



# How to Forgive

- A brief guide -

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# Why is forgiveness important?

Forgiveness may be the most powerful tool God gives us as Christians. Consider a few points:

- 1) We forgive to be obedient to God. If we are to become more and more like Christ, we need to forgive every offense. Jesus commands us to forgive “seventy times seven” meaning, as many times as it takes.
- 2) We forgive for our own sake because unforgiveness and bitterness make us miserable. It releases the unnecessary burden we carry with the offense and releases us from slavery to the people we’re offended by.
- 3) We forgive for our friends and family. When we live with an attitude of forgiveness, we are more joyful, peaceful and full of gratitude. We are better friends, parents and members of society.





## Step One

### **Realize you're offended**

If it hurt, it hurt. You do not need to approach the offender for this process to work. In fact, we are called to forgive even if the offender isn't apologetic, repentant or even a little sorry. Often, realizing and admitting this to ourselves is one of the biggest hurdles to finding freedom.

Tell God, "I'm offended." And ask for the Holy Spirit's help as you seek to understand your offense.

## Step Two

### **Determine what you have judged**

Judgments are what we've chosen to believe because of the offense. For example, if someone makes a comment that we find offensive and we judge that person to be rude and uncouth. They may not be rude and uncouth, we might have simply misunderstood or misheard. Our judgment of them puts us in a position that only God should occupy.

Recognize your judgments to the offender.



## Step Three

### Take inventory of your emotions

Often, painful emotions come with offense. Anger is a common one, but any negative emotion can indicate offense (sadness, confusion, manipulated, disrespected, ashamed, etc.) Identifying the negative emotions associated with an offense is essential for them to lose their power in your life and diminish.

When we identify our emotions it increases our self-awareness and helps us find the truth.

## Step Four

### Release it

Pray. You don't have to feel like forgiving, in fact you probably won't feel like it. It's an act of will. A choice. God is so faithful about completing in us what we begin in obedience. You may find it surprising when you look back at the offense and no longer harbor negative emotions, judgments or beliefs.

"I choose to forgive [insert name] for [specific event/behavior]..."

Learn more about how to forgive including a comprehensive prayer template at [www.LordMin.com](http://www.LordMin.com).