

THE ENVOY JOURNAL · PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

A Seven-Lesson Bible Study

Seven lessons on releasing the offense and guarding the gate

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INTRODUCTION

Releasing the Offense, Guarding the Gate

Many believers refuse to deal with an old offense because of one fear: if I forgive them, I have to let them back in. This study, a companion to the Envoy Journal teaching, untangles that fear. Over seven lessons you will see how unforgiveness hinders prayer, how an offense grows into a root, and why forgiveness, restored trust, and reconciliation are three different things.

> Forgiveness releases the offense. Boundaries govern future access.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Take one lesson a day or one a week. Read the passage slowly, sit with the key verse, read the teaching, then write honest answers. Close each lesson with the prayer, in your own words if you like.

THREE DIFFERENT THINGS

Forgiveness	Deals with the past	Commanded; between you and God
Restored Trust	Deals with the present	Earned over time through changed behavior
Reconciliation	Deals with the future	Takes two; requires repentance and change

LESSON 1

The Knot in the Hose

Read: Mark 11:22–26

> And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. — Mark 11:25

TEACHING

God's supply is full, yet many believers find one area of life where nothing grows. Often the issue is not a lack of anointing but a knot in the hose: an unresolved offense that hinders the flow. Jesus tied forgiveness directly to prayer, which makes unforgiveness an open gate, not a small personal matter.

REFLECT

1. Where in your life does the flow of God seem to back up?

2. Why do you think Jesus placed forgiveness right beside faith and prayer?

3. Is there an offense you have carried for years? Name it before God.

PRAY

Lord, show me every knot in my life. Let Your flow move freely through my prayers again. Amen.

LESSON 2

How an Offense Becomes a Root

Read: Hebrews 12:14–15; Ephesians 4:31–32

> Looking diligently... lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. — Hebrews 12:15

TEACHING

Offense held becomes unforgiveness. Unforgiveness held becomes bitterness. Bitterness becomes a root, and that root is ready to produce hatred. The longer an offense stays, the deeper it goes. Deal with it while it is still an offense, before it becomes a root.

REFLECT

1. At which stage is your most painful offense right now: offense, unforgiveness, bitterness, or hatred?

2. How has bitterness affected others around you ("many be defiled")?

3. What would it look like to deal with offense early this week?

PRAY

Father, uproot every root of bitterness in me. Make me kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving, as You have forgiven me. Amen.

LESSON 3

When the Wound Keeps Talking

Read: Psalm 27:13–14; Philippians 3:13–14

> I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. — Psalm 27:13

TEACHING

The event may be over and the person may be gone, but unforgiveness keeps the wound speaking. It shapes discernment, trust, leadership, emotions, prayers, and decisions. In that area, growth stops and we become frozen in time, standing like a statue at the moment we were hurt.

REFLECT

1. What does your wound still "say" to you?

2. Which of these has it influenced most: discernment, trust, prayers, or decisions?

3. Where might you be frozen in time?

PRAY

Lord, silence the voice of old wounds. Unfreeze every area of my life so I can see Your goodness in the land of the living. Amen.

LESSON 4

What Forgiveness Is and Is Not

Read: Matthew 18:21–35

> Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? — Matthew 18:21

TEACHING

Forgiveness does not say what happened was acceptable. It does not erase boundaries or always restore the relationship. It does not let the offender off the hook; it lets you off the hook and frees God to deal with them. Forgiveness means I refuse to allow what happened to me to continue controlling what happens inside of me. It is an empowerment of the Holy Spirit, not a work of the flesh.

REFLECT

1. Which false belief about forgiveness has held you back the most?

2. In the parable, what did the unforgiving servant forget?

3. Who currently has too much power over your heart?

PRAY

Holy Spirit, I cannot forgive in my own strength. Empower me to release what I have held. Amen.

LESSON 5

Forgiveness, Trust, and Reconciliation

Read: John 2:23–25; Romans 12:17–21

> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. — Romans 12:18

TEACHING

Forgiveness is commanded and happens between you and God; it deals with the past. Trust is earned and rebuilt over time through changed behavior; it deals with the present. Reconciliation restores the relationship and takes two; it deals with the future. You owe the first. The other two depend on what is safe, wise, and true. Jesus loved fully without handing everyone full access.

REFLECT

1. Have you confused forgiveness with trust or reconciliation? How?

2. What would changed behavior need to look like before trust returns?

3. Where is reconciliation simply not possible right now, and can you accept that without guilt?

PRAY

Lord, give me clarity to forgive fully, trust wisely, and seek peace where it is possible. Amen.

LESSON 6

Boundaries Govern Future Access

Read: Proverbs 4:20–27

> Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. — Proverbs 4:23

TEACHING

Boundaries are not punishment; they are stewardship. You can say, "I forgive you, but you can't come to my house." You can keep loving, praying, and smiling while limiting what you share, keeping contact structured, declining to restore influence, or ending contact where there is danger. Access is a privilege, and privileges follow trust.

REFLECT

1. Which relationship needs a clearer boundary?

2. What guilt do you feel about setting it, and is that guilt from God?

3. Write one specific boundary you will set.

PRAY

Father, teach me to guard my heart without hardening it. Give me wisdom for every gate. Amen.

LESSON 7

Walking Free

Read: Colossians 3:12–15; Romans 12:19

> Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another… even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. — Colossians 3:13

TEACHING

Releasing an offense is a process you keep honoring: name it honestly, ask for empowerment, release the debt out loud, hand the case to God, set wise boundaries, and release it again when the memory returns. Make a settled decision ahead of time: if you offend me, as a general rule, you are forgiven. Forgiveness sets you free. Boundaries keep you free.

REFLECT

1. Which of the six steps is hardest for you?

2. What will you do when the memory returns?

3. How will your prayer life change as you walk free?

PRAY

Lord, I choose freedom. I release them into Your hands and walk forward in healing and wholeness. Amen.

WORKSHEET

Release and Boundary Plan

Use this page for one person or situation at a time.

What happened, honestly named:

How it has affected me (prayers, trust, decisions):

My prayer of release, in my own words:

Is trust restored yet? What would show real change?

The boundary I will set, without guilt:

What I will do when the memory returns:

CLOSING

Declarations

- I will not sit in offense, unforgiveness, or bitterness.
- I have the character of God and the fruit of the Spirit.
- What happened to me will no longer control what happens inside of me.
- My momentum will not be stopped and my blessings will not be hindered.
- I forgive freely, and I guard my gates wisely.
- I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Closing Prayer

Father, in the name of Jesus, search my heart and show me every offense I have held. I cannot forgive in my own strength, so I receive the empowerment of Your Holy Spirit. I release those who have hurt me into Your hands. Untie every knot so Your flow can move freely again. Give me wisdom to set healthy boundaries without bitterness, and grace to walk in healing, wholeness, and victory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scriptures for Further Study

Mark 11:25–26 · Matthew 6:14–15 · Matthew 18:21–35 · Ephesians 4:26–27, 31–32 · Hebrews 12:15 · Proverbs 4:23 · Romans 12:17–21 · John 2:24–25 · Colossians 3:13 · Psalm 27:13

Read the full teaching: kingdomenvoy.org/blog/forgiveness-does-not-mean-giving-someone-access-again