

How to Deal with Unforgiveness

Matthew 18:21-22

Matthew 18:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ “Then Peter came and said to Him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.”

God’s Word clearly teaches that we’re to forgive those who hurt us. So let’s identify practical ways to confront the matter of unforgiveness head-on. You may want to keep this list in your Bible or some other handy place for easy review.

Take it seriously. Unforgiveness is an issue that shouldn’t be dismissed.

Assume full responsibility. Don’t blame anyone for your feelings or actions.

Confess it honestly. Be specific and direct with God about what you feel, and acknowledge that unforgiveness is sin. Don’t “soften” the matter or let yourself off the hook.

Lay down your anger. Unless you deal with your resentment, bitterness can re-enter your life later on.

Pray for the other person. This may feel impossible or unnatural, but do it anyway. Praying is a choice to act lovingly, regardless of how you are treated. This will impact your relationship with that individual—and your outlook.

Ask that individual to forgive you. If the other person knows that you’ve been harboring bitterness, you need to ask for his or her forgiveness.

Do something nice for that person. Let a loving gesture demonstrate your desire to restore the relationship.

Don’t allow Satan to throw you back into unforgiveness. Once the matter is resolved, watch out for stray thoughts that could stir up memories of how the other person hurt you.

This process isn’t easy, but it works. If you go through these steps every time you are hurt, God will truly work miracles in your relationships.