

Love Is...

MOVING FORWARD:

When I regret what has happened in the past

Philippians 3:13-14 (NLT) No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved [perfection], but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

Don't dwell on regret; don't ignore regret; overcome regret

Regret is overcome by FORGIVENESS

God has granted us forgiveness in Christ

Ephesians 1:7 (NLT) He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

Sometimes God is speaking to us in our regret, Listen

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 (NLT) Now I am glad I sent [that severe letter], not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way. For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

Take steps towards reconciliation with people

Romans 12:18 (NIV) If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT) "So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

Forgiveness can be a process

A suggested format for addressing hurts we have caused:
(When God's Spirit reveals things from our past)

One of the ways I have hurt you is... (*State specifically what you did or didn't do*)

I was wrong to treat you this way because... (*"I was wrong" is better than "I'm sorry." It is also good to express more about why it was wrong.*)

You must have felt ... _____ (*Express your understanding of how your wrong affected the other person; this is empathy—tuning in to the other's feelings.*)

And I feel _____ **for you.** (*This is comfort and Godly sorrow! "Godly sorrow brings repentance...but worldly sorrow brings death." 2 Cor. 7:10*)

At this point it is usually good to ask,

"I really want to make sure that I understand how I have hurt you.....Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this particular hurt? I really want to understand..."

Listen and receive whatever is shared with you. Then comfort the sadness and hurt even more, and additionally confess as needed. It is very important that the one you hurt experiences that you understand and care about how you caused the hurt.

Every conflict that involves hurt should end with this question being asked sincerely:

"Will you forgive me?"