

Touch of Faith Ministry Everyday Bible Study Course

Student's Name: _____ Bible Instructor: _____ Date: _____

Forgiveness



The various Hebrew and Greek words used for forgiveness not only convey the idea of releasing and offender from guilt, but also restoring the relationship that existed prior to the offense. One writer said, "God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which he sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart." (M.B. 167).

Let's discover what the Bible actually teaches about forgiveness.

1. Why do we need forgiveness?

- "For **all** have **sinned**, and come short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23)
- "And you, that were sometime **alienated** and **enemies** in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled," (Col. 1:21)
- "For the **wages** of sin *is* **death**; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)
- "Know ye not that the **unrighteous shall not inherit** the kingdom of God?" (1 Cor. 6:9a)

We are all sinners standing before God condemned to death, no different than a prisoner on death row.

2. What does forgiveness do for us?

- "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).
- "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." (Ps. 51:10)

While forgiveness alone does not necessary bring peace, it sets the individual on the path to receive a clean heart, a renewed spirit. This allows the individual to experience justification by faith and peace with God.

3. Can every sin be forgiven?

Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*" (Matt 12:31-32)

Every sin can be forgiven – with the exception of the sin against the Holy Spirit. In reality, it isn't that God cannot forgive this sin, but rather the person who has committed this sin no longer considers what he is doing wrong. Therefore he does not seek forgiveness. As a result, he falls further into sin and never considers getting up and doing right (see Proverb 24:16).

4. Why does God forgive us?

- "*It is of* the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." (Lam. 3:22)
- "⁶And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, ⁷Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*;" (Ex. 34: 6, 7).

God does not have to forgive. His gracious character impels Him to do so whenever sinners, in sincerity, ask.

5. How complete is God's forgiveness?

- "...thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." (Micah 7:19).
- "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." (Ps. 103:12)
- "...thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." (Isaiah 38:17)
- "...He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake..." (Isa. 43:25)
- "...I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:34)

God's forgiveness is as He is; it is perfect! Nothing can be added to it and nothing else is required.

6. What does God expect from those that He forgave?

- ²¹"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? ²²Jesus saith unto him, **I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.**" (Matt 18:21, 22)

As far as it is possible, God expects that those who have received His divine forgiveness should forgive all who come to them asking for forgiveness. In fact, the individual who has been forgiven by God has placed himself under obligation to forgive his fellowman since God has forgiven him. (Matt. 18:23-35).

7. How does forgiveness affect our prayers?

- ²³**"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; ²⁴Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."** (Matt 5:23, 24)

Our prayers are hindered until we reconcile with our fellowman. It is more important to God that we reconcile with our fellowman than for us to bring a sacrifice to the altar. (Matt. 6:15; 1 John 4:20)

8. What role must the TRUE Christian play when wrongs are done, even when HE is the innocent part?

- ¹⁵**Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. ¹⁶But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. ¹⁷And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.** (Matthew 18:15-17)

The TRUE Christian will have a spirit of forgiveness. Notice in the above passage that he is the one making every reasonable effort to rectify, resolve and win the wrongdoer. Not only that, he will do it in such a way to make it easier for the wrongdoer to ask for forgiveness.

9. How can a Christian forfeit the forgiveness of God and thereby loose his salvation?

- ¹²**"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. ¹⁴For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: ¹⁵But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."** (Matt 6:12, 14, 15)

We are forgiven ONLY "as we forgive." God is watching from heaven. The Bible says, "The eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth" (Zech 4:10). He is watching to see whether we forgive those who have wronged us so that in return He can forgive us. The surest way of missing heaven and forfeiting our salvation, is failing to forgive. (Matt 18:23-35).

10. Do you understand God's teaching on forgiveness and are you willing to work towards following them?

Answer _____