

WHAT FORGIVENESS IS NOT

1. Forgiveness is not a feeling.
2. Forgiveness is not a quick, easy, and one time action.
3. Forgiveness is not dependent on confession.

Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him.
Genesis 42:8 (NIV)

4. Forgiveness is not forgetting the offense or pretending you were not hurt.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, He said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you."
Genesis 45:4-5 (NIV)

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.
Genesis 45:1-2 (NIV)

Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them...
Genesis 45:14-15 (NIV)

5. Forgiveness is not requiring an agreed upon version of the past.

"Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt." Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them. But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them...Israel said, "I'm convinced."
Genesis 45:26-28 (NIV)

6. Forgiveness is not condoning or excusing what the person did to you.
7. Forgiveness is not re-trusting or reconciliation.

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

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

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.
Mark 11:25 (NIV)

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*
Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

HOW DO I FORGIVE?

Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." The second son he named Ephraim and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."
Genesis 41:50-52 (NIV)

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.
Romans 12:19 (NIV)