

**“Apologize”** by One Republic (#50 on Billboard’s all-time top 100)  
Colossians 3:13

This song we’re looking at today really connects with us. “I’m sorry” is sometimes underused, and sometimes overused in our relationships. Let’s listen to verse 1 and the chorus of this song (the lyrics are printed in your bulletin): <play snippet 1>

He’s enamored with her ... later in the song he says she’s angelic to him, even heaven sent. He’s into her in a big way, he’s so happy, he’s 10 feet off the ground! And she’s into him. Then, POW, she snaps or something, she cuts him down. Relationship crisis! But wait ... she says she’s sorry. And HE says, “nope. not gonna’ happen. It’s too late to apologize now and I’m outta here.”

Sound familiar? Compare that to Colossians 3:13, “Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”

Let’s look at apology, confession, forgiveness, reconciliation, and finally answer, “is it EVER too late to apologize?”

**A. What does it mean to “apologize”?** To admit your part with regret.

- Accusative apology: “I’m sorry you can’t get what I’m saying!”
- Ignorant apology: “I’m sorry, let’s just forget it and move on.”
- Manipulative apology: “If I apologize, will you \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Conditional apology: “I’ll apologize if you \_\_\_\_\_.”
- NOTE: an apology should never include the word, “you.”
- Genuine apology: “I’m sorry. I was wrong.”

CONFESSION means to come into agreement about the situation.

James 5:16, “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.”

**B. Is “forgiveness” the same thing as “apology”?** No. Forgiveness requires confession.

1 John 1:9, "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."

NOTE: It's God's job to do the cleaning ...

### **C. Self-awareness is the first step of forgiveness.**

Colossians 3:13, "Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

Make allowance for each other's faults ... people sin, build a bridge, and get over it. And that's the point isn't it? "Building" bridges instead of burning them.

### **D. Genuine forgiveness is rooted in our faith in Christ.**

"Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you *must* forgive others."

1. "I was forgiven." (the fact of Jesus' death on the Cross.)
2. "I am forgiven." (applying that fact to my current situation.)
3. "I am forgiving." (allowing who I am in Christ to change my feelings/behavior.)
4. "I will forgive." (choosing to move forward in my relationship with Christ and others.)

### **E. Is it ever "too late to apologize?"**

Let's listen to the ending of the song, it's a bit odd, and then I want to ask you a question. <play song snippet 2>

Did you catch that at the end? He's back on the rope again! "I'm holdin' on your rope, Got me ten feet off the ground."

Lot's of relationships go through these cycles of passion > crisis > apology > rejection > passion. Roller coaster love, let's say. There's a better way:

**Ephesians 4:31-32**, Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. <sup>32</sup> Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

MAIN POINT: Focus less on apology, and more on confession and forgiveness. Apologies come and go. Confession and forgiveness build long-term trust.

Answer: No, it's never too late to apologize, but it can be too late for it to do any good.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, we want to come into agreement and unity in our relationships. Please lead each of us to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving. We know You'll never cut us off or let us down. Show us how to build our relationships upon that kind of trust. Amen."