

You Don't Have to Wait for an Apology

Forgiveness Can Begin Before Reconciliation

Key Scripture - Ephesians 4:31-32 (KJV)

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger... be put away from you... And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

A Thought for the Day

Some hurts stay with us because we keep waiting for something that may never come: an apology. We tell ourselves that when the other person finally admits what they did, then we can begin to heal.

But what happens if they never apologize? What happens if they do not understand the damage they caused, refuse to take responsibility, or are no longer part of our lives?

If my healing depends entirely on another person's apology, then I have handed that person control over something God wants to do in my heart. Forgiveness offers another way.

Forgiveness Is Not Pretending

Forgiveness does not mean saying the hurt was acceptable. It does not mean forgetting what happened, removing healthy boundaries, or automatically restoring a relationship. Forgiveness and reconciliation are related, but they are not the same thing.

Reconciliation involves rebuilding a relationship and normally requires honesty, repentance, trust, and willingness from both people. Forgiveness can begin in one heart before any of those things happen.

We can tell God the truth: That hurt me. It was wrong. I cannot change what happened, and I cannot force this person to make it right. But I do not want this wound to rule the rest of my life.

Releasing What We Cannot Control

Forgiveness is not always a single emotional moment. Sometimes it is a decision we bring back to God more than once. The memory may still hurt. Consequences may remain. Wisdom may require distance. Yet bitterness does not have to become our permanent companion.

Jesus has shown us extraordinary forgiveness. Because we have received grace from Him, we can ask Him for the strength to extend grace even when it is difficult.

That does not excuse another person's behavior. It releases us from waiting for that person to determine when our healing can begin.

Carry This With You

Maybe there is a name, a memory, or an old wound that immediately came to mind while you were reading this. You do not have to solve everything today. Begin by placing it honestly before God. Ask Him to show you what you are still carrying and what you can begin releasing

into His hands.

Am I waiting for someone else's apology before allowing myself to heal?

Is there a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation that I need to recognize?

What hurt can I place into God's hands today instead of carrying it alone?

Closing Prayer

Father, You know every hurt I carry and every wound I have tried to hide. Give me the strength to forgive as You have forgiven me. Help me understand that forgiveness does not require me to pretend that wrong was right, nor does it always require reconciliation. Free my heart from bitterness and from waiting for another person to determine when I can begin to heal. Give me wisdom for healthy boundaries, grace for the journey, and peace as I place what I cannot change into Your hands. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Rick Hicks Ministries
Helping people grow in faith, one day at a time.