

Lesson 15-17

Christianity Based on Receiving and Extending Forgiveness

I. What do we know about God that serves as a foundation to our understanding of forgiveness?

A. God is omniscient or _____.

This means the following:

1. He sees all that occurs in every place and keeps watch upon the evil and the good (Pro. 15:3).
2. He knows everything that occurs in nature (Ps. 147:4; Mt. 6:8; 10:29).
3. He knows the ways of man (Ps. 33:13-15; Pro. 5:21).
4. He knows all of the deeds and experiences of man (Ps. 139:2-3).
5. He knows all of man's words (Ps. 139:4).
6. He knows all of man's sorrows (Ex. 3:7).
7. He knows our thoughts (Ps. 139:1-2).
8. He knows for all eternity what will be for all eternity (Acts 15:18).

B. God is a _____ God.

There are many verses that present God as a God of mercy and forgiveness. Many of these verses challenge some of our concepts of our holy God.

1. Exodus 34:6-7

And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation."

2. Nehemiah 9:17

They refused to obey, and they were not mindful of Your wonders that You did among them. But they hardened their necks, and in their rebellion they appointed a leader to return to their bondage. But you God are ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness, and did not forsake them.

3. Psalm 32:1-5

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all

the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

4. Psalm 86:1-5, 15

Bow down Your ear, O LORD, hear me; for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am holy; You are my God; save Your servant who trusts in You! Be merciful to me, O Lord, for I cry to You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You...15 But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

5. Psalm 103:1-18

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.

6. Psalm 130

*Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD; Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope. My soul waits for the Lord More than those who watch for the morning-
-Yes, more than those who watch for the morning. O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."*

7. Isaiah 55:7

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

8. Micah 7:18-20

Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from days of old.

9. Matthew 9:1-8

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

10. Acts 13:38-39

Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

11. Ephesians 1:3-8

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

12. Colossians 2:13-15

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,

He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

II. What is the nature of God's forgiveness?

A. The nature of God's forgiveness is seen in the phrases that He uses to describe His forgiveness.

When He forgives our sins, He—

1. Remembers our sins _____ (Jer. 31:34).
2. _____ our sins as far from Him as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12).
3. Casts our sins into _____ the sea, never to be retrieved again (Mic. 7:18-20).

B. The nature of God's forgiveness is reflected in the definition of the word "forgive."

1. The word "forgive: means "to _____ or pardon."
2. To forgive is to _____ from liability to punishment for a crime or fault committed.
3. Forgiveness is the voluntary _____ of a person over which one has legal control.
4. When God forgives it does not mean that He _____ suspends punishment which He may at some later time inflict.
5. God's forgiveness is _____ and it is _____.

C. The nature of God's forgiveness is reflected in the _____.

There are five characteristics of a presidential pardon:

1. It must be exercised by one who has _____ to pardon.
2. No other judge or magistrate can _____ the pardon.
3. The crime for which the pardon is granted is completely _____ from all police or FBI records.
4. You can _____ for that particular crime again.

5. That crime can never be _____ again.

III. What are the conditions that we must meet to receive God's pardon?

The six conditions for forgiveness include the following:

- A. We must _____ the Lord (Ps. 86:5; Ps. 51:4).
- B. We must _____ our sin (I John 1:9).
- C. We must _____ of our sin (Acts 8:22).
- D. We must be willing to _____ our sin (Pro. 28:13).
- E. We must be willing to _____ (Ps. 18:25; Mt. 5:23-24; 6:12-15; Mark 11:25; Luke 6:37; Col. 3:13).
- F. We must _____.

IV. How important is it for us to forgive others?

- A. Jesus indicated that we do not have _____ in the matter of forgiving others.
- B. Jesus taught us that our forgiveness of others is _____ for our receiving God's forgiveness.
 - 1. He included this teaching in the Lord's Prayer (Mt. 6:12; Luke 11:4).
 - 2. He emphasized it again on a number of occasions (Mt. 6:14-15; Mark 11:26; Luke 6:37).
- C. Jesus taught that we are to _____ forgive when those who have offended us repent (Luke 17:3-4).
- D. Jesus taught that we are to forgive without keeping _____ (Mt. 18:21-22; Luke 17:4).
- E. Jesus taught that forgiving others was not dependent upon their _____ our forgiveness (Mark 11:25).
 - 1. Jesus demonstrated this _____ (Luke 23:34).

2. Stephen demonstrated this at his _____ (Acts 7:60).

F. Jesus taught that if we do not forgive we will experience _____.

1. Our prayers will be _____ (Mark 11:25).
2. Our gifts and ministries will be rendered _____ (Mt. 5:23-24).
3. God will _____ His forgiveness (Mt. 18:35).
4. The sins of others will remain _____ (John 20:23; II Cor. 2:7).
5. We will personally _____ and dwell in a prison house of our own making (Mt. 18:23-35).

Jesus told the parable of the unforgiving servant. From this parable we learn many things:

- a. There is no possible way that we could ever _____ the debt that we owe to him.
 - b. The forgiveness that we received from God is totally _____ because our debt was real.
 - c. What others owe to us is totally _____ when compared to the debt that we owed to God.
 - d. By not extending forgiveness to others we demonstrate a lack of true appreciation for and _____ concerning God's unspeakable gift to us.
 - e. God is further _____ when we do not reciprocate His generosity.
6. We will experience the fruit of _____ (Heb. 12:14-15).

When we do not forgive others physiologically and psychologically we experience some negative reactions.

- High blood pressure
- Increased levels of stress
- Hostility in relationships
- Anger and intolerance
- Increased heart rate
- Higher instance of substance abuse
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Difficulty in developing wholesome friendships
- Headaches and chronic pain

- Inability to commit to others

V. What does it mean to extend forgiveness to others?

Extending God's forgiveness means several things:

- It means that we express our forgiveness to them _____.
- It means that we _____ bring the matter up to the offending party again.
- It means that we treat the offending party as if it had _____.
- It means that we refuse to _____ about it anymore.
- It means that we _____ on the offense in our minds.

VI. How can we effectively receive God's forgiveness and forgive ourselves?

Forgiving ourselves is just as important as forgiving others. Paul indicated that in order for us to win the race that we are running, we must have the ability to forget some things (Phil. 3:12-15).

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

- Forgetting is not a normal human _____.
 - The dictionary defines the word "forget" in several ways.
 - To be unable to recall something that was previously known.
 - To fail to remember.
 - To fail to do something unintentionally or neglect.
 - To fail to take through forgetfulness.
 - To lose interest in or regard for; to overlook purposefully; to disregard.
 - To leave unmentioned or to fail to think of.
 - The New Testament word for "forget" means "to _____ or no longer care for."
- Forgetting means that we are to no longer _____ certain things in our mind.
 - There are certain things that we are to _____ and no longer care for in

our minds.

2. There are certain things that we are not to let _____ our thinking or thought life.
3. There are certain things upon which we are not to _____ or gaze.
4. There are certain things that we are not to _____, water or feed.
5. There are certain things that we must let _____ for lack of nourishment.

C. Forgetting involves the discipline of one's _____.

Paul had many things to forget when it came to his personal race, including:

1. Christian that he had persecuted to death (Acts 8:3; 22:4; Phil. 3:6).
2. Blasphemy that he had uttered against the Lord (I Tim. 1:13).
3. Assisting at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58; 8:1).
4. The rejection he experienced from the other apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 8:26).
5. The many disappointments, betrayals and heartaches caused by those to whom he ministered (II Cor. 4:8-12; II Tim. 1:15; 4:10).

D. Forgetting means adopting the attitude of _____ (Gen. 41:50-52).

1. Joseph had to learn to forget his _____.
 - a. The word here used for “toil” literally means the following:
 - Heavy weary labor to the point of exhaustion.
 - The produce of labor.
 - Weariness, trouble, vexation.
 - Sorrow
 - b. The toil that Joseph had to forget involved bad experiences and _____.
 - His brothers sold him into slavery.
 - Potiphar’s wife made false accusations against him.
 - Potiphar (whom he had served faithfully) put him into a common prison.
 - The butler broke his promise to him to put in a good word for him.
2. Joseph had to grow from the negative experiences and become _____.
3. Joseph’s _____ of his children indicated the work had been done.

- a. His first child he named Manasseh (forgetting).
- b. His second child he named Ephraim (doubly fruitful).

When he did see his brothers again, he had _____ to retaliate but he did not (Gen. 45:1-8; 50:19-20).

Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." Genesis 50:19-20

VII. What are the results of forgiveness?

When forgiveness is granted and received it brings forth some wonderful results. These results include:

- A. Justification (Acts 13:38-39).
- B. Clearing of the Conscience (II Cor. 7:11).
- C. Joy (Ps. 51:12).
- D. Restoration (Acts 3:19).
- E. Love for God (Luke 7:36-48, esp. vs. 47)