

Who Are You?

Forgiven

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Ephesians 1:3–11 NLT

3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. 4 Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. 6 So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. 7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. 8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding. 9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. 10 And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. 11 Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

Last week we had a strong cup of truth that shines light from something that the modern church refuses to declare over the life of the believer. Today's message has a more upbeat rhythm and will reassure our faith. As the identity of being forgiven runs parallel with being redeemed we will make mention of the full counsel of God's word. Since we are now aware that we have been redeemed from slavery in the reference of a penalty of and a bondage of, we come to the facet of what this redemption now offers us.

The definition of forgiven is not a hard word to understand just as it is not hard to receive but to give forgiveness goes against our nature instinct. But let us first start with what Forgiveness means. Forgiveness or to be forgiven means to be released from a legal liability that is punishable due to being found guilty.

So what have we been forgiven of that we are guilty of? Paul answered this question up front. Forgiven of sin. And what is sin? Sin is contrary and opposite of God's

nature. Sin is what interrupted our fellowship with God. Let's go back to the origin of man's sin.

Genesis 2:15–17 NLT

15 The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. 16 But the LORD God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden — 17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."

Genesis 3:1–7 NLT

1 The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" 2 "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. 3 "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.' " 4 "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. 5 "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." 6 The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. 7 At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Notice that from the beginning God placed man in a position. This position or if we take this message personal, our position was God assigned and the assignment was to tend and watch over. We will go in further detail about our position in our next series but as we use the reference of this scripture to place the understanding that our position is God appointed and that the devil works to hinder the call to tend and watch over the work of God. Within our positioning we are faced with the decision to fulfill or to succumb. When the option to succumb to the deception of the evil one we place ourselves at odds with God. We suffer needlessly and eventually we are separated from God's presence. All of man's sins are from the basis of disobedience and pride.

When we get a revelation of what separates us from God then we will have the understanding of what we have been forgiven of. Let's look at an individual that did not get this revelation.

Genesis 4:2–14 NLT

2 Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. 3 When it was time for the

harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. 4 Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, 5 but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected. 6 “Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? 7 You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.” 8 One day Cain suggested to his brother, “Let’s go out into the fields.” And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him. 9 Afterward the LORD asked Cain, “Where is your brother? Where is Abel?” “I don’t know,” Cain responded. “Am I my brother’s guardian?” 10 But the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground! 11 Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother’s blood. 12 No longer will the ground yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.” 13 Cain replied to the LORD, “My punishment is too great for me to bear! 14 You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

Cain's fate would have been so much different if he had acknowledged and given to God what was acceptable. What caused him to separate from God? It was not act of sin of murder, but the position of his heart. There are a few key things that scripture stated so clearly but we often times over look them. Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden because they disobeyed. When they disobeyed God covered them with animal. Meaning that blood is what covers the sin. These two factors alone must have been passed along to Cain and Abel because Abel got it right. Abel caught the revelation of what God wanted while Cain missed it because he only heard it communicated.

Cain was warned to change his heart by overcoming the pattern of doing what was wrong. God gave him the opportunity to be forgiven but yet he chose to continue. God will always give us forgiveness if we repent. Just as he told Cain, “You will be accepted if you do what is right”. Forgiveness of sin is not remaining in sin.

Hebrews 10:26–27 NLT

26 Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins. 27 There is only the terrible expectation of God’s judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies.

This truth is not much of one that you hear in our western churches. Like we stated last week that the redemption of a penalty of our sin is what is accepted among believers but redemption of bondage from sin is far fetched. We want the truth but only the parts that fit our notion. Jesus said that you will know or have the revelation of

the truth and that truth will set you free. Truth is not full unless it is revealed. Do you remember in math class that you struggled with new math equations but when you caught the revelation of the equation you mastered it. The understanding that each step of the equation played an intricate role that produced an answer. This is no different than the knowing of truth. The answer to forgiveness is understanding what we have been forgiven of. It is the blood of Jesus that covers the multitude of sin. It is not by our works that we are forgiven. That's the part we as the church understands. But we have not captured the revelation of what keeps us from sinning.

Let's look at a scripture we so often quote. Exodus 20:20

Exodus 20:20 ESV

20 Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin."

What was going to keep the Israelites from sinning? The fear of God! Let's be honest for a moment. If we look at this sentence and use our carnal understanding we would say that Moses was talking out of both sides of his mouth. But look at what Moses was really saying in a different translation.

Exodus 20:20 NLT

20 "Don't be afraid," Moses answered them, "for God has come in this way to test you, and so that your fear of him will keep you from sinning!"

Don't be afraid. To fear God doesn't mean to be afraid of God. How can you be intimate with someone that you are afraid of. Moses was differentiating to be afraid of God and the fear of God. The awe, reverence, respect, and honor of His holiness and wonder that keeps us at His feet. When we love what He loves and hate what He hates. When we keep Him at the forefront of every thought and action. This is the footsteps of fearing God. When we live out life in this manner this keeps us from sinning. This keeps us from being separated from God's presence. This keeps us reminded of what we have been forgiven of.

As we read last week in 1 John 4:17 "17 And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world."

As he is, so are we in this world. The same way that Jesus operated in His time on earth is that same way we have been called to be. Jesus spoke on several occasions in reference to forgiveness.

Matthew 6:9–15 NLT

9 Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. 10 May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today the food we need, 12 and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. 13 And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. 14 "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15 But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Most if not all of us are familiar with the teaching of the Lord's prayer but how close does it hit home for us? If we had time we would cover the entirety of this prayer but the last four verses is where our attention needs to be right now. With the understanding that the Lord's prayer stopped at verse 13 but Jesus placed such an urgency to make sure that His disciples understood the importance of forgiveness. Within this prayer we are to repent but the forgiveness of sin is the basis of our own forgiving of others. And our lack of forgiveness places us within grips of the evil one. Unforgiveness is very tempting because often times we are justified because we have been wrong. But remember our definition of forgiveness: to release from the legal liability that is punishable due to being found guilty. Releasing someone from our justification to hold a grudge or an ought. But Pastor, you don't know what they did to me! Like I said, you may be justified to not forgive or release someone from the offense but does that does not change the fact that if we don't forgive then we aren't forgiven of our offense. But let's look further into this same teaching that Jesus spoke to the multitude.

Matthew 18:21–35 NKJV

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. 23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. 28 "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' 29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31 So when

his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. 32 Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

How much or how often should we forgive someone? Well Jesus said 70x7 right? So do we stop forgiven when they reach 490 times? According to the book of Luke, It is written 70x7 a day. That is forgiving someone every 3 minutes in the span of 24 hours and that is providing that they don't go to sleep. Have you ever been wronged that many times in a 24 hour period? I don't know anyone that sins that much. I never did this even when I was the chief of sinners.

We need to understand the magnitude of this story especially with the numbers and the language. A single talent is not an amount of money but a weight of money. One talent weight approximately 75 pounds. And he was indebted to 10,000 of this weight of money. Meaning he owed 750,000 pounds of gold. If we used today's currency, one pound of gold is worth \$49,500. So, 1 talent of gold would be 75 x \$49,500 which equals \$3,712,500. So let's be modest and just say \$3.7 million. So now if we multiple this number by 10,000 we get \$37 billion dollars and that was being modest. The actual value of 750,000 pounds of gold is valued at \$46.2 billion. Currently there are 34 people in the entire world that could pay that debt. But what about the other 8 billion people? Another words, this debt is unpayable. But yet we have been forgiven because of the blood that Jesus redeemed us with.

Let's continue this story. After the servant had just received forgiveness of a debt that he could not repay came across someone that owned them hundred denarii. A denarii is equivalent to a days wage. If someone makes \$30 an hour for 8 hours their pay is \$240. Multiple that daily income by 100 and you get \$24,000. So the same man that was forgiven of \$46 billion in debt could not forgive their fellow man of \$24,000 is exactly what Jesus was speaking about in Matthew 6. Falling into temptation. The justification of not forgiving others cause us to fall prey to the evil one.

A person that does not forgive is a person that has never realized or has forgotten what they have been forgiven of. Forgiveness is not earned it is given.

So as Paul stated that we are redeemed and forgiven because of the blood of Jesus we must know that our forgiveness is freely received so it must be freely given. If all we ever do is receive and never give then what we have been given will eventually die.

Let me pray with you today!