

Caution: Watch Your Step

Amends is NOT “I’m sorry, baby.”

Amends is both apology (“I was wrong when I....”) and restitution.

When a man or woman wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the LORD, that person is guilty and must confess the sin he has committed. He must make full **restitution** for his wrong, add one fifth to it and give it all to the person he has wronged. Numbers 5:6-7 NIV

Fools mock at making amends for sin, but goodwill is found among the upright. Fools make fun of guilt, but the godly acknowledge it and seek reconciliation. Proverbs 14:9 NLT

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24 NIV

Forgiveness

“Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins”. Matthew 6:9-15 NLT

The Nature of Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is transferring a case to a higher court.
- Forgiveness is NOT the same as “just forget it”.
- Forgiveness is a decision.
- Forgiveness is NOT a feeling.

Offenders Beware

- Remember: this isn’t about you.
- It is not the “offendeds” job to make you feel better.
- The offender should expect nothing in return.

The Offended

- Beware of an offender who makes it all about “them”.
- Beware of an offender who uses an amends to attempt to elicit an amends.
- Forgiveness is allowing the amends process to proceed – that’s all.
- Once a case is transferred, it stays transferred.
- Do not confuse the amends process with the responsibility we all have to choose our friends wisely.

Forgiveness is such a huge topic! All of us have been both offender and offended. And most of us have been either the maker or receiver of an inadequate amends process that has gone terribly wrong. Frankly, sometimes a person making an amends ends up causing more offense because they’ve revealed their complete cluelessness about the original harming behavior! Thankfully, God has given us plenty of principles and practices to guide us down this road. This fall we’re working in our home study groups and in our “Bible Study Basics” class on Wednesday nights developing biblical study foundations that can inform us about topics as gynomous as forgiveness. You may want to take your concordance (they’re in the back of most bibles) and look up all the scriptural references on the topic of forgiveness (see: forgive, forgiving, forgiven, forgiveness, etc.) and study for yourself all that the bible has to say on the topic.