

SCENARIO 3 **The Apology That Never Came**

They have never said it. They may never. Can you release it without them?

The wound was real. It was wrong. It is allowed to have cost you something. Nothing here asks you to minimize what happened — it asks something harder: to choose release in full knowledge of what you are releasing.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Yes — and it is the hardest thing on this list. The release is not for them. The person who wronged you may never know, may never change, may not be here anymore. Releasing it is what breaks your chain — not theirs.

WHERE THE SCRIPTURE LANDS

Luke 23:34	“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Nobody at the cross had apologized. Nobody had asked. Jesus released it before anyone repented — and while it was still happening.
Genesis 50:20	Joseph had power to retaliate and did not use it. His brothers never fully owned what they did. He released it anyway.
Ephesians 4:31–32	Bitterness takes up residence in you — not in the person who wronged you. Releasing it changes you first, and does not require their awareness.
Colossians 3:13	“Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Not because it is fair. Because you were forgiven by Someone who had every right not to.
Luke 17:3	“If thy brother repent, forgive him.” A real text. Read it alongside Luke 23:34 — Jesus did not wait for repentance.

THE THREE CHOICES

A	Forgive them now, without them	The cross pattern. Release does not wait on the other party — and this is the only option that does not leave your freedom in their hands.
B	Wait until you feel it	Understandable, and where most people quietly live. But <i>aphiemi</i> is a decision, not a feeling. The feeling often arrives long after the choice, if it arrives at all.
C	They must repent first	Grounded in Luke 17:3. The hard question: if they never repent, are you willing to carry this for the rest of your life to hold that line?

THE DISTINCTION THAT MATTERS

Forgiveness is not the end of grief. It is the decision to stop letting the person who wounded you also determine your future. You are not forgiving from strength — you are forgiving from having been forgiven.

For deep wounds, forgiveness is rarely a single event. The weight comes back and the decision has to be made again — sometimes daily. That is not evidence the first decision failed. It is faithfulness, not failure.

TAKE IT HOME

1. What has the waiting cost you? Not what they cost you — what the waiting cost you.
2. If they never say it, and they might not, can you still put it down?

SCENARIO 3 **The Five-Frame Prayer**

Take it with you. Fill it in for yourself — nobody is reading it but you.

WHERE IT COMES FROM

Drawn from Ephesians 4:26–32. Paul does not tell us to skip the anger — he tells us not to let the sun go down on it. This prayer moves through it in order: name the anger, make the decision, release the weight, receive the healing, and hand the judgment to God.

You may need to pray it more than once. For deep wounds the weight comes back, and the decision has to be made again — sometimes daily. That is not evidence the first decision failed. It is faithfulness, not failure.

PRAY IT

Lord, I am angry at _____ for _____.

Lord, I forgive _____ for _____.

Lord, I release _____.

Lord, I receive Your healing.

Lord, I trust You to make it right.

ONE MORE THING

There may also be someone waiting on a conversation with you — an apology you owe that you have been putting off. Tonight has two addresses: stop waiting for their apology, and stop waiting to give yours.

If tonight opened something you need to talk about, text Pastor. That is what the number is for — tonight, or any day after.

FOLLOWING CHRIST. MOVING TOGETHER.

John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church • Southfield, Michigan • Text Pastor anytime tonight