

The Foundation of Forgiveness (Part 2)

What is God's forgiveness like?

www.uvachurch.com

Introduction: What does it mean for God to forgive?

- A. This is the basis of our relationship with God! (1 Jn 1:7-9; Mt 26:28)
 - 1. We previously studied that sin is the reason for our separation from God.
 - 2. God had to act on our behalf to provide forgiveness. He is serious about forgiveness! How serious? He gave His Son to provide it!
- B. We make a big mistake when we assume that all understand what forgiveness is.
 - 1. Many Christians struggle with guilt because of a lack of understanding of forgiveness! Some think of God like a man. (Num 23:19)
 - 2. We need to have a clear understanding of God's promises and let His forgiveness give us peace of mind. (Acts 8:38-39; 16:33-34)

I. What happens when God forgives?

A. What is the definition of forgiveness? (Mt 6:12, 14)

Forgive - (1) send off or away, let go (MT 27.50); (2) as a legal technical term divorce (1C 7.11); (3) abandon, leave behind (MT 26.56); (4) of duty and obligation reject, set aside, neglect (MK 7.8); (5) of toleration let go, leave in peace, allow (MK 11.6); (6) of sins or debts forgive, pardon, cancel (LU 7.47);

- 1. There are several actions described by this word: send off, let go, abandon, leave behind, reject, set aside, pardon, cancel and forgive.
- 2. When God forgives sin then that sin no longer exist as a barrier between you and God! (Isa 59:1-2)
- 3. Still, men have many questions! Could this sin be brought back by God? Is there something I need to do to keep forgiven? What price do I need to pay?
- B. When God forgives the sin is removed forever.
 - 1. God describes our sins as being cast into the sea! (Mic 7:18-19)
 - 2. Notice that this is a product of the mercy of God. He wants us to win this battle!
 - 3. Have you ever doubted the forgiveness of men? Men often say they forgive but in fact they do not. God is not a man.
 - 4. The holiness of God demands a complete removal of sin.
- C. When God forgives that sin is never remembered as a charge against us for all time. (Heb 8:12)
 - 1. This is why Jesus acts as our High Priest. He wants us to have all guilt removed. (Heb 4:14-16)
 - 2. Nothing delights God as much as when a sinner is forgiven. Repentance always is found before forgiveness! (Lk 15:7)
 - 3. God tells us He blots out our sins! (Acts 3:19; Isa 43:25)
- D. When God forgives He receives us back into full fellowship! (Lk 15:20-24)
 - 1. This is very difficult for men to do. God is not a man.
 - 2. Here is where many Christians can be overcome by guilt. (2 Cor 2:7-8, 11)

3. We have lost some because of this. This is why we need a solid understanding of God's character.

II. What should God's forgiveness produce in us?

A. We should have a joy that fills our hearts. (Psa 51:8-12)

1. We already saw the rejoicing in the book of Acts. This same joy comes for the Christian that repents and confesses his sin.
2. When our relationship with God is our single focus then our forgiveness becomes a "big deal." Do we remember how rich we are?
3. The greatest motivation in evangelism comes from those who have a vivid memory and a vivid joy in what God has done for them. (Mk 5:19-20)
4. Our love for singing has this joy at the foundation! (Jam 5:13)

B. The love of God will become a power in our thoughts and our choices. (Lk 7:44-47)

1. When we struggle with our priorities we may need to remember our forgiveness.
2. Be honest with yourself: "How much were you forgiven when you became a Christian?"
3. It is very important that we have a genuine conversion. We can grow in our understanding of that conversion over time. We also can forget. (2 Pt 1:9)
4. Do we rejoice with the angels at another's forgiveness or are we indifferent?

C. The mercy and forgiveness of God will become a part of us as we deal with others. (Mt 6:14-15; 18:33-35)

1. This is one of the biggest challenges we face as Christians. Many let the hurts of brethren dominate them and in time destroy them.
2. When we hold grudges we become hard hearted towards our brethren. There is no excuse.
3. What does our thoughts and words say about how we think of brethren that have hurt us? (1 Pt 4:8-9; James 5:8-9; 2:13)
4. Do we enjoy being with our brethren? If through indifference or bitterness we rarely seek out time to be with our brethren, something is wrong. (1 Pt 1:22)

III. Let us daily remember all that brought about our forgiveness

A. This memory will keep us humble. (1 Pt 5:5-7)

1. It will help me to see that I am just like my brethren and not a superior looking down!
2. It will help me to make allowances for my brethren.
3. It will help me to speak kind but firm words in dealing with sin and forgiveness.

B. This memory will produce a heart that finds real meaning in worship. (Jn 4:23-24)

1. What an opportunity to speak and hear words about the One that forgave me!
2. These will have a very different attitude about assemblies. Our attitudes towards God's provisions reflect an attitude towards the blood of Christ. (Heb 10:29)
3. Let each of us help one another to remember! (Heb 10:23-25)

Conclusion: Never be indifferent to seeking the certain forgiveness of God!