

“When I repent, I have a hard time forgiving myself. How do I learn to forgive myself?”

Believe that the Atonement can work in your life. Heavenly Father wouldn't offer repentance if forgiveness weren't possible. If you repent, He will forgive you, so you can forgive yourself too.

If you have repented, you won't forget your mistakes, but you can feel at peace, knowing that the Lord has forgiven you. Feeling His Spirit can let you know that He has forgiven you, and you can move on with your life. He doesn't want you to worry about the past if you have corrected the problem.

Talk to your bishop or branch president about this if needed. If you are having a hard time forgiving yourself because you don't know if the Lord has forgiven you, your bishop can help you understand how to repent and how to recognize when you've been forgiven. (See D&C 58:42–43.)

Also remember that as you repent and correct the mistakes of your past, you will feel the blessings of the Atonement. Its power is changing your nature. You are gradually becoming more like Christ and more worthy of His Spirit. **NE**



Pray for Help

Forgiveness seems harder when it's me I need to forgive. If I have repented and done everything the Lord has asked

me to do, then I have to remind myself that it's Satan who doesn't want me to feel better. Praying and asking Heavenly Father for His help always makes it easier for me to forgive myself. He always reminds me that He has forgiven me and loves me, so I should love myself enough to forgive myself. Heavenly Father has never let me down.

Mesa B., 16, Georgia



Alma's Example

I had an experience where I didn't feel that I was worthy and that I couldn't forgive myself. One day at seminary

I talked to my teacher, and he told me to read Alma 36:12–20. In this scripture Alma tells his conversion story, and after reading this, I decided to pray as Alma did so I could receive an answer from God to know if I was forgiven. After that, I felt better and was able to forgive myself.

Elder Avelar, Florida Fort Lauderdale Mission

Confidence to Forgive Myself

When I repent, I know that Heavenly Father will forgive me for what I have done. That gives me confidence that if Heavenly Father forgives me, so should I. If you are having a hard time forgiving yourself, you should pray, and I know that you will receive an answer to your prayers.

Chanae G., 13, California

The Atonement

I too have had some problems forgiving myself. I have found that it is just Satan trying to make me feel that I have failed and that I can't succeed. I find that if I pray to Heavenly Father and ask for comfort and His help, I feel much better. Just remember that after you have done all that you can do, that's when the Atonement steps in and takes care of the rest (see 2 Nephi 25:23). Because of the Atonement we can be saved through grace from the true and living God.

Adam R., 16, Utah



The Source of Influence

If you truly repent, God will forgive you. He will remember your sins no more. If you are feeling guilty after you fully repent and if you are having a hard time forgiving yourself, think of the spirit that is influencing you. Is it from God or Satan? God wants you to feel sorry enough to repent and not repeat the sin. Satan wants you to continue to

feel bad afterward. Ask Heavenly Father in humble prayer to help you forgive yourself.

Jessica J., 16, Arizona



Small and Simple Things

When I need to feel forgiven, I do small and simple things like reading the scriptures, praying, taking the sacrament worthily, changing my thoughts, and so on. When I do these things, I feel the Spirit, and that informs me that I am close to God and that He has forgiven me. Feeling that Spirit lets me know that I am worthy and have truly repented. You also know you are forgiven when you are busy thinking, doing, and becoming more like Christ and leaving behind sin through your works of faith.

Elder Silva, 21, New York New York
South Mission

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

NEXT QUESTION

"A guy in my class teases me for being Mormon. He does it jokingly, but I can tell he has a low opinion of our Church. How can I help him see things differently?"

Send your answer by February 15, 2009, to:

New Era, Q&A, 2/09

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BELIEVE IN THE ATONEMENT

Choose to believe in the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Accept the Savior's forgiveness, and then forgive yourself. Because of His sacrifice for you, He has the power to 'remember [your sins] no more' (D&C 58:42). You must do likewise."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "To Act for Ourselves: The Gift and Blessings of Agency," Ensign, May 2006, 7.