

Forgive and Reconcile  
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Objectives:

1. Understand that we must forgive
2. Challenges to reconciliation.
3. The process of true confession.

**We must forgive:**

Matthew 6<sup>14</sup>For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

**How many times?**

Matthew 18 <sup>21</sup>Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

**Value of forgiveness:**

1. Free from anger.
2. Free from need to punish.
3. Free from keeping accounts.
4. Free from victim mentality.

**When we forgive we:**

- 1: Choose not to harm, punish, or hold accountable. "You deserve death, but I will not harm you."
- 2: Work to be free from obsessive thoughts about the offense.
- 3: Thank God for the freedom to forgive, keeping an attitude of gratitude ever present.
- 4: But we may also maintain healthy boundaries with people who are not repentant.

What is the hardest thing that you have had to forgive? \_\_\_\_\_

**Reconciliation** (to restore to friendship or harmony):

**Matthew 5:24** leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be **reconciled** to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

We are to be reconciled **if possible**.

Romans 12 <sup>18</sup>**If it is possible**, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

If it is NOT possible, then what? – It IS POSSIBLE to forgive even though you cannot reconcile.

Unrepentant sinners cannot be reconciled. You can forgive, but keep distance from someone who harms and does not repent, or change.

### **What about Enemies:**

Sometimes, people act as enemies. They will harm if given the opportunity. You don't have to be an enemy even if you have one, or more.

**Matthew 5:44** But I tell you: **Love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you,

So we are to pray for them, but we don't have to put ourselves in harms way needlessly.

**Matthew 7:6** "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw **your pearls** to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

How many enemies do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

## **Confession and Forgiveness**

Format for individuals who have hurt someone else:

Write out these 5 steps and prepare to present it to the person you have injured. This may take some time to thoroughly explore the impact of the wrong and reach a point of true repentance. Humbly speak this to the one that you have harmed. You merely speak the Truth in a way that he/she can understand what you are saying. If they reject your confession, continue to pray a blessing on them. (See *2 and 6 word prayers* in Counsel Tools at [www.livefaithfull.com](http://www.livefaithfull.com))

1. ***Here is what I did to hurt you.*** Write it out specifically and concretely.
2. ***Why what I did is bad for you.*** The Confessor describes how he/she knows the negative effects in the present and also in the future. For example, adultery may lead to feeling unwanted, inferior, undesirable, as well as stirring issues of betrayal and abandonment. It may make it difficult to trust in the future.  
Sexual abuse of a child would include statements about how it can be confusing, can lead to future problems with self esteem or relationships and in some cases gender identity confusion.
3. ***Why it is bad for me.*** i.e. wrecking my character, losing all contact with my family, lack of intimacy, inability to grow, objectifying people, etc.
4. ***Here is what I am doing so that it will never happen again.*** Recovery plan. Accountability. Life changes and patterns. Boundaries around being in a situation of vulnerability.
5. ***Restitution.*** i.e. I have hurt you so I will serve you in some way for a period of time – 3 months, or I will pay for therapy, or pay for a year of a health club membership to encourage your health, etc. For a child an appropriate gift may be meaningful.