

Repentance, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation

These are big words with important meanings:

Repentance – to turn away from sin or wrong-doing and go the other way. To decide the way I acted was wrong, and I don't want to act that way any longer. I am truly sorry I acted that way in the first place.

Forgiveness – to let go over our anger toward someone else. To start new with nothing between the two of you. To accept someone's apology (if they say, "I'm sorry.") We can forgive even when someone does not say sorry too.

Confess – to say with our mouth what we are thinking in our hearts: I'm sorry, I forgive you, I was wrong, please forgive me.

Reconciliation – renewing the relationship, restoring the relationship as though nothing wrong ever happened.

Restitution – an action to make things right again. For example: if you broke your sister's toy because you were angry with her, you may need to buy her a new toy or give her one of yours. To make amends, to repair the relationship/friendship.

Repentance: What is my part in this disagreement/broken friendship? _____

Confess to _____
(write the name or names of those you need to confess to that you've done wrong—do not confess a bad thought you had about a person to that person, but to God or to your parents so they can pray with you. If you talked about someone to another person, then you need to apologize to the person you talked to and ask them to forgive you for gossiping and being a bad friend).

Confess to God

Forgiveness – What is their part in this disagreement/broken friendship? _____

I forgive you, _____
(write the name or names of those you forgive on the line above, then say it out loud to the person)

Ask God to bless them. (Pray asking God to bless each person you listed).

Reconciliation – Is your relationship restored? Are you friends again? _____

Can you trust them again? _____

Do they trust you again? _____

Do you need to make restitution in some way? _____

Do they need to make restitution in some way? _____

Some verses to remember and memorize:

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

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32, NIV)

Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14, NIV)

So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. (Luke 17:3, NIV)

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17, NIV)

“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 5:23-24, NIV)