

# Forgiving and Forgetting

Session 4

Let's Pray

As the verses in this lesson challenge us to be more like You in our relationships with others help us, Lord, to really respond to Your word as You would have us to do. Help us to learn to let go of the negatives in our lives.

As we go through these scriptures choose one that really “speaks” to you and write it on a slip paper.

At the end of this session you can put this “scripture slip” in your wallet or purse and use it to help you remember what this “step” is in learning to walk with Christ.

Genesis 33:4; 45:15

Verse 4 Jacob and Esau were brothers. Jacob had done Esau a grievous wrong and run away to spend many years living way away from Esau. Now Jacob is returning to live near Esau but is fearful of Esau's reaction. Esau demonstrates uncommon, Godly forgiveness and goes even further and welcomes Jacob back with love.

Verse 15 Joseph's brothers had sold Joseph into slavery. Joseph, with God's help, had become very powerful in the land where he started as a slave. Instead of harming his brothers, Joseph welcomed them with love.

Matthew 6:12-14; 18:21- 22

Verses 12-14 are part of what is known as the “model prayer” voiced by Jesus at His disciples’ request. If we are forgiven by God like others are forgiven by us, we need to be careful to forgive fully and freely.

Verses 21-22 Jesus tells us to forgive again and again. It would probably be easier to forgive continuously than to keep a record until the 491<sup>st</sup> time.

Mark 11:25

We need to forgive those who do us wrong  
BEFORE we ask for God to forgive us.  
Sometimes forgiving others is a challenge but it  
is required.

Luke 17:3-4

We are commanded to forgive if there is repentance on the part of the sinner.

## Acts 7:60

Stephen is considered to be the first Christian martyr. He was being stoned to death for his belief in Christ. Notice how Stephen asked God not to hold his stone-throwing judges accountable for their actions.



## 2 Corinthians 2:7-10

Paul is reminding this group of believers that forgiveness is necessary.

## Ephesians 4:31-32

Not only are we instructed to forgive but we are not to hold grudges. We may not be able to forget a wrong someone does to us but we are to “forget” the bitterness and anger because that hurts us and our witness.

## Colossians 3:13

Again we are instructed to forgive. Notice that the forgiveness does not just benefit the sinner but us as well.

**These two verses, one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament summarize this lesson.**

**Zechariah 7:9 and Ephesians 4:2**

**Zechariah and Colossians both tell us to be forgiving.**

**God expects us to show mercy and kindness.  
Unforgiveness, bitterness, rage: there is no place for them.**

If we don't forgive we give Satan and the one who wronged us two victories. If we don't forgive all we get is separation from God and perhaps, ulcers. Your anger will eventually eat at you and interfere with your personal relationships with God, your spouse, and your children.

While you are working on forgiving others and emptying your heart of any bitterness, hurt, or anger don't forget to examine your feelings towards your parents and siblings especially if your childhood was not good or if your parents "played favorites". This may be some of the hardest forgiveness to find and some of the most deeply embedded bitterness, hurt, or anger to identify but if you plan to walk with Christ you must find it and, with God's help, root it out and give it up.

Everything that we have examined in this session is summarized in the assurance that follows.

Assurance 4:

***YESTERDAY IS GONE AND SO ARE ITS  
PROBLEMS, HURTS, AND REGRETS***



This concludes session 4

Let's pray.

Lord, show me/us how to attain Your peace by learning to forgive others whether it is my/our parents, other relatives, former teachers, bosses, coworkers, or friends. Help me/us to realize that You have forgiven me/us and to apply that to my/our own lives as I/we forgive others.