

# Seeking and Granting Forgiveness

How can I forgive you for *that*?

## How I Forgive

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 1) We tend to forgive but not forget. \_\_\_\_
- 2) Asking for forgiveness comes easy to me. \_\_\_\_
- 3) I get frustrated when my spouse does not get over it when I ask for forgiveness. \_\_\_\_
- 4) My spouse does not ask for forgiveness. \_\_\_\_
- 5) I refuse to let my spouse win by forgiving them. \_\_\_\_

Most everyone has disagreements in their marriage. Some disagreements are a difference of opinion. Other disagreements are rooted in doing something wrong (we are using the word sin for this). In these circumstances we need to be willing to forgive and grant forgiveness, not just apologize.

What are some ways people minimize what they did or apologize poorly?

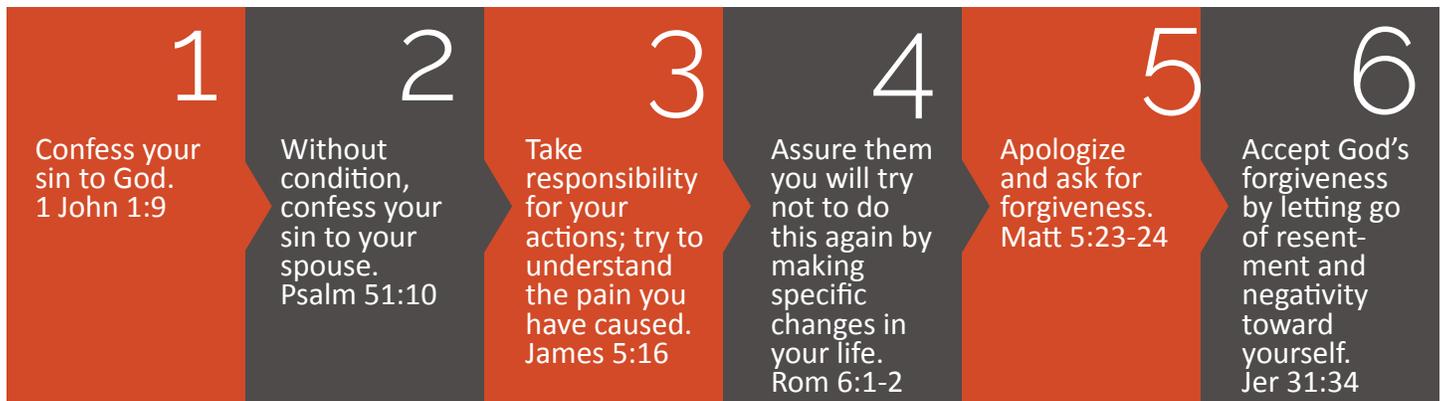
- We don't truly understand what we did
- We are still thinking about why we did was OK
- We just want to get back in "happy" mode



**Forgiveness is** overcoming of negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors not by denying the offense or the right to be hurt or angry but by viewing the offender with acceptance (if not compassion) so that the forgiver can be healed. To clarify further the boundaries we turn to what the concept is not.

**Forgiveness is not** denial or indifference, pardon, reconciliation, condoning, excusing, passive forgetting, weakness, or an interpersonal game. Forgiveness in no way cancels the crime, but it works to take care of the distortions caused by the unhealthy aspects of anger and resentment.

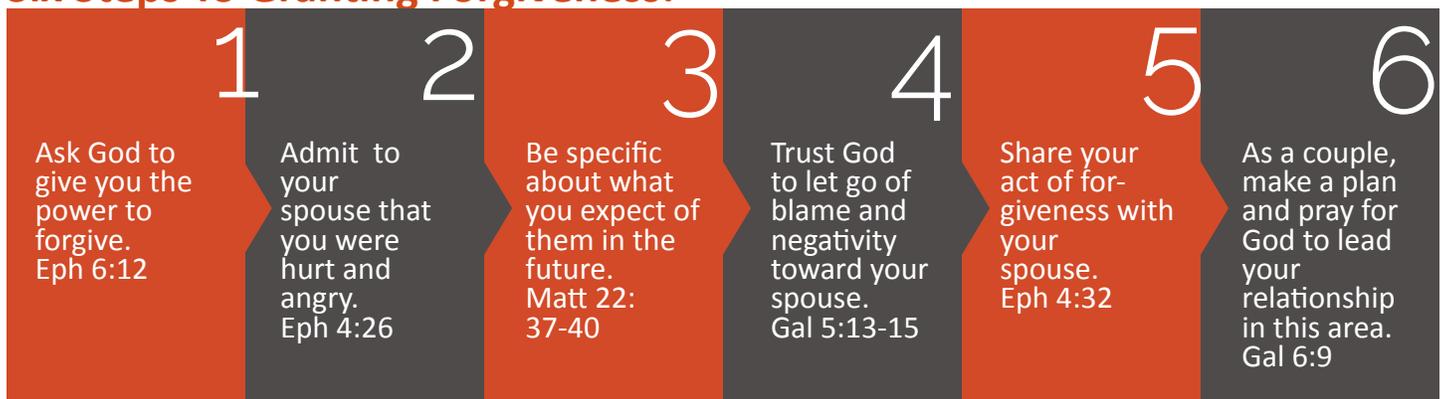
## Six Steps To Asking for Forgiveness:



You might notice that asking for forgiveness from your loved one doesn't happen until step 5! Most of us might lead with that easy question, "will you forgive me?"

Asking for forgiveness is important as its own entity. Even if the person already wants to forgive you or will never forgive you, this process stands effectively on its own.

## Six Steps To Granting Forgiveness:

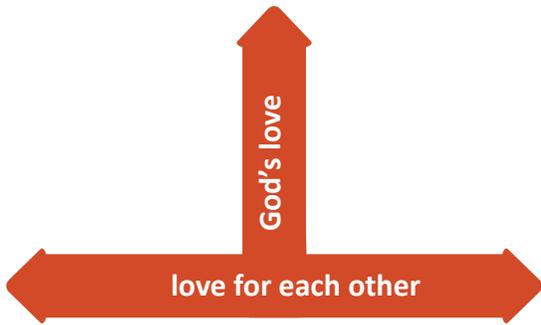


## Reconciliation:

Reconciliation takes place after forgiveness. If either of you have not forgiven/been forgiven, the couple cannot reconcile. Either the offender has not acknowledged wrong or the offended has not let go of the hurt and anger. Either way, the couple cannot work toward a resolution to the conflict. Therefore, forgiveness is key.

## Forgiveness and Reconciliation with God:

This model of forgiveness is based on our reconciliation with God. Since overall, the same principles apply to your relationship with God. We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), therefore the wages of our sin is death (Romans 6:23). But God loved us enough that he sent his only Son to die for our sins (John 3:16). But we have to accept the gift God has given us (1 John 5:5). Just like with our spouse, we cannot be reconciled to our God unless we have sought forgiveness and God has given it (God is offering it already). Have you sought forgiveness?



## Individual Reflection:

1. What is your key take-away from this lesson?
2. What would it look like if you both tried to incorporate these steps regarding forgiveness?
3. If you would like to, take a moment to pray and ask God if there is an issue for which you have not sought true forgiveness from your spouse. Write down the issue(s) here: