

She Recovers
BY TIFFANY FRANCOIS

FORGIVENESS

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?

MATTHEW 18:22

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18:22

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

THE TRUTH ABOUT FORGIVENESS

TO FORGIVE:

THE ACT OF PARDONING SOMEONE FOR AN OFFENSE, DEBT, OR WRONGDOING; RELEASING RESENTMENT, ANGER, OR THE DESIRE FOR REVENGE TOWARD SOMEONE WHO HAS CAUSED HARM.

TO PARDON MEANS TO:

GRANT MERCY AND CANCEL A DESERVED PUNISHMENT. IT'S CLOSELY RELATED TO FORGIVENESS BUT EMPHASIZES REMOVING THE PENALTY THAT WOULD NORMALLY FOLLOW SIN OR WRONGDOING.

THE HIDDEN FACES OF UNFORGIVENESS

Unforgiveness doesn't always look like hatred—it often hides behind emotions we've normalized. Here are a few ways it shows up:

- Fear: Afraid of being hurt again, so we withhold grace.
- Trauma Response: Emotional shutdown, avoidance, or overreaction when reminded of the person or event.
- Resentment: Quiet bitterness that builds walls around our hearts.
- Anger: Ongoing irritation or hostility toward the one who caused pain.
- Hurt: Lingering wounds that replay the moment of betrayal.

Unforgiveness wears many faces—but the root is the same: a heart still holding onto what God is trying to heal.

SO WHAT IS

TRUE

FORGIVENESS?

“True forgiveness is completely wiping out the offender’s record. When you see them or hear about them, you should no longer see what they’ve done.”

This type of forgiveness is supernatural. It’s not human nature to forget pain—it’s divine nature to choose mercy over memory.

True forgiveness means:

- You stop identifying the person by their mistake.
- You no longer rehearse the narrative of what happened.
- You release them—and yourself—from emotional prison.

It doesn’t mean reconciliation or trust must be instant—it means you no longer carry the charge against them.

SIGNS WE
HAVEN'T FULLY
FORGIVEN

Take a moment for self-check. You may still need healing if you notice:

- You feel instant anger when their name is mentioned.
- You replay the situation in your mind or tell the story repeatedly.
- You experience emotional or physical tension when around them.
- You avoid the person or the memory altogether.
- You withhold prayer, kindness, or empathy toward them.
- You secretly hope they “get what they deserve.”

These aren't signs of failure—they're indicators of where God still wants to bring healing.

**FORGIVING
REPEAT
OFFENDERS**

Forgiving the Repeat Offender

Jesus said, “Not seven times, but seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22).

Some wounds reopen because the same person keeps failing us—but forgiveness remains our response, not their reward.

How to navigate repeat offenses:

- Set healthy boundaries – forgiveness doesn’t mean foolish access.
- Pray for discernment – ask God when to restore, when to release.
- Practice consistent surrender – each time the hurt resurfaces, give it back to God.
- Remember, forgiveness is often a process, not a one-time event.

Each time you forgive, you heal another layer of your heart.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Reflection Questions:

1. Who do I still see through the lens of what they did to me?
2. What emotions arise when I think about that person or situation?
3. What debt do I still feel they “owe” me (apology, explanation, justice)?
4. How has holding on to this hurt affected my peace or my purpose?

Activity: Write to Release

- Write down the names of people or situations that need forgiveness.
- Beside each name, write what you’re releasing them from (“I release the need for an apology... I release the pain from this betrayal...”).
- Pray over your list and speak aloud:
- “Father, I release their record. I choose to see them as You do. Heal my heart where pain once lived.”

Pardoning Those Who Have Hurt You

Pardoning someone goes a step beyond forgiveness – it's not only releasing the offense, but also releasing the consequence you feel they deserve.

When you pardon, you're saying: "You no longer owe me anything – not an apology, not understanding, not closure."

It's a divine act of mercy that mirrors the heart of God, who "abundantly pardons" (Isaiah 55:7). To pardon is to remove the record entirely, to no longer see the person through the lens of what they've done, and to consciously choose peace over punishment.

Pardoning doesn't make the hurt right; it makes you free. It pulls you out of the courtroom of your own pain and places you back into the grace of God's presence – where healing begins, and the burden lifts.

When you pardon, you say with your spirit,
"I choose mercy over memory. I choose grace over grudges."
And in doing so, you open the door for God to deal with their heart –
and restore yours.