

The purpose of the first paragraph is to reveal stats and quotes from mainstream sources about the growing struggles teens may have regarding each topic. The purpose of the second paragraph is to reveal God's perspective by seeing what the Bible says regarding each topic and how we can receive help and guidance in our life's purpose through a relationship with Jesus.

FORGIVENESS

Google says to forgive is to stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for an offense, flaw, or mistake. Forgiveness can be one of the most difficult things to give. Unforgiveness can lead to resentment, hostility, anger, hatred, depression and can negatively affect your mental and physical health¹⁶⁶. Giving forgiveness can lead to greater health, self-esteem and happier relationships¹⁶⁶. Forgiveness isn't necessarily to relieve responsible ones from blame, but to free the injured person from carrying ongoing hurt/anger¹⁶⁴. Sometimes it seems impossible to forgive others or ourselves. How are we supposed to receive and give forgiveness?

The Bible says we all need forgiveness because we've sinned (Rom. 3:23), and all sin is ultimately against God (Ps. 51:4). If we confess our sins to God, He'll forgive us (1 John 1:9) through Jesus (Eph. 1:7). Then we're able to forgive both ourselves (Phil. 3:13) and others (Col. 3:13) because God forgave us, paying for it in Jesus (1 Cor. 6:20). If we don't forgive, we won't receive God's forgiveness (Matt. 6:15), but doing so is a freedom we have (Gal. 5:1) as a new person in Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17).

BIBLE VERSES TO CONSIDER

Forgiveness from God

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Psalms 51:4 "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight."

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

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

1 Corinthians 6:20 "You were bought at a price, therefore honor God with your bodies."

2 Corinthians 5:21 "God made him who had no sin to be sin[ful] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

James 2:10 "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in[a] Christ Jesus our Lord."

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Romans 10:9 "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Colossians 1:13-14 "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

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

Acts 3:19 "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."

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

Hebrews 10:17 "Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.""

Daniel 9:9 "The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him."

Psalms 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

Micah 7:18-19 "Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea."

Matthew 26:28 (Jesus) "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Acts 10:43 "All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Forgiving Yourself

Philippians 3:13 "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."

Galatians 5:1 "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

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

1 Peter 5:7 “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

Psalms 103:10-12 “He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”

Philippians 4:8 “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

Forgiving Others

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

Matthew 6:14-15 "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

Matthew 18:21-22, 35 "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times." ""This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.""

Ephesians 4:31-32 "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

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

Matthew 5:38-39 ““You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.”

Luke 17:3-4 “So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.””

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

Matthew 18:15 “If your brother or sister[a] sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.”

Matthew 18:34-35 "In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

1 Peter 4:8 "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

Matthew 6:14 (Jesus) "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

Luke 6:37 (Jesus) "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."

James 5:16 "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

2 Thessalonians 1:6-7 "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels."

STATS & QUOTES TO CONSIDER

By the end of adolescence, most parents and most teenagers have been given some cause to forgive and to be forgiven.

To resolve never to forgive is to sentence one's self to a life of grievance. The first purpose of forgiveness is not to relieve the responsible person from blame, but to free the injured party from carrying ongoing hurt and anger.

You cannot force forgiveness from a person you hurt.

People who can't forgive themselves can commit to punishing themselves in ongoing penance for what they once did.

When there is no capacity for forgiveness, hard feelings can build as grievances solidify into grudges. Then ongoing resentments weigh people unhappily down, keeping them antagonized or estranged. Thus, the need for forgiveness: as a means to recover their relationship to others and to themselves after a regrettable, hurtful, or harmful experience has passed.

Indeed, our culture seems to perceive forgiveness as a sign of weakness, submission, or both. Often, we find it easier to stigmatize or denigrate our enemies than to empathize with or forgive them. And in a society as competitive as ours, people may hesitate to forgive because they don't want to relinquish the upper hand in a relationship.

Surely now is a time when the world could use some more forgiveness.

The forgiving person becomes less motivated to retaliate against someone who offended him or her and less motivated to remain estranged from that person. Instead, he or she becomes more motivated by feelings of goodwill, despite the offender's hurtful actions.

Unforgiveness, by contrast, seems to be a negative emotional state where an offended person maintains feelings of resentment, hostility, anger, and hatred toward the person who offended him.

Forgiveness has proved beneficial to a range of relationships, whether it's a family, romantic, or professional relationship.

These findings suggest that forgiveness has benefits such as high self-esteem, better moods, and happier relationships.

No one has yet found a silver bullet that helps people forgive instantly.

It's important to stress again that forgiveness usually takes time. The amount of time someone spend trying to forgive is highly related to the actual degree of forgiveness experienced.

Forgiveness is not necessarily something that just comes naturally to people with high self-esteem and stable relationships. Instead, it is something all different kinds of people can learn. With the right kind of practice, its benefits can be available to most of us.

Whether it's a simple spat with your spouse or long-held resentment toward a family member or friend, unresolved conflict can go deeper than you may realize—it may be affecting your physical health. The good news: Studies have found that the act of forgiveness can reap huge rewards for your health, lowering the risk of heart attack; improving cholesterol levels and sleep; and reducing pain, blood pressure, and levels of anxiety, depression and stress.

Forgiveness is not just about saying the words.

Forgiveness is a choice.

The act of forgiving includes forgiving yourself.