

Forgiveness

Psalm 32:1-2

Introduction

1. **Psalm 32:1-2** – Forgiveness is a central theme in scripture. However, it is one that is widely misunderstood.
 2. Forgiveness defined (2 Greek words):
 - a. *Aphiemi* – (*apo*, “from,” *hiemi*, “to send”); “to send forth, send away”; “to remit or forgive” (VINE)
 - i. **Psalm 103:12** – removed transgressions far from us.
 - b. *Charizomai* – 1) to do something pleasant or agreeable (to one), to do a favor to, gratify; 1b) to grant forgiveness, to pardon. (THAYER)
 3. Forgiveness is a sending away of an offense as to release the offender from the guilt of such. Inhering within such an act is kind favor to the benefit of its object.
- I. The Need
- A. The Sin of Man
 - a. **Romans 3:23** – all have sinned.
 - i. Failed to glorify (honor) God.
 - ii. **1 John 3:4** – sin is lawlessness.
 - iii. Failed to glorify (honor) God by adhering to His law. (**Ecclesiastes 12:13**)
 - b. The need for forgiveness is universal, but it is only on an individual basis:
 - i. **Ezekiel 18:20** – the soul who sins dies – each individual is solely responsible.
 - ii. The gospel is designed to convict each individual of their sin, for without this knowledge forgiveness cannot be sought – **Romans 3:9, 19-20; 11:32**
 - B. The Penalty of Sin
 - a. Sin is not without consequence.
 - b. **Romans 6:23** – wages of sin is death (spiritual)
 - i. **Isaiah 59:1-2** – separation from God.
 - ii. Seeking forgiveness before that is finalized – **2 Thessalonians 1:8-9**
 - c. Any and all sin will be punished equally – **Revelation 21:8**
 - i. On earth there may be a range of penalty.
 - ii. With God all sin is equally guilty.
- II. The Desire
- A. Forgiveness Must be Desired to be Obtained
 - a. Not all desire forgiveness, so they don’t seek it, so they don’t obtain it.
 - b. Pride/self-righteousness – **Luke 18:11-12** (Pharisee/Tax collector); **James 4:6-10** (humble self in sight of Lord)
 - c. Blinded by Satan and his devices – **2 Corinthians 4:3-4** (worldliness, biases, etc.)
 - B. The Desire for a Pure Conscience

- a. **Psalm 32:3-4** – guilt of sin weighs on the soul, and even effects the body.
 - b. **Psalm 51:3-4, 10** – always before me, request for cleansed conscience.
 - i. **NOTE:** Forgiveness does not equate to a release from all consequences, but definitely eternal ones (**cf. 2 Samuel 12:10-15** – consequences to David’s sin despite forgiveness.)
 - c. **1 John 3:20-21** – confidence before God →
- C. The Desire for Restored Favor with God
- a. **Psalm 51:12** – restored to the joy of the Lord.
 - b. Therefore, only those who seek the Lord will receive forgiveness – **2 Chronicles 7:14**

III. The Origin

- A. Forgiveness, by definition, is offered by the one offended.
- B. The Main Victim
 - a. Forgiveness is to be sought from the person you have sinned against – **Matthew 5:23-24**
 - b. However, God is the One offended with each and every sin:
 - i. **Psalm 51:4** – God. (David had sinned against Uriah, Bathsheba, and all the people, but His sin was against God.)
 - ii. **Genesis 39:9** – Joseph – how can I do this sin against God. (Would also be against Potiphar.)
 - c. The idea of forgiving self is not really Biblical:
 - i. How can the offended be the offender?
 1. Certainly, the sinner has done themselves a disservice.
 2. However, that is not the central problem, but merely a byproduct.
 - ii. Such a concept is self-centered (even though it usually comes in the context of implied humility).
 - iii. Forgiving self, or acting as though you can’t forgive self are both displays of pride:
 1. Usually revolving around a particular sin, OR MORE ACCURATELY, OUR ESTIMATION OF A SIN.
 2. Forgive self of laziness, or idleness? – **Romans 12:11 (“in diligence not slothful”; ASV)**
 - a. Do you think this is not as severe as other sins?
 3. Can’t forgive self of adultery/fornication? – **Hebrews 13:4**
 - a. Did you think you couldn’t fall this way? – **1 Corinthians 10:12-13**
 4. Either one fails to realize who the victim is – God – and fails to realize the severity of sin.
 - d. Forgiveness from another may not be possible and is not enough.
 - e. Forgiveness of self truly does not mean anything at all.
 - f. Only forgiveness from God can truly rectify an offense.

IV. The Price

- A. Blood

- a. **Hebrews 9:22** – “**remission**” – *aphesis* – corresponding noun to the verb *aphiemi* (to send forth, to send away, forgive).
 - i. “**and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness**” (NASB)
 - b. Why without the shedding of blood?
 - i. **Romans 6:23** – wages of sin is death.
 - ii. Judicially, with God, this must occur.
 - iii. Blood – used by metonymy for death – a substitution of the name of an attribute of a thing put for the thing meant.
 - 1. **Leviticus 17:11** – life of flesh in blood.
 - 2. Blood is shed, life is given – i.e. death.
 - 3. Shedding of blood and forgiveness – **Leviticus 4:15-20** (Concerning the Sin offering)
 - c. Blood of animals insufficient – **Hebrews 10:1-4** – merely a shadow.
- B. The Blood of Christ
- a. **Hebrews 9:11-14; 10:11-18** (“**remission**” – same as **9:22**) – how much more shall the blood of Christ?
 - b. Blood of Christ is the purchase price – **Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:18-19**
 - c. Forgiveness, then, should not be taken for granted – **Hebrews 10:26-29**
- V. The Purpose
- A. The Glory of God
- a. **Ephesians 1:3-7, 12** – Ultimately, all spiritual blessings in Christ, which center around the forgiveness of sins in His blood, is to the praise and glory of God.
 - b. **Psalms 51:1** – appeal to God’s nature for forgiveness.
 - i. Forgiveness from God magnifies His glorious nature.
 - c. **Romans 11:32-36** – the gospel plan of salvation leading to the forgiveness of man for sin is to God’s glory.
 - i. (**v. 36**) – of Him (origin), through Him (sustaining power), to Him (purpose – to His glory), to whom be glory.
- B. The Restoration of Man to the Glory of God
- a. Fallen short of His glory – **Romans 3:23**
 - b. All those forgiven comprise the kingdom, which is the church – **Colossians 1:13-14**
 - c. The church is to the glory of God – **Ephesians 3:20-21**
- VI. The Range
- A. One will ask, “Is there any sin which is so great that God cannot forgive?”
- B. The range of God’s forgiveness can be understood based on the purpose of God’s forgiveness.
- a. If the purpose of forgiveness is ultimately the glorification of God as His divine attributes are put on display for the world to see, then what would an inability to forgive display?
 - b. If there is something too great for God to forgive, then God is shown to be limited in mercy, and power.

- c. Mercy of God is unlimited – **Psalm 103:17** – mercy from everlasting to everlasting.
- d. Power – **Matthew 19:25-26** (who can be saved) – all things possible with God.
- C. The only sin that cannot be forgiven is that which is unrepented of – **1 John 5:16-17**
 - a. Death – separation – i.e. spiritual from God.
 - b. God cannot have fellowship with sin – hence the need for forgiveness.
 - c. Forgiveness – “to send forth, send away” – i.e. of sin.
 - d. How can sin be sent away by God without repenting from it? – **Romans 6:1-2**

VII. The Conditions

A. Repentance

- a. **Ezekiel 18:20-23** – cease to do unrighteousness and begin doing righteousness.
- b. **Luke 13:5** – repent or perish.
- c. As discussed before, sin that is not repented of cannot be forgiven.

B. Confession

- a. **Romans 3:3-4** – Jewish refusal to accept the blame of sin and seek God’s mercy.
 - i. They accused God of unfaithfulness.
 - ii. Quoted – **Psalm 51:4** (note verse 3)
- b. **1 John 1:9** – if we confess, He is faithful to forgive.
 - i. We must be willing to acknowledge our wrong in order to be forgiven.
 - ii. If we don’t, then we won’t repent – confession is part of seeking and desiring forgiveness.
 - iii. **Proverbs 28:13** – coveting sins will not prosper.

C. Obedience to the Gospel

- a. Christ’s blood is the price for the forgiveness of sins.
- b. Christ’s blood is accessed in the gospel:
 - i. **Romans 1:16-17** – Gospel – power of God to salvation. (Believes – **Romans 1:5** – obedience of faith) (Righteousness of God revealed)
 - ii. **Romans 3:21-26** – righteousness of God revealed in Gospel is propitiation in Christ’s blood, accessed by faith. (**Romans 5:1-2** – access by faith into grace.)
- c. Those who don’t obey the gospel – **2 Thessalonians 1:8**
- d. Obey the gospel! – **Mark 16:15-16**

D. Forgiveness of Others

- a. God’s forgiveness of us is dependent on our forgiveness of others – **Matthew 6:12, 14-15**
- b. Failure to forgive others manifests an undervaluation of God’s forgiveness for us – **Matthew 18:21-35** – parable of unforgiving servant.
- c. Forgive as God in Christ forgave you – **Ephesians 4:32**

Conclusion

1. We all severely need forgiveness from God.
2. We need to understand and appreciate all that goes into God's forgiveness of us.