



A Great

Part 18

SALVATION

Forgiveness
Various Verses

We have gone over many topics in this series, such as the *gospel, salvation, redemption, adoption, our eternal security in Christ, the image of God, being ambassadors for His glory, our victory in Jesus, and more.* We also looked at our **new identity** in Jesus. We will finish our series, though we *could continue*, by studying ***Forgiveness***.

A. Defining Forgiveness

...**Ephesians 4:32** is our foundation verse - Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

If we *don't understand forgiveness, we won't be able to express it.* In this verse, both words for "*forgiveness*" refer to "**giving grace.**" What does forgiveness mean?

A. Defining Forgiveness

"The various biblical authors used a number of different Hebrew and Greek words to convey the concept of forgiveness. One word means "to blot out," in the sense that God erases the record of the sins we commit. Another common Hebrew word means "to lift and carry away," speaking of the complete removal of our sins from us, as if a

A. Defining Forgiveness

heavy load had been lifted from our shoulders. Still another word means “to release from debt,” indicating the punishment for sin has been canceled. And one Greek word means “to show grace to one who has sinned greatly,” speaking of the undeserved nature of forgiveness. It is truly a gift from God. In their book *Forgive and Love*

A. Defining Forgiveness

Again, John Nieder and Thomas Thompson (pp. 62-63) point out that the Bible uses at least 75 different word pictures of forgiveness. Here are a few :

- "To forgive is to turn the key, open the cell door, and let the prisoner walk free."

A. Defining Forgiveness

- "To forgive is to write in large letters across a debt, 'Nothing owed.'"
- "To forgive is to pound the gavel in a courtroom and declare, 'Not guilty!'"
- "To forgive is to shoot an arrow so high and so far that it can never be found again."
- "To forgive is to loose the moorings of a ship and release it into the open sea..."

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities (*keep record of sins*), O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is **forgiveness**, that you may be feared. - ***Psalm 130:3-4***

You have **put all my sins behind your back.** - ***Isaiah 38:17***

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

I am He who **blots out your transgression** for
My own sake and **I will not remember your**
sins. - *Isaiah 43:25*

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

Who is a God like You, **pardoning iniquity** and **passing over transgression** for the remnant of His inheritance? He will again have compassion on us; He will **tread (*trample*) our iniquities underfoot**. You will cast (*throw*) all our (*or their*) sins into the depths of the sea. - *Micah 7:18-19...*

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

Leviticus 1:1-5 - The LORD called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, 2“Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock. 3“If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

blemish. He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the LORD.4He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. 5Then he shall kill the bull before the LORD, and Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and throw the blood against the sides of the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

1. The person who *brought the sacrifice*, put his/her hands on the heads of the animals, picturing a *transfer of guilt* from the person to the animal...
2. A price had to be paid for forgiveness...

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

3. They were offered after sin was realized.

We must *recognize the need for forgiveness* and *acknowledge* it.

4. Though not stated here, there was a *payback or recompense*. Why? To show the seriousness of the crime and encourage others to avoid sin.

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

5. If people followed what God said, He stated their *sin would be forgiven...*

6. There was no sacrifice for pre-meditated sin - *only punishment by death...*

B. Forgiveness in the Old Testament

This was the *Old Covenant*. God promised a *New One in Jeremiah 31:31-34*.

The *death and resurrection* of Christ were *necessary for forgiveness to take place*.

Otherwise, sacrifices would continue, because *without the shedding of blood there is no remission*, taking away or *forgiveness* of sin.

C. Forgiveness in the New Testament

There is a *connection* and *correlation* between the Old and New Testaments regarding forgiveness.

Romans 3:23, 5:6-11, 8:1, 31-34, 2

Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 8:8-12 (quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34), 9:27-28, 1 Peter 2:24...

C. Forgiveness in the New Testament

Colossians 2:13-14 - And you (*Gentiles*), who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having **forgiven** us **all** our trespasses, 14by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he **set aside**, nailing it to the cross...

C. Forgiveness in the New Testament

Paul illustrates God's complete forgiveness of all the sins of believers by a colorful image derived from the world of business in the first century. The "written code" (*cheirographon*) was a note of indebtedness. The term is used many times in the papyri and is even well attested in Jewish literature. One Jewish document well illustrates how it

C. Forgiveness in the New Testament

was used: " 'Let us find how we might be able to repay you.' Without delay, I would bring before them the note (*cheriographon*) and read it granting cancellation."

Jesus has cancelled the note of indebtedness believers have with God. Consequently, all of the penalties God has threatened because

C. Forgiveness in the New Testament

humanity has defaulted on its obligations to him are declared null and void because of Christ's work on the cross. Paul creatively takes the image one step further by saying that Christ has taken the note away from us and nailed it to the cross.

Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: NT,
p. 386

C. Forgiveness in the New Testament

*...This is our **position** in Christ and should be our **practice** in life. It is to have the righteousness of Christ. It is to be "justified" or declared righteous by God. It is God taking away all our guilt, erasing it, washing our dirty souls and making us whiter than snow! It is having our debt "paid in full..."*

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

...There are **2 views** about *forgiveness*, based on **one's perspective on salvation**.

Some say - *forgive everyone, every time for everything*. They use the text of forgiving 70 times 7 in *Matthew 18:21-22*.

Others say *someone must repent to be forgiven*, using *Luke 17:3-4*.

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

1. What Forgiveness Isn't

Eliminating - not about *getting rid of consequences of someone's attitudes, actions, words or decisions...* Regarding forgiveness, it's *not about getting rid of consequences.*

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

1. What Forgiveness Isn't

Enabling - not about *giving someone the ability, authority or opportunity*, to continue in a selfish, abusive or destructive behavior.

Excusing - not about making *excuses* for someone's sinful behaviors or patterns.

(Have the Funeral - DVD Study)

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

2. What Forgiveness Is

"We are to extend grace to others as God has extended grace to us. We, the undeserving who have been showered with God's grace in Christ, are to give to other undeserving sinners (who have sinned against us) the same outpouring of grace. From God to us to

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

2. What Forgiveness Is

others. Grace to us, grace to others. This is God's plan."

From:

<http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2003-06-01-Is-Total-Forgiveness-Realistic/>

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

2. What Forgiveness Is

Forgiving is releasing a person and their offense to **God**, and letting **Him** work in their lives to bring them where **He** wants them to be. When someone hurts us, we decide to let go of that offense and give it to **God**. However, we *cannot be reconciled* or be *brought back into a right relationship with* that person until he or she repents...

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

3. Steps of Forgiveness

a. **Initiation**

...God took the initiative in salvation. We *cannot be saved* apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. We take the **initiative** to *offer* forgiveness to the one who wronged us, *not ignoring sin*, but to showing *God's love*, hopeful and prayerful for repentance...

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

3. Steps of Forgiveness

b. Extension

Before the person repents, this is where you **extend** the **opportunity of forgiveness** to the person or group. It's their choice to take it. You can *give them* and *their sin* to God. Then *they have a choice...*

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

3. Steps of Forgiveness

c. Reconciliation

*Repentance must take place for **reconciliation** to take place.* Though we treat someone kindly before they repent, it's difficult have a healthy relationship with that person until he/she does....
When someone *truly recognizes* he or she has sinned and repents, *reconciliation can take place.*

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

4. Questions about Forgiveness

Can or does God forget? **No**. What does it mean when He says *He won't remember our sins anymore?* ***He doesn't hold them against us...***

We may not forget an offense, but we *don't have to hold it against* someone. That is a choice we make!

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

4. Questions about Forgiveness

What if I can't forgive myself?

If God has forgiven me of **EVERYTHING**, and if I hold something against myself, MY standard is higher than God's. *That is pride...*

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

4. Questions about Forgiveness

Should we bring up something from the past we have forgiven?

In *Numbers 20* the nation grumbles because they have no water... That was a great sin in Israel and their hearts were hard. In *Numbers 22*, a king hires a false prophet,

D. Forgiveness in Our Lives

4. Questions about Forgiveness

Balaam, to curse Israel, but God won't let him. God says He doesn't see ...*misfortune* or ...*trouble in Israel*. God **forgave** them and *doesn't mention their sin*, but in *Psalm 95* and through the prophets and other passages, did God mention it? **Yes**. It seems the **motivation** for why God did it is the answer...