

## Seventy Times Seven

Everyone has been wronged, offended, and sinned against at some point. How are Christians to respond when such offenses occur against them? According to the Bible, we are to forgive others. [Ephesians 4:32](#) declares, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Similarly, [Colossians 3:13](#) proclaims, “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” The key in both Scriptures is that we are to forgive fellow believers as God has forgiven us. Why do we forgive? Because we have been forgiven! Our forgiveness of others should reflect God’s forgiveness of us.

To forgive those who sin against us requires patience and forbearance. The church has the command to “be patient with everyone” ([1 Thessalonians 5:14](#)). We should be able to overlook personal slights and minor offenses. Jesus said, “If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, [turn to them the other cheek also](#)” ([Matthew 5:39](#)). Not every “slap in the face” needs a response.

To forgive those who sin against us requires the transformational power of God in our lives. There is something deep within fallen human nature that thirsts for revenge and urges retaliation in kind. We naturally want to inflict the same type of injury on the one who injured us—an eye for an eye seems only fair. In Christ, however, we have been given the power to love our enemies, do good to the haters, bless the cursers, and pray for the abusers (see [Luke 6:27–28](#)). Jesus gives us a heart that is willing to forgive and will work to that end.