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## [As a Christian, Do I Need to Forgive a Person Who has Hurt Me?](#)

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Forgiveness is the decision to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge.

Do you find it easy to ask God for forgiveness, but difficult to grant forgiveness to others?

In the Lord's Prayer, God teaches us to ask for forgiveness of our debts (balance due) and to forgive those that are our debtors (balance owed). God's Word commands us to forgive those that wrong us. If we disobey this directive, it has serious emotional, physical and spiritual results for our lives.

Forgiveness is not an act of justice, but an act of grace, mercy and love.

Forgiveness is a concept Christians often discuss and encourage others to practice. In our real world relationships forgiveness is a painful process. It's more difficult than many people have you believe. These wounds, which we carry in our bodies, have pierced through to our inner soul. These wounds can be self or other-inflicted injuries. It is hard to forgive the ones responsible (self or others) for these deep painful injuries. Why should I forgive anyway? They don't deserve forgiveness.

In life trials, our prayer must be "let these circumstances make me "better not bitter." Whether you are suffering from the pains of divorce, death, abuse, mistakes, or loss of job or love, nursing an unforgiving spirit will develop bitterness and resentment in your heart and soul. Bitterness (holding a grudge) is a powerful emotion that depletes the brain of needed chemicals thus causing clinical depression. It can be directed at yourself, others, and/or God. Bitterness can be associated with anxiety, paranoid disorders, and inability to fight infections, and heart attacks and strokes. As depression remains untreated for too long the person may become suicidal.

If you refuse to forgive because of vengeful motives you are trying to play God. Revenge wants the person that hurt you to experience the same or more intense pain than they inflicted on you. This is revenge. Romans 12:19-21 cancels our rights to seek revenge. "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written it is mine to avenge; I will repay." "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

The old adage "forgive and forget" doesn't work either. Some things need to be dealt with, worked through, forgiven but remembered as a warning not to get into the same situation again.

To just "forget" a wound of the past is emotionally unhealthy. It involves repressing and denying emotions that will produce emotional disorders such as depression and anxiety.

Forgiveness does not mean you cozy up to an abusive person, or become good friends. Forgiveness does not necessarily mean you reconcile with the person.

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Forgiveness is making a choice.

It is an act of the will. It is a decision you make for your own sake to restore your life and your emotions to good health.

Forgiveness is not an act of self-sacrifice.

It is an act of healthy, Biblical self-love. If you harbor bitterness and grudges, you are allowing others to re-victimize you whenever you brood over the past hurts. The abuser is in control of the bitter person's emotions. Forgiving another frees you from that abusers control. With emotional freedom comes emotional health and well-being.

Forgiveness can only be accomplished by you.

You have the power to forgive regardless of what the other person does or doesn't do.

Forgiveness does not equal reconciliation.

It takes two to reconcile. Removing both the abuser and bitterness from your life is the God pleasing and healthy choice you need to make.

Forgiveness is an ongoing process.

Few people can forgive and wipe the offense totally from their mind. Every time the offence comes back, it must be forgiven again. As you continually forgive each remembrance of the offense, your thinking and feeling will be re-channeled until the time the memories no longer return. Or if the memories return, the pain associated with them is gone. The task of forgiveness will be finished when you will be at peace with the past.

As you choose to forgive, the process starts with an act of the will. Biblically we are to choose forgiveness no matter how the other person responds. Having an unforgiving spirit only hurts you. Choosing to forgive doesn't mean you are able to blot out the past, but it does mean you identify your feelings and refuse to dwell on them. As you forgive make sure you allow yourself time to work through these feelings.

Revenge is natural and forgiving is unnatural. God doesn't want us to respond to life and its challenges in a natural way. He wants us to respond in a supernatural way.

Forgiveness resolves the past and clears a path into the future.

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