

When It's Your Turn to Ask for Forgiveness

Marti Wibbels, MS, LMHC

Therefore become imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father]; and walk continually in love [that is, value one another—practice empathy and compassion, unselfishly seeking the best for others], just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice to God [slain for you, so that it became] a sweet fragrance (Ephesians 5:1-2, AMP).

When is it time to ask for others' forgiveness?

1. **When our words and actions haven't exhibited God's unconditional love.**
2. When we've been **impatient, unkind, or selfish**, valuing ourselves more than others.
3. *When we've **gossiped**: *The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body (Proverbs 18:8, ESV).*
4. *When we've participated in a conversation or failed to correct someone who is practicing **slander** (assassinating someone's reputation): *A good name is to be desired more than great wealth, favor is better than silver and gold (Proverbs 22:1, NASB).*

*It's possible to do more harm than good if we tell someone, "I'm sorry; I've been gossiping about you," or "I've been criticizing you behind your back." If you've practiced gossip or slander, stop immediately. Confess it to God, per 1 John 1:9, and wholeheartedly live in God's love, kindness, and Truth.

5. **When we're lying to ourselves or others.** Whether a lie is covert or overt, it could be rooted in deceptive, self-protective actions. Even repeatedly being late could be a subtle form of lying (selfishly seeing our time/plans/schedule as more valuable than others' time). If inconsistencies between your words and actions have become a form of rationalization (rational lies), allow God to transform you. *God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love—like Christ in everything (Ephesians 4:15, MSG).*

Colossians 3:23 urges us to *work from the soul [that is, put in your very best effort], as [something done] for the Lord and not for men (AMP).* When people disappoint us, overlook our kindness, or disrespect what we've done for them—it's vital to remember to **keep doing our work for the LORD!**

Dear ones, let's live in forgiveness and love! ***Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; for I trust in You; teach me the way in which I should walk; for to You I lift up my soul***" (Psalm 143:8, NASB). ***I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first,' doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel, takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end*** (1 Corinthians 13: 3b-7, MSG).



For **additional ideas on forgiveness**, see **chapters six and seven** of *Core Healing from Trauma*, a biblical counseling workbook for individuals or groups, available on Amazon (<https://cutt.ly/occdejH>). You can also watch "Strengthening Your Core," a 12 - video series on YouTube at <https://cutt.ly/Or6EiiW> or subscribe to my blog at <https://corehealingfromtrauma.com/>.