

This False Belief Will Confine You in a Stronghold of Bitterness

Forgiveness is a conscious decision to wipe the slate clean of all judgment, to give up all resentment, to release the offender from the debt of his or her act and personally accept the price of reconciliation. God has forgiven us; therefore, we cannot withhold forgiveness from others. Jesus said, "If you forgive men for their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Matt. 6:14).

Forgiveness is not a feeling. If you wait until you feel like forgiving, you may never forgive. When you forgive, you are accepting what Jesus did at the cross. Even though what you believe the person did was wrong and you may never receive an apology from them, you are choosing to forgive them based on what Jesus did and not on how you feel. Forgiveness is a two-step process. First, we make a conscious decision to forgive the person in our mind because it is the right thing to do based on the finished work of the cross. Second, we need to pray and ask Jesus to align our heart to feel the forgiveness we just offered.

Forgiveness does not mean pretending the offense never happened, condoning the wrong or demanding that the offender change their behavior. It does not mean that you have to put yourself back into a relationship with them. It is acknowledging that you are not going to allow it to hold you in bondage anymore. Forgiveness means not arguing it out anymore but choosing to release it instead. Forgiveness is not the same as forgetting. You can completely forgive someone and still remember the offense. However, when you offer forgiveness, the hurt won't be so intense, and the memory will fade over time because it is no longer consuming you.

Forgiveness is an expression of love, and love takes the initiative to forgive even if the offender has not asked for forgiveness. Forgiveness is difficult. It goes against our human nature.

We can find the power to forgive through Christ. We have the power to forgive through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. When we feel like we can't forgive is when we have to rely on the Holy Spirit within us to assist us in the process of forgiving.

Forgiveness is renewing our mind that we don't have to receive an apology back from the person who offended us. It is accepting what Jesus did at the cross without any expectations of receiving anything back from a person in return. It releases us. I encourage you to spend time this week with the Holy Spirit and allow Him to speak to you and help you through forgiving. I can also walk you through additional forgiveness in my book, *Discerning and Destroying the Works of Satan*. Deepen your relationship and learn to hear clearly and let the Holy Spirit co-labor with you in your spiritual walk through Charisma Media's "Life in the Spirit" Series. These booklets will deepen your understanding and relationship with the Holy Spirit so He can assist you in forgiving. {eo}

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