



What The Bible Says About Forgiveness - Handout

Matthew 6:14-15 (NLT) If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Rate each of the following statements as an **ACCURATE** or an **INACCURATE** description of forgiveness:

- You cannot honestly forgive someone unless that person shows some remorse for what they did. ____
ACCURATE ____ **INACCURATE**
- If you really forgive someone, you would want that person to be released from the consequences of their actions. ____ **ACCURATE** ____ **INACCURATE**
- If you genuinely forgive someone, you should rebuild your relationship with that person. ____ **ACCURATE**
____ **INACCURATE**
- If you have really forgiven someone, you should be able to forget what they have done to you. ____
ACCURATE ____ **INACCURATE**

FORGIVENESS AND REPENTANCE

“You cannot honestly forgive someone unless that person shows some remorse for what they did.”

There are at least three arguments people use for demanding repentance before granting forgiveness:

1. Forgiveness needs to be _____.

Ephesians 2:8-9 ⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2. Forgiving an unrepentant person invites further _____.

Romans 5:20b, 6:1-2 But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound ... ¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3. Forgiving an unrepentant person is _____.

The issue of repentance is vitally important to _____ forgiveness, but totally irrelevant to _____ forgiveness.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

FORGIVENESS AND CONSEQUENCES

“If you really forgive someone, you would want that person to be released from the consequences of their actions.”

The Bible clearly distinguishes between two very important words:

- _____ is my desire to see another person suffer for the pain he has caused me. The Bible consistently warns against harboring this kind of feeling in my heart.
- **Romans 12:19 (CEV)** Dear friends, don't try to get even. Let God take revenge. In the Scriptures the Lord says,

“I am the one to take revenge and pay them back.”

· _____ is the payment God or society might demand from someone because of a wrong they have committed against us, or against society as a whole.

· **Isaiah 1:17 (NLT)** Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the orphan. Fight for the rights of widows.

VENGEANCE	JUSTICE
Our personal desire for retribution against our offender	The repayment another person demands from our offender
Striving to settle the debt ourselves	Allowing someone else to settle the score
Leads to bitterness	Leads to healing

· **Why would a forgiving God (or a forgiving person) still allow someone to suffer consequences for their actions?**

1. Consequences promote _____ in society.

§ **Genesis 9:6 (NKJV)** Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God he made man.

2. Consequences serve as a _____ to others.

§ **1 Timothy 5:20 (NLT)** Anyone who sins should be rebuked in front of the whole church so that others will have a proper fear of God.

3. Consequences prevent us from further _____.

§ **Psalms 119:67 (NLT)** I used to wander off until you disciplined me; but now I closely follow your word.

FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

“If you genuinely forgive someone, you should rebuild your relationship with that person.”

· **Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT)** ²³ “So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴ leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

· **Psalms 133:1** Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

FORGIVENESS DEPENDS UPON _____, WHILE RECONCILIATION DEPENDS UPON _____.

· **Romans 12:18 (NKJV)** If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

· **Amos 3:3 (NKJV)** Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Reconciliation usually involves three ingredients:

· _____ – admitting that we are responsible for the wrong that has been done to another person

· _____ – offering some type of compensation to the person we have wronged for the loss they suffered

· _____ – demonstrating a change in our behavior over a period of time toward the person we have wronged

FORGIVENESS	RECONCILIATION
It takes one person to forgive	It takes two to be reunited
Forgiving happens inside the wounded person	Reunion happens in a relationship between people
We can forgive a person who never says he is sorry	We cannot be truly reunited unless he is honestly sorry
We can forgive even if we do not trust the person who wronged us once not to wrong us again	Reunion can happen only if we can trust the person who wronged us once not to wrong us again
Forgiving has no strings attached	Reunion has several strings attached

FORGIVENESS AND FORGETTING

“If you have really forgiven someone, you should be able to forget what they have done to you.”

· **Jeremiah 31:34c** ... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

· **It’s not that God _____ remember, it’s that He _____ remember!**

· **Romans 4:7-8 (NLT)** ⁷ “Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight.
⁸ Yes, what joy for those whose sin is no longer counted against them by the Lord.”

· **Forgetting is a function of the _____; forgiving is a function of the _____.**

· **HOW CAN I HANDLE MEMORIES OF A PAST HURT?**

1. Do not _____ the memories.
2. Recall your own _____.
3. Remember your _____ to forgive.
4. Realize that healing memories takes _____.