**



**must be driven by the realization that it will likely take repetitive, focused effort. Let's focus and act on what is Christlike and not fall into the traps of natural emotional reactions.**

We need to pay close attention to the many details of forgiveness.

**How can I make my forgiveness of another a reality for life so that it can be counted on by everyone?**

Christian forgiveness is not a reaction that has an emotional basis; it is a response that is decision-based. To be at the maturity level required to make such a choice, we first need to be sure of our motivation in this forgiveness. Do I *really* want that person's sin against me to lose its influence in my daily choices and my daily life? To genuinely let it go. If we fail at this, we need to get up and try again. It takes courage.

***Forgiveness is a virtue of the brave.* – Indira Gandhi**


**Forgiving in a Christian manner begins with living in a Christian manner:**

**Philippians 1:21:** (NASB) *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*

Jesus felt all the abuse heaped on him, yet he did not look to reciprocate or retaliate against evil. He just went about doing his Father's will. Remember, to forgive is to make someone's sin against us lose its relevance in our life. The event still happened, and the results of the event are still intact, but its relevance has been diminished. The echo of the experience gradually fades over time. Our reaction over the memory must be put in its place again and again. We may never get completely to the goal of total acceptance, but we need to keep striving - that is what counts. When we fail, we ask the Lord for strength, going to Him again and again, as often as needed.



*The echo of the experience gradually fades over time.*

 **Forgiveness takes work, CQ Contributor**

- *Forgiveness is something you have to work at. If you don't, those same feelings of anger and sadness just sit there waiting for you until you think about that person again. It is an active process of letting go of the feelings and the experiences that have impacted you and realizing that we are all imperfect; some of us are just flawed in ways that really hurts others.*

There is an old saying that "time heals all wounds." Time does not heal all wounds by itself. Time can help you forget things, but it does not heal them. The passage of time while engaged in the act of forgiving is much more effective. Time coupled with our focus on being more Christlike, trying to do



the right thing, learning to push the sin out of our immediate consciousness, is what heals the wound.

It is amazing that God looks at us and understands the heart intention rather than the deed. We would be doomed if He did not. We are so thankful He does! We have to turn around and apply this to others in our lives.

**Refocus: How do I see those of the world, be they family, friends or just people who I may need to forgive?**

2 Corinthians 5:17-21: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. <sup>18</sup>Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup>namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

How do we achieve the righteousness of God? Let's look at the following principles for this:

**Forgiveness Principles to manage our non-Christian relationships**

**when forgiveness is appropriate:**

- I am in Christ - I have been called higher and called to follow Jesus.
- My experiences are in God's providence, and He reconciled me to Him.
- God's Plan includes forgiving and reconciling the world to Him through Jesus.
- I am an Ambassador of that forgiveness and reconciliation.
- All of this is ONLY possible through Jesus.
- Therefore, who am I to not forgive from my heart?

**Refocus: How do I see those of the brotherhood who I may need to forgive:**

Philippians 2:2-4: (NASB) <sup>2</sup>make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; <sup>4</sup>do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

These verses help us focus in on the humble reckoning we need to do when we are face-to-face with our spiritual brother or sister dealing with forgiveness. With God's people, it may be more challenging to avoid the *should have* approach. It is easy to say to them; *you are in Christ, you should have known better!* We do not have the right to do that. We can have a discussion, express the disappointment, then forgive and move on from there.



**Did Jesus second-guess Peter after his three denials?** No, he forgave him and had confidence in his dedication and proved it by charging him with feeding the flock. Jesus did *not* say to Peter that he *should have* known better - after all, Jesus told him that he would do this! Instead, he told him, *I trust you, feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Be the one that I can count on.* Jesus knew Peter could do this. Jesus could see past his failure, he forgave him, pushed the sin away and saw his potential instead. What an incredible example!

**Did Jesus avoid Saul of Tarsus because he mercilessly persecuted Christians?** No, he forgave him and had confidence in his dedication and called him to be the 12th apostle - part of the foundation of Christianity. Saul had been an enemy of Christianity. While Saul was on the road to do an enemy's work, Jesus stopped him dead in his tracks, confronted him and converted him. Jesus did not say to Saul; *You should have known better! You of all people knew the Law; you knew you were breaking the Jewish Law!* Jesus saw his potential, forgave him and put his sins aside so that he could touch his heart. Saul became Paul the apostle and did an incredible job of doing the work of Christ.

### Forgiveness Principles to manage our **Christian** relationships when forgiveness is appropriate.

- Leave "should have" alone. That is what Jesus did.
- Focus on and contribute to the unity of the spirit, because we ALL have one purpose.
- Remember that a lack of forgiving can be a form of conceit - never choose my anger over a godly response.
- Always dwell on the value of those whom God has blessed.
- Forgiveness is a gift, that when it is given by me also gives me a gift!

These are tremendous examples - showing what forgiveness really looks like.

### FINDING AND APPLYING FORGIVENESS:

 **Any act of forgiveness we hope to accomplish**



must be a clearly defined goal that is driven by intellectual and spiritual clarity, as well as heart assurance. Our forgiving is an action that accomplishes God's will in us.



The beauty of our forgiving is about standing before God with a clear heart and clear conscience. Even if we do not fully accomplish it and keep trying, we can stand before God and say we did our best. He will know, that is what He was looking for! He does not read our results as much as He reads our heart.

**Romans 12:9-13:** (NASB) <sup>9</sup>Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup>Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; <sup>11</sup>not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup>rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, <sup>13</sup>contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Forgiveness is an expression of love. Whether it is love for our enemies, love for people in the world, love for our business associates, love for our family or love for our spiritual brotherhood. Living a forgiving life is about applying the love that was applied to us first. Inevitably, by forgiving, we show our love for the one we are forgiving, and we are showing love for our Lord Jesus and our Heavenly Father. We must forgive and mean it!

**So, did I really forgive them?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!**



Join us next week for our podcast on August 16, 2021  
Ep. 1191: Are Christians Supposed to Convert the World?

### Bonus Material and Study Questions

***When you forgive, you in no way change the past - but you sure do change the future. – Bernard Meltzer***

***You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well. – Lewis B. Smedes***

***To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you. – Lewis B. Smedes***



All "repentance" is not the same. There are three primary words in the New Testament for *repentance*:

Strong's #3338, and #3340 and #3341 being similar:

**Repent:** Strong's #3338 *metamelomai*; to care afterwards, i.e., regret

**Repent:** Strong's #3340 *metanoëō*; to think differently or afterwards, i.e., reconsider (morally, feel compunction)

**Repentance:** Strong's #3341 *metánoia*; compunction (for guilt, including reformation) by implication reversal (of [another's] decision): (compunction: uneasiness of mind due to feelings of remorse or guilt; twinge of conscience)

Strong's Exhaustive Bible Concordance explains the distinction between these two words - emotional vs. actual change:

**#3338**

Emotional change

Refers to particulars

Nothing but regret possibly amounting to remorse

**#3340**

Change by choice

Refers to the entire life

Reversal of moral purpose - known as repentance

**Strong's #3338 (KJV) - two examples:**

Matthew 27:3: *Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, **repented himself <3338>**, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,*

Matthew 21:28-29: (NRSV) <sup>28</sup>*What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, son, go and work in the vineyard today. <sup>29</sup>He answered, I will not; but later he **changed his mind** and went.*

**Strong's #3340 example:**

Acts 17:30-31: (NRSV) <sup>30</sup>*While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to **repent <3340>**, <sup>31</sup>because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.*

**Strong's #3341 example:**

Acts 5:31: (KJV) *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give **repentance <3341>** to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

**Forgiveness releases us from damaging emotions:**

Proverbs 14:29: (KJV) *He that is slow to anger is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.*

Ecclesiastes 7:9: (KJV) *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

Proverbs 19:11: (ASV) *The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger; And it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*



**Forgiveness transforms us from being mere sinful men to being sons of God:**  
Matthew 5:43-45: (NASB) <sup>43</sup>You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. <sup>44</sup>But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

**Forgiveness is a lynchpin of the entire plan of God:**

Jeremiah 31:31-34: (NASB) <sup>31</sup>Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup>not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the LORD... <sup>33</sup>I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. <sup>34</sup>They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, know the LORD, for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

**Exhaustive uses of Strongs #859, the forgiveness word for "pardon:"**

Matthew 26:28: (KJV) For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the **remission <859>** of sins.

Mark 1:4: (KJV) John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the **remission <859>** of sins.

Luke 1:77: (KJV) To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the **remission <859>** of their sins,

Luke 3:3: (KJV) and he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the **remission <859>** of sins;

Luke 4:18: (KJV) The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach **deliverance <859>** to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at **liberty <859>** them that are bruised,

Luke 24:47: (KJV) And that repentance and **remission <859>** of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 2:38: (KJV) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the **remission <859>** of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 5:31: (KJV) Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and **forgiveness <859>** of sins.

Acts 10:43: (KJV) To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive **remission <859>** of sins.

Acts 13:38: (KJV) Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the **forgiveness <859>** of sins:

Acts 26:18: (KJV) To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive **forgiveness <859>** of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Ephesians 1:7: (KJV) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the **forgiveness <859>** of sins, according to the riches of his grace;





Colossians 1:14: (KJV) *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the **forgiveness <859>** of sins:*

Hebrews 9:22: (KJV) *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no **remission <859>**.*

Hebrews 10:18: (KJV) *now where **remission <859>** of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*

## Christian Questions Weekly Newsletter

CQ Rewind Show Notes and Study Questions

Text

**CQREWIND**

to **22828** to get started.



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# Study QUESTIONS

## Ep. 1190: Did I Really Forgive Them?

<https://christianquestions.com/character/1190-forgiveness/>

See:  CQRewind  
SHOW NOTES

1. How are the words translated “given” and “release” in the New Testament (KJV) used in relation to forgiveness? (See Matthew 27:17, Luke 6:37, Philippians 1:29)
2. How is the Strong’s Concordance word #863 *aphiemi* translated? What does it mean? How does it apply to us? (See Matthew 18:21)
3. How is the Strong’s Concordance word #859 *aphesis* translated? What does it mean? Does it apply to our actions? What does this type of forgiveness bring to the person who receives it? (Luke 4:16-21, Ephesians 1:7, Romans 5:18)
4. During his ministry, how did Jesus forgive the sins of those who came to him? How should this change the way we see others that have wronged us? (See Luke 5:18-24, 1 John 2:12)
5. Why is it so important for Christians to have an attitude of forgiveness? What will happen if we cannot forgive? (See Matthew 6:9-15, CQ Kids Video “Why Should We Forgive”)
6. What is the first step to truly forgiving someone? Why is forgiveness hard? Is it wrong to be angry? Explain: (See Matthew 18:21-24)
7. How can repetitive restraint help us reach forgiveness? How do we handle our need for vengeance against those who hurt us badly? (See Romans 12:17-19)
8. What part should repentance play in our forgiveness? What is necessary when we are dealing with our Christian brethren and forgiveness? How is this different from dealing with forgiveness of non-Christians? (See Luke 6:27-31, 17:3-4)
9. How did Jesus show us how to truly forgive others for their sins? Why should the phrase “should have” not be considered in forgiveness? (See 1 Peter 2:21-24)
10. What are some principles to help us apply forgiveness in our non-Christian relationships? (See 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Philippians 1:21)
11. How can we change our focus to better forgive in our Christian relationships? How does Jesus’ use of Peter and Saul give us examples to follow? (See Romans 12:9-13, Philippians 2:2-4)
12. Have you had difficulty forgiving someone else? What did/will you do to reach the point of true forgiveness for that person?