

Are you holding a grudge? It's not something you can physically see, but in your heart there's something you hold on to. It's a resistance, a reluctance, a rebellion, a resentment. You know you should forgive and forget but you don't.

You should drop your grudge because:

The world *recommends* it.

Forgiveness

- Means letting go of negative emotions.
- Provides significant health benefits (grudges raise blood pressure, deplete immune function, make more susceptible to depression, cause stress to your entire body).

The Word of God *requires* it.

The Lord's Prayer in *Matthew 6*

- Forgive others the same way God forgives us.
- Forgive means to let alone, leave behind, let go and lay aside.

Matthew 18:21-22

Peter's question gives away his position of arrogance and assumption; limits and lines. We can offend people just as much as they can offend us. But we are not to keep track of others' sinful behavior. Instead, we have to be in a spirit of forgiveness and walk in forgiveness.

Matthew 18:23-27

Let go of the grudge and grab hold of the GOAL. The goal is love and it is found in forgiveness (*1 Corinthians 13:5*).

Romans 2:1

We judge others over the same offenses we commit.

Romans 2:2-4

God's goodness brings us to repentance. In that same way, our grudges do not change people; our love and forgiveness changes people.

Matthew 18:28-30

Let go of the grudge and grab hold of the GROWTH.

Luke 17:3-10

It is our duty to forgive.

Luke 6:32-35

It is our directive to forgive.

Hebrews 12:14-15

It is our defilement if we don't forgive.

Matthew 18:31-35

Let go of the grudge and grab hold of the GLORY.

God is glorified when He forgives sin, and when sin is brought to justice. God's judgments are righteous (*Revelation 16:5*).

Romans 12:18-20

God wants us to forgive and leave the judging to Him—He will judge everyone perfectly.

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind, tenderhearted and forgive everyone that same way God, in Christ, forgave you.

Conclusion:

There is freedom in letting go of a grudge. Forgiving others brings peace to the heart and is what God commands of us. By forgiving, we are showing love toward others the same way God forgives and loves us and we let Him be the perfect judge.

APPLICATION STATION:

What are some things that make you keep a grudge? Why?

How can you improve when and how you forgive others in light of this message?

What steps can you make today toward letting go of your grudge?