

# Forgiveness Worksheet

## How to Forgive

To begin with, you must make yourself vulnerable to God. He has to be allowed to bring to the surface all the painful emotions you feel towards those who hurt you. Do not try to suppress or hide your pain. You need to grant God permission to go down to the emotional core of your being and bring that pain to the surface so those damaged emotions can begin to heal once your decision to forgive is complete.

1. Get alone and ask the Lord to show you the people you need to forgive.
  - Make a list of the names of people He brings to your memory.
    - They may be the little girl from the third grade, or your fifth-grade school teacher, etc.
      - If applicable, be sure to include yourself.
2. Go over each name with the Lord and express to him how they have hurt you.
3. Write down what they did and why you need to forgive them.
  - Example:
    - Mrs. Smith, my fifth-grade teacher, humiliated me. She made fun of me and I was so angry. I was so vulnerable and not able to protect myself from her.
4. List whatever feelings you had and the degree to which you felt them.
  - Example:
    - i. I was so angry, I did not care if they fell and hurt themselves. Actually, I wish they had.
    - ii. I wished I could have died because of the humiliation.
5. Write a short note to each person who has hurt you, telling them what they did and how it made you feel. End each note with: *"But I choose to forgive you!"*
  - These notes do not need to be given to the person you need to forgive. These are an act of faith. The Lord will see you are serious.
6. Choose to forgive and release them. Then do it.
  - Pray a simple prayer similar to this:
    - Lord, I want to confess that I have not loved, but have resented, certain people and have unforgiveness in my heart. Lord, I now choose to forgive \_\_\_\_\_ (*name of the person or persons*), in the name of Jesus, amen.
      - Pray that prayer for each person on your list.
7. Last of all, this step can be the hardest but also the most freeing.
  - Go somewhere alone, the bathroom, or your bedroom with a mirror. Look at yourself in the mirror. Forgive and release yourself for everything that you need to forgive yourself of.

## The Motivation for Seeking Forgiveness for the Wrongs You Did to Others

Matt. 5:23-26 is the key passage for seeking forgiveness. Several points in these verses bear emphasizing. The worshipper coming before God to offer a gift *remembers* that someone has something against him. The Holy Spirit is the One who brings to his or her mind the wrong that was done.

Only the actions which have hurt another person need to be confessed to them. If you have had jealousy, lustful, or angry thoughts toward another, and they don't know about it, these are to be confessed to God alone. An exception to this principle occurs when restitution needs to be made. If you stole or broke something, damaged someone's reputation, and so on, you need to go to that person and make it right, even if he or she is unaware of what you did.

## The Process for Seeking Forgiveness for What You Have Done to Others

1. Write out what you did wrong and why you did it (this is not to be given to the person you offended).
2. Make sure you have already forgiven them for whatever they may have done to you.
3. Think through exactly how you will ask them to forgive you. Be sure to:
  - a. Label your action as “wrong.”
  - b. Be specific and admit what you did.
  - c. Make no defenses or excuses.
  - d. Do not blame the other people, and do not expect or demand that they ask for your forgiveness.
  - e. Your confession should lead to the direct question: “Will you forgive me?”
4. Seek the right place and the right time to approach the offended person.
5. Ask for forgiveness in person with anyone with whom you can talk face to face with, with the following exception: *Do not go alone* when your safety is in danger.
6. Except where no other means of communication is possible, *do not write a letter* because: a letter can be very easily misread or misunderstood; a letter can be read by the wrong people (those having nothing to do with the offense or the confession); a letter can be kept when it should have been destroyed.
7. Once you sincerely seek forgiveness, you are free—whether the other person forgives you or not (Rom. 12:18).
8. After forgiveness, fellowship with God in worship (Matt. 5:24).