

Practical Forgiveness Means . . . (Matthew 18)

Healing Hurts Through Confession and Forgiveness

How we choose to handle hurts will go a long way in determining the strength of our relationships, particularly in the family.

Believers handle guilt through [confession](#) and we handle anger and bitterness through [forgiveness](#).

Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you . . . ¹⁹Cling tightly to your faith in Christ, and always keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.

1 Timothy 1:18-19 (New Living Translation)

● FORGIVENESS

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 (New International Version)

The Results of Failure to Forgive

- You inadvertently invite [the devil](#) to operate in the life of your family.

And "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil" Ephesians 4:26, 27 (NLT)

Foothold = a deliberate sin by a believer which Satan uses for greater evil

- You [hurt yourself](#).
- You produce relational [distance](#).

- . . . [assessing the debt](#) and grieving the loss.
- . . . making a decision to [forgive the debt](#).
- . . . refusing to [replay](#) the hurt.
- . . . changing your [behavior](#).

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called. 1 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

● CONFESSION

"This is how I want you to conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work things out with God."

Matthew 5:23-24 (The Message)

So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. Acts 24:16 (NIV)

Practical Confession Means . . .

- . . . accepting [responsibility](#).

Yes, each of us will have to give a personal account to God. Romans 14:12 (NLT)

- . . . going to God for [His forgiveness](#).

But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the LORD made the punishment fall on him, the punishment all of us deserved. Isaiah 53:5-7 (Good News Bible)

- . . . [confessing](#) to your loved one.

- Admit [wrong](#).
- Identify [the offense](#).
- Ask for [forgiveness](#).
- Show a willingness to [change your behavior](#).

At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?"²² Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven."²⁵ "The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn't pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market."²⁶⁻²⁷ "The poor wretch threw himself at the king's feet and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt."²⁸ "The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, 'Pay up. Now!'"²⁹⁻³¹ "The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' But he wouldn't do it. He had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king."³²⁻³⁵ "The king summoned the man and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn't you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?' The king was furious and put the screws to the man until he paid back his entire debt. And that's exactly what my Father in heaven is going to do to each one of you who doesn't forgive unconditionally anyone who asks for mercy."

Matthew 18:21-35 (The Message)