

action includes the guilty party(ies) asking for and receiving forgiveness from the injured party(ies).

Forgive - From 2 Corinthians 12:13 - Strong's G5483 - charizomai

This word is defined in a number of ways including:

- to do something pleasant or agreeable (to one), to do a favor to, gratify
- to show one's self gracious, kind, benevolent
- to grant forgiveness, to pardon
- to give graciously, give freely, bestow
- to forgive
- graciously to restore one to another
- to preserve for one a person in peril

Anybody can forgive. You can choose to forgive someone without their involvement.

The difference is clear... **ANYONE** can and must forgive! This an individual can do by themselves... it can be done between the individual and God. But **NO ONE** can reconcile with another by themselves. Reconciliation **requires** the positive participation of all parties involved.

Conclusion

Maintaining a right relationship with God **requires FORGIVENESS**. We

must not hold unforgiveness in our hearts. Ideally this can lead to reconciliation; however, it may not. There is no guarantee that if you forgive someone, you will be reconciled with them.

Reconciliation amongst Christians and a restoration of fellowship **mandates** action from all participants.

*“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, **we have fellowship** one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7)*

Fellowship is the spiritual end result of “being in God’s Light”. If two people cannot have fellowship, at least one of them is **NOT** “in the light”.

True reconciliation brings great glory to God and is His desire. When fellowship amongst believers is broken, God wants it restored.

“...Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalms 133:1)

Transformed Living Messages

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*“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and **hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;**” (2 Corinthians 5:18)*

The “ministry of reconciliation” is perhaps one of the most misunderstood concepts in the Church today. It is often viewed with a “forgive and forget” type of mindset. Christians are too frequently entrapped by other well-intentioned believers into thinking that they need to “forgive and forget” a wrong that they have suffered at the hands of another.

However, is that truly what reconciliation is all about? This writing will look at some of the “reconciliation” Bible passages in



RECONCILIATION — FORGIVE AND FORGET?

context to determine what God has in mind.

Forgiveness: This is always mandated by God. We **CANNOT** harbor unforgiveness in our hearts and be right with God. His Word makes that very clear.

“And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. (35) So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” (Matthew 18:34-35)

Reconciliation: Is forgiveness (which is mandatory) the same thing as reconciliation? According to this study, the answer to this question is **NO!** While there are some similarities, the differences are undeniable.

Reconciliation ALWAYS requires the positive interactions of both (or all) parties involved.

Forgiveness may be done **UNILATERALLY.** Forgiveness that includes the involvement of all parties will lead to reconciliation; however, unilateral forgiveness cannot lead to reconciliation.

For example, imagine that someone tells a terrible lie about you and spreads it far and wide.

Forgiveness (which God requires of you) causes you to go to God and forgive those who have lied about you. If the guilty parties continue in their lying and unrepentant ways, reconciliation is impossible.

Reconciliation can be real if those spreading falsehoods become convicted by the Holy Spirit and repent, and if they ask forgiveness from the injured parties and attempt to retract their stories from everyone that they spoke to. Under this type of scenario, reconciliation will become a reality.

The Perfect Example

*“Then said Jesus, **Father, forgive them;** for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.”*

(Luke 23:34)

At the moment that Jesus spoke these words, was He reconciled with the soldiers who cast lots for His clothes? Were those soldiers, the Roman officials and/or the Jewish leaders forgiven and granted entrance into Heaven because Jesus asked for them to be forgiven?

Of course not! Reconciliation **IS** a two way street! The guilty party must ask for and receive the forgiveness of the party that was harmed.

Definitions

The following are definitions of the words reconciliation and forgive. Both are from Paul's 2 Corinthians letter and should help clarify the differences between these words.

Reconciliation - From 2 Corinthians 5:18 - Strong's Concordance G2643 – katallagē

This word is defined as an "exchange" as in the business of money changers, exchanging equivalent values.

It is also an adjustment of a difference, reconciliation, restoration to favor.

The New Testament usage is often in the context of the restoration of the favor of God to sinners that repent and put their trust in the expiatory death of Christ.

The definition of the word reconciliation should make it clear that at least two parties need to interact. This inter-