

# The Christian Arsenal

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## LOVE IS FORGIVING

50 Days of Love

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Part 6 of 7

The ultimate test of love is when somebody hurts you.

*“Love doesn’t keep a record of wrongs that others do.”* I Cor. 13:5

### FORGIVENESS QUIZ

- A person should not be forgiven until they ask for it. T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_
- Forgiving includes minimizing the offense and the pain that was caused. T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_
- Forgiveness includes restoring trust and reuniting a relationship. T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_
- You haven’t really forgiven until you’ve forgotten the offense. T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_
- When I see someone else hurt then it is my duty to forgive the offender. T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

If you study the Bible and you study what Jesus says, you’ll discover that all five of those statements are false.

#### 1. WHAT FORGIVENESS IS NOT

- IT ISN’T CONDITIONAL.

Genuine forgiveness is unconditional.

- IT ISN’T MINIMIZING THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE OFFENSE.

Understand the difference between:

Being wounded – someone hurts you accidentally.

Being wronged – someone intentionally meant to hurt you.

- IT ISN’T RESUMING A RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT CHANGES

Forgiveness is not the same as restoring a relationship.

Trust must be built over a long period of time. Forgiveness takes care of the damage done, but it doesn’t guarantee that the relationship will be restored.

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Forgiveness is your part in reconciliation. But for a relationship to be restored, the offender has to do three other things that are totally unrelated to forgiveness.

- Demonstrate genuine repentance (That means a change in their lifestyle.).
- They have to make restitution whenever possible for the damage done.
- The offender must rebuild your trust by proving they have changed over time.

We are obligated to forgive over and over but you are not obligated to trust that person or instantly restore the relationship.

- **IT ISN'T FORGETTING WHAT HAPPENED.**

The only way to forget something is to replace it.

The key to forgetting is learning to see it through the lens of grace, God's sovereignty and how God can turn even bad things into good in your life if you'll trust Him and you learn to respond in the right way.

- **IT ISN'T MY RIGHT WHEN I WASN'T THE ONE WHO WAS HURT.**

Only the victim has the right to forgive

## 2. WHAT IS GENUINE FORGIVENESS?

- **RELINQUISHING MY RIGHT TO GET EVEN.**

*"...Never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. For He has said that He will repay those who deserve it." Romans 12:19 (LB)*

Who can do a better job of getting even? You or God?

If you don't understand this you will fall into the trap of bitterness.

*"Be careful that none of you fails to respond to the grace which God gives, for if he does there can very easily spring up in him a bitter spirit which is not only bad in itself, but can also poison the lives of many others." Heb 12:15 (Ph)*

- **RESPONDING TO EVIL WITH GOOD.**

*"...Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:27-28 (NIV)*

**How do you know when you have forgiven?**

1. You can pray for God to bless them.

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2. You also understand their hurt.  
Hurt people hurt people.

- **REPEATING THE PROCESS AS LONG AS NECESSARY.**

Forgiveness is never or rarely a one-time shot.

*“Peter asked, Lord how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times? No, Jesus replied, seventy times seven!”* Matt. 18:21-22 (NLT)

### **WAYS TO TAKE THIS STEP:**

- Empty chair technique
- Writing a letter

It is not the hurt that destroys relationships – it’s the refusal to forgive that destroys.

You don’t forgive because you feel like it, but because it is the right thing to do.

### **THE SECRET OF FORGIVENESS: REMEMBER HOW MUCH GOD HAS FORGIVEN YOU**

*“Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”* Col. 3:13 (NLT)

*“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ, God forgave you.”* Eph. 4:32 (NIV)

### **WHY SHOULD YOU FORGIVE?**

- God has forgiven you.
- Bitterness makes you miserable.
- Forgiveness is a two-way street.

You say, “But I could never forgive that person.”

### **THEN I HOPE YOU NEVER SIN.**