

Overcoming Unforgiveness
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1 John 5:1-5 (NIV)

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

*“Our response to an offense determines our future.” – John Bevere, *The Bait of Satan**

Offense - Something that causes a person to be hurt, angry, or upset.

Greek: **Skandalon** - A trap or stumbling block.

Offense is a tool the devil uses to bring people into captivity.

Luke 17:1 (NKJV)

...“It is impossible that no offenses should come...”

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Unforgiveness - Having or holding a grudge against someone who has offended, slandered or hurt you; not having the compassion or mercy to forgive.

Unforgiveness is being unwilling to let your offender “off the hook”.

1 Peter 5:8 (NLT)

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

1 Peter 5:8 (MSG)

Keep a cool head. Stay alert. The Devil is poised to pounce, and would like nothing better than to catch you napping.

Bait – Any person or situation the devil can use to exploit an area of vulnerability in my life.

Matthew 18:21–35 (NIV)

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who

sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Am I dealing with unforgiveness?

- Is there anyone you think you could never forgive for what they have done
- Do you avoid seeing or talking with certain people?
- Do you get upset, angry or feel hurt when you think or talk about someone that has offended you?
- Do you keep rehearsing situations or conversations involving your offender?

Forgiveness - To stop feeling anger toward someone who has done something wrong; to stop blaming someone; to stop requiring payment of a debt that is owed.

Greek: **aphiemi** – send away; leave behind; let go.

Mark 11:24-25 (NIV)

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

How to forgive:

- Admit that you have been hurt

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.

How to forgive:

- Forgive as you have been forgiven

Ephesians 4:31–32 (NLT)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

How to forgive:

- Stop rehearsing the offense

Philippians 3:13–14 (NLT)

No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

How to forgive:

- Pray for your offender

Luke 6:27–28 (NLT)

“But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.”