Forgive
(Ephesians 5:32)

Introduction: 1. Those of you who are old enough will remember the Academy Award winning movie from 1970 called, "Love Story."
2. This movie popularized the phrase, "Love means never having to say you're sorry."
3. That's about the worst explanation of love I've ever heard!
   a. The avoidance of offenses will build pressure that will eventually "blow" over the most insignificant matters.
4. Isn't it amazing how gullible we sometimes are?
5. I would argue that unless one is willing to say they are sorry, they don't truly love.
6. In this lesson, I want to share some biblical advice on forgiveness and asking for forgiveness.

I. **Christianity Is More Than A Set Of Doctrines To Believe**
   A. Certainly, Christianity involves non-negotiable doctrines to be believed.
      1. (John 8:24).
      2. (1 John 4:3).
   B. But Christianity is more than holding doctrine, it's practicing doctrine.
   C. One of those teachings we must practice is that of forgiveness.
      1. (Matthew 18:21-35).
      2. (Ephesians 4:32).

II. **Things Forgiveness Does Not Do**
   A. It does not erase our memory (Hebrews 8:12).
   B. It does not remove consequences (2 Sam. 12:13-14; Mt. 19:9).
   C. It does not rebuild trust (Acts 15:36-41).

III. **We Must Confess Our Faults**
   A. (James 5:16).
   B. Some among us may have institutionalized this passage and apply it almost exclusively to the assembly.
   C. But this should be done in every day life.

IV. **We Must Learn How To Apologize And Seek Forgiveness**
   A. We sometimes "apologize" in a defensive and unsympathetic way that leaves the one who was offended unsatisfied.
   B. When seeking forgiveness...
      1. Accept responsibility - "I was wrong." No excuses (2 Sam. 12:13).
      2. Restitution - "How can I make it right" (Mt. 3:8; Acts 16:33).
      3. Express desire to change - Demonstrates sincerity (Ps. 51).

Conclusion: 1. These suggestions are not intended to just help you get along with your fellow-man.
2. They are also offered to help you to obtain forgiveness from God.