

## Hold on to Love

Peter came to Jesus and asked Him this:

*“Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.”* (Matthew 18:21-22, NASB)

Paul spoke to the same need when he said:

*Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.* (Ephesians 4:31—5:2, NIV)

Those we love sometimes hurt or disappoint us.

The cause may be a misunderstanding or  
human weakness or  
plain old selfishness.

Even the highest human love  
sometimes falls short.

When that happens, we can let bitterness and anger sweep in and  
widen the separation.

We can put at risk the love we’ve held so dear.

Or we can hold on to that love with both hands.

We can continue to reach out and  
seek to understand.

Even in our own hurt,  
we can do what love is designed to do:  
focus on the other person rather than ourselves.

When we forgive this way,  
we not only let the other person experience  
the beauty of God’s love,  
we experience it ourselves.

*Father, You have given me such a  
marvelous gift in  
complete forgiveness.  
I will gladly give it to others as well!*

Listen and sing:

**Hymn: *The Joy of Forgiveness***

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