

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS for MEANINGFUL APOLOGIES

The Power of Apology by Beverly Engel. Not a Christian author, but many Christian principles on the roadblocks, necessity and skills for giving a meaningful and healing apology. Outstanding resource for those who want to truly reconcile with those they've offended.

The Art of Forgiving by Lewis Smedes. A practical follow-up to his book, *Forgive and Forget*, by a seminary professor detailing the steps to forgiving seemingly unforgivable hurts.

The Five Languages of Apology (2006) by Gary Chapman & Jennifer Thomas
A terrific tool for discovering the most effective, meaningful apologies for you and your spouse.

Caring Enough to Forgive – Caring Enough NOT to Forgive by David W. Augsberger. An older book about the importance of forgiving and yet the importance of not forgiving when it means ignoring the truth and shoving conflicts under the rug.

Forgiving the Unforgivable (1994) by Beverly Flanigan
Although Beverly does not claim to be a Christian, she is an expert on the subject of forgiveness. I liked this book because it honors the pain of the wounded in a way that I seldom see in the “forgiveness” literature. My copy is highlighted on nearly every page. Highly recommended for those left by a non-repentant spouse and/or still feel stuck in the mire of pain. No clichés or trite solutions offered.

Forgiving and Reconciling: Bridges to wholeness and Hope (2003) by Everett L. Worthington Jr. He has really been through some tragedies that have forced him to apply all he has learned and taught on the topic of forgiveness. Contains some great exercises.

Forgiving the Unforgivable (2005) by David Stoop. Fabulous book. Highly recommend. Comes from a Christian perspective, but no trite solutions. Well done.

How Can I Forgive You? The Courage To Forgive, The Freedom Not To by Janis Abrahms Spring, Ph.D. Jewish author and therapist explores the difficult issue of how to resolve the pain of intimate wounds when the offender refuses to repent or take appropriate responsibility. She presents new terminology to help people let go of their anger and bitterness without feeling like they must condone and absolve others for their wrongs. While I think she confuses forgiveness with reconciling and trust (I see these as not always linked), it is still a good, challenging read.

Why Won't You Apologize? Healing Big Betrayals and Everyday Hurts. By Harriet Lerner, Ph.D. An excellent resource to help folks go beyond a simple “I'm Sorry.” Useful for both the offender and the offended. Practical examples included. Useful to professionals and general public.

Bold Love, by Dan Allender
First half of the book is a bit wordy and not that great. However, the last half of the book is worth its weight in gold. He discusses how to “love” an evil person, how to love a fool, and how to love an ordinary sinner. Dispels some of the preconceived notions about what it means to be a loving person that is so popular in Christian lore, but nevertheless dysfunctional and contrary to the heart of God.