

**“I have a problem
with not
forgetting
past
mistakes
after I have repented.
What can I do
to feel at peace?”**

We're often told that we need to forgive and forget. However, when dealing with our own past transgressions, the forgetting aspect can feel overwhelming. After all, how can we ever consciously choose to forget something? And if we do forget our sins, how can we hope to learn from our mistakes?

Forgetting a past sin isn't the same as the everyday forgetting that keeps us from finding our keys. We don't actually forget the transgressions that we've committed; we just stop letting them have any power over us. As Elder Tad R. Callister of the Seventy has said, "I do not know if we will forget our sins, but the time will come when those who repent will no longer be troubled by their sins" ("How Do I Know When I Am Forgiven?" *New Era*, Aug. 2012, 26).

When we fully accept the Atonement of Jesus Christ and do our part to repent of our sins, then the memory of a sin actually becomes a blessing. We are able to take important lessons from the experience and ensure that we don't fall into the same traps.

If you find yourself reliving past sins in your mind, try to direct your mind to more positive thoughts and present matters—scripture study, service, gratitude, the good and uplifting things in your life. If you still feel guilty, then pray to Heavenly Father for peace. It's also possible that there might be some aspect of repentance that you've neglected. You can always speak with your bishop or branch president if you need more help. **NE**

Pray and Get to Work



Pray to the Lord for peace, and then busy yourself with uplifting activities like scripture study, service, or volunteer work. Helping others with their trials is one of the

best ways to feel closer to Christ. When I dwell on my past mistakes, it makes it difficult to progress and find the beauty in all the blessings I have already been given.

Hanna O., 17, Oregon, USA

Remember God's Promise



Always remember God's promises written in the scriptures. He says in Doctrine and Covenants 58:42, "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and

I, the Lord, remember them no more." If we truly repent of our sins, God will no longer remember them. Then we don't have to worry about those past mistakes because God will have already forgiven us.

JJ Q., 18, Virginia, USA

Let Go of Unnecessary Burdens



Repentance is hard, but finding the will to forgive yourself is harder. Continually dwelling on past mistakes keeps you from spiritual growth and receiving blessings.

If the Lord has forgiven you, forgive yourself and let go of your unnecessary burden because then comes your desired peace of mind.

Emily V., 17, Alberta, Canada

Talk with a Friend



What I do when I have made a mistake and can't forget about it 100 percent is pray to God.

If you feel scared to pray at first, talk with your bishop. You can also get general advice from your Young Men/Young Women leaders about prayer—they will help you, for they are your friends.

Daniel P., 16, New York, USA

Make It Right



If you have already sincerely repented, you are on the path to forgiveness. You can pray for peace. Since you know

what you did was wrong and you keep thinking about it, you know you'll never do it again. You can also do everything you can to make it up to the person you did wrong to."

Jennavieve F., 14, Washington, USA

Pray and Study the Scriptures

I can get my answers by reading scriptures and by praying to God. Reading the scriptures helps me find answers to my questions. I seek help from my Heavenly Father to help me forget and forgive my past mistakes. Happiness and peace are the result of my prayer and scripture study.

Poojitha P., 14, India

Have Faith in the Atonement

To feel peace from a past mistake, have faith in the Lord's wonderful and infinite Atonement. The Atonement is infinite, which means that it is never ending and it allows us to become clean of any sin, no matter how serious it may have been. [See Isaiah 1:18.]

Shawn S., 18, Arizona, USA

Think of Better Things



One way to forget about a past mistake that you've already repented of is to just shake out the negative thoughts about what it

was and then think of better things, such as a good choice you've made.

Ciarra B., 14, Washington, USA

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.



THE NEED TO REMEMBER

"Satan will try to make us believe that our sins are not forgiven because we can remember them.

Satan is a liar; he tries to blur our vision and lead us away from the path of repentance and forgiveness. God did not promise that we would not remember our sins. Remembering will help us avoid making the same mistakes again. But if we stay true and faithful, the memory of our sins will be softened over time. This will be part of the needed healing and sanctification process."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Is There a Point of No Return?" *New Era*, June 2010, 5.

NEXT QUESTION

"Some of my friends have questions about the Church, but it seems they just want to argue. How can I avoid an argument and turn this into an opportunity to share?"

Send your answer and photo by October 15, 2012.

Go to newera.lds.org, click "Submit Material," and then select "Questions and Answers."

You can also write to us at newera@ldschurch.org or

New Era, Q&A, questions
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.