

# Forgiveness: Remembering God's Forgiveness Journal

## INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION:

One of the struggles that some Christians encounter in life is a lack of a sense of forgiveness over sins that have been committed in the past. Sometimes they are focusing on sins committed prior to conversion or sometimes it is sins committed since the time of their conversion to Christ.

In obedience to the biblical commands, these people may have confessed their sins to God (1 John 1:9), they claim to believe in justification by grace through the person and work of Christ alone; they say they have repented of those sins and are attempting to change (Proverbs 28:13; 2 Corinthians 7:9-11); they may even have confessed their sins to those whom they have offended (James 5:16) and when necessary they may have made restitution (Matthew 5:23-24; Luke 19:8,9), yet they still worry and fret over the sins they have committed. They still say they lack the assurance God has forgiven them and cleansed them from all unrighteousness.

If this is true of you, I encourage you to complete the following journal on a daily basis until the pattern of your life has changed. This journal will help you develop a habit of thinking based on the truth of God's Word. Completing this journal regularly will help you eliminate thoughts that reinforce your sense of unforgiveness and the kind of actions that only lead to more despair, such as avoiding people, withdrawal from useful service, neglect of prayer and Bible study, seeking to relieve your sadness by filling your time with distractions such as overeating, movies, television, or sports. This journal can also help you fill your mind with true thoughts and your life with God-honoring, worthwhile actions such as worshiping God, giving thanks for forgiveness, rejoicing in Christ, forgiving others, being content to be a sinner saved by grace, rejoicing in the freedom of God's forgiveness accompanied by a removal of your sense of guilt and focusing on serving God fully in the opportunities each day brings.

Study the following Scriptures and record everything you see in each verse about God's forgiveness of sins. Begin to memorize some of these passages and review them every day:

### **Psalm 103:12**

As far as the east is from the west,  
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

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### **1 John 1:9**

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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### **Colossians 1:13-14**

For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His  
beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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**Romans 8:1**

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

**Galatians 5:1**

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

**Colossians 2:13-14**

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

**Ephesians 1:7**

In Him (Christ) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**I Timothy 1:15**

It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. And yet for this reason, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example to those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

**Titus 3:5-7**

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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**Isaiah 43:25**

I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My sake; and I will not remember your sins.

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**Isaiah 44:22**

I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud, and your sins like a heavy mist

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Summarize the most important insights about God's forgiveness taught by these verses:

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Use the following journal daily until you have put off your pattern of dwelling on your past sins in an unbiblical way.  
Complete the following inventory on a daily basis (may be reduplicated for daily use):

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

What sin that I have already confessed, repented of, sought forgiveness of through the blood of Christ and worked on putting out of my life, am I tempted to remember and fret about?

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What are my thoughts at this time?

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What am I feeling?

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What is God's view of that previously forgiven sin (include Scripture)?

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What are my choices at this time?

- To focus on my sin, which would include these thoughts, feelings and actions:

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- Or to think about what is true from God's Word, which would include these thoughts, feelings, and actions:

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What will I choose to do?

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What are my thoughts and feelings after making this choice and following through on it?

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What specific actions will result from making that choice?

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**Summary and Evaluation:**

If you are obedient in your thoughts and actions in spite of the fact that you are tempted to do otherwise; if you fill your mind with biblical truth and get involved in biblical actions; if you reflect on the grace of God shown in the life and death of Jesus Christ on your behalf, then give thanks for God's help, give thanks for His certain forgiveness of the past sins, and move on to continue to fill your mind with biblical truth and to use your body to serve Him and other people.

**OR**

If you are disobedient in your thoughts and actions when you were tempted to dwell on your past sins; if you allow your mind to think unbiblical thoughts and your body to get involved in unbiblical actions; if you won't fill your mind with thoughts of the grace of God shown in the life and death of Jesus Christ on your behalf, if you won't give thanks for His certain forgiveness of the past sins, and if you won't move on to continue to fill your mind with biblical truth and to use your body to serve Him and other people, then confess this sin; ask God's forgiveness for choosing to remember sin rather than His grace and forgiveness; ask Him for help/strength to instead choose to remember His grace and forgiveness tomorrow; commit yourself to handling the next temptation differently and get up and do it.

For further study: You will find helpful material on the subject of forgiveness in Jay Adam's book, *From Forgiven to Forgiving*.