

Letters From My Future Self: Week 4

Discussion Guide

Discuss:

- Which is harder for you, to offer forgiveness or to ask for forgiveness? [5 min]
- What is the emotional, mental, or spiritual cost of withholding forgiveness from another? Can you share a specific example of someone you know (or maybe you)? [5 min]
- What advice would you give to your younger self about the advantages of offering and/or receiving forgiveness? Give specific examples. [5 min]
- How do you confess sins appropriately? [5 min]

Challenge:

What is your next step in either accepting forgiveness or offering forgiveness? [5 min]

Scriptures:

- **Matthew 6:14–15** (NIV) “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” The only thing Jesus commented upon in the Lord’s Prayer was forgiveness. It is a salvation issue. (See also **Mark 11:25**)
- **Matthew 18:21–22** (NIV) “Then Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.’” There is no limit to the number of times we forgive others. (See also **Luke 17:3-4**)

- **Matthew 26:28** (NIV) “For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” The sacrifice of Jesus, embodied in communion, is the source of our forgiveness (see also **Acts 10:43; 13:38; Romans 5:15; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 2:13**).
- **John 20:23** (NIV) “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.” We have Jesus’ authority to pronounce forgiveness in his name.
- **2 Corinthians 5:20** (NIV) “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”
- **Ephesians 4:32** (NIV) “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” We are to forgive others as we have been forgiven.
- **Colossians 3:12–13** (NIV) “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”
- **1 John 1:9** (NIV) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We can be forgiven if we confess our sins. (See also **Romans 8:1**)

Prayer:

Lead a time of silent prayer offering the following prompts:

- Lord, I confess my sin to you...
- Lord, I accept your forgiveness for...
- Lord, I release [name] from [offense]...