

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

Learning How to Forgive Ourselves - Peter's Restoration

Scripture Context: Peter Denies Jesus and Then Is Restored

Before the crucifixion of Jesus, Peter, one of His closest disciples, boldly declared that he would never deny Jesus. However, when Jesus was arrested and put on trial, Peter denied knowing Him three times, just as Jesus had predicted (Luke 22:61). Peter was devastated by his failure, and he wept bitterly. After Jesus' resurrection, He appeared to Peter and the other disciples, offering Peter a chance for restoration.

John 21:15-17 (NIV):

"When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?'

'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.'

Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'

The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'"

God's Grace and Forgiveness:

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

God's Grace and Forgiveness:

Peter's Denial Was a Failure, but God's Grace Is Greater

Peter's denial of Jesus was a major failure. He had been a passionate follower of Christ, yet when it mattered most, he denied even knowing Jesus. Despite his failure, Jesus didn't condemn him; instead, He came to him, offering forgiveness and restoration. This is an example of God's grace—no matter how big our mistakes are, His grace is bigger, and He offers us a chance to be restored.

Romans 8:1 (NIV): "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

- Application: When we fail, we may feel shame and guilt. However, God does not condemn us; He offers us forgiveness through Christ. Learning to forgive ourselves means accepting God's grace and moving forward in His love.

God Does Not Hold Our Past Against Us

Jesus didn't hold Peter's denial against him. In fact, He asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" This allowed Peter to reaffirm his love for Jesus, giving him an opportunity to reverse the shame he felt from his earlier denials. Jesus' question wasn't because He didn't know the answer but to give Peter a chance to heal and be restored.

Isaiah 43:25 (NIV): "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

- Application: When we seek forgiveness from God, He doesn't hold our past against us. He wipes away our sins and remembers them no more. To forgive ourselves, we need to accept that God has already forgiven us and not dwell on past mistakes.

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

How Peter's Restoration Teaches Us to Forgive Ourselves

1. Acknowledge the Hurt and the Failure

Jesus didn't ignore Peter's denial; He addressed it directly. By asking Peter three times, "Do you love me?" Jesus helped Peter face his failure and acknowledge it. When we fail, we need to acknowledge the hurt and the mistake, but that doesn't mean we stay stuck in it. Acknowledging our failures is a step toward healing and forgiveness.

1 John 1:9 (NIV): "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

- Application: We need to confess and acknowledge our failures to God. Once we do, we can be confident that He forgives us. This is the first step in forgiving ourselves—being honest about our mistakes.

2. Accept God's Forgiveness

Peter had to accept Jesus' forgiveness before he could move on. Jesus didn't just forgive him; He entrusted him with the care of His people, giving him a purpose. Similarly, God forgives us and then calls us to a greater purpose, allowing us to live in freedom from our past.

Ephesians 1:7 (NIV): "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace."

- Application: We must accept that we are forgiven because of God's grace. This means releasing the guilt and shame we carry and embracing the freedom that forgiveness brings.

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

How Peter's Restoration Teaches Us to Forgive Ourselves

3. Move Forward in God's Calling

After Jesus forgave Peter, He gave him a new mission: "Feed my lambs". Peter wasn't just forgiven; he was also commissioned to continue the work that Jesus had begun. Jesus restored Peter not just for personal healing but for the purpose of ministry. Similarly, we can forgive ourselves and move forward in God's calling for our lives.

Philippians 3:13-14 (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."

- Application: After accepting God's forgiveness, we must move forward in the new life He has given us. We cannot change the past, but we can choose to press forward into the future with God's help.

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

Practical Steps to Forgiving Ourselves

Step 1: Accept God's Grace

- Understand that God has already forgiven you through Christ's sacrifice. His grace covers all your mistakes, no matter how big or small.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV): "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

Step 2: Let Go of Guilt and Shame

- Stop holding onto guilt. Remember that Jesus has already paid the price for your sins. Holding onto guilt is like telling God that His grace is not enough.
- Psalm 103:12 (NIV): "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

Step 3: Walk in Newness of Life

- Embrace the new life that God has given you and step into the purpose He has for you. Don't let past mistakes define your future.
- Romans 8:1 (NIV): "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Step 4: Share Your Struggles With Others

- You do not and should not hide your skeletons in your closet. No, you should rather be sharing your struggles with others to help you overcome and process these thoughts holding you captive in your mind. (Find a therapist, pastor, or spiritual mentor to help guide you through this.)
- James 5:16 (NIV) "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

Practical Steps to Forgiving Ourselves

Step 5: Renew Your Mind Daily

- Your mind will try to bring up old memories, regrets, or failures, but God calls you to renew your thoughts with His truth. Healing happens when you replace self-criticism with Scripture and God's promises.
- Romans 12:2 (NIV): "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Step 6: Set Healthy Boundaries With Negative Thoughts

- When intrusive thoughts or harsh self-judgment arise, don't entertain them. Instead, redirect them through truth and prayer. Not every thought deserves your attention.
- 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV): "We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Step 7: Celebrate Progress, Not Perfection

- Growth takes time. Celebrate small moments of healing and obedience. Progress glorifies God because it reflects His work in you.
- Philippians 1:6 (NIV): "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Step 8: Spend Time in God's Presence

- Self-forgiveness grows naturally when you allow God to reshape your heart through prayer, worship, and quiet time. His presence softens shame and strengthens your identity in Him.
- Psalm 34:5 (NIV): "Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame."

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

Discussion Questions

1. How does Peter's restoration teach us about accepting God's forgiveness and grace?
2. Why is it difficult to forgive ourselves even after we know God has forgiven us?
3. How can acknowledging our mistakes lead to healing and restoration?
4. In what areas of your life do you need to forgive yourself, and how can you move forward in God's calling for you?

Name:

Date:

Self Forgiveness- Bible Study

Discussion Questions