

Gary Ricucci
SESSION 1 | Forgiven

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the next several sessions, we will look at forgiveness biblically, relationally, emotionally, willfully, decisively; and as a gift, redemptively possible, to give to others!

In this session, we begin with God's forgiveness, miraculously and eternally extended to us. This is what makes every other occasion or situation requiring forgiveness, absolutely possible.

II. THE DEFINITION OF BEING FORGIVEN: THE BIBLE'S DESCRIPTION

"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us..." (Ephesians 1:7)

"The most common word for forgiveness in the Bible is the Greek word 'aphiemi'. This word means to release from legal or moral obligation or consequence. When God forgives, he commits or promises that he will no longer hold the sin against the person being forgiven." Chris Brauns, *Unpacking Forgiveness*, p. 48.

- A. Released from the punishment and consequences of all sin and rebellion against God
- B. Cleansed from guilt, shame, and separation

- C. Reconciled...a relationship with God enacted and eternally secured

III. THE DILEMMA OF FORGIVENESS FOR SINFUL MAN: MAN'S DESPERATE NEED

Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind

- A. Born in sin, we are eternally lost and without hope.
- B. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God
- C. God, who because of his own holiness cannot abide sin without violating his own righteousness and justice.
- D. The wages of which is death.

IV. THE DESIGN OF FORGIVENESS FROM A HOLY AND LOVING GOD: GOD'S DIVINE PROVISION

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Romans 3:23-26)

- A. God is perfectly righteous and just to punish
- B. God is infinitely loving and gracious to forgive

C. God displays both in the substitutionary sacrifice of his sinless Son

“The doctrine of the propitiation is precisely this: that God loved the objects of his wrath so much that he gave his own son to the end that He by his blood should make provision for the removal of his wrath. It was Christ’s so to deal with the wrath that the loved would no longer be objects of wrath, and love would achieve its aim of making the children of wrath the children of God’s good pleasure.” John Murray, *The Atonement*, p.15. J.I. Packer, *Quoted in Knowing God*, p.185

“Therefore both the love and the justice of God were the ultimate cause of the atonement. It is not helpful for us to ask which is more important, however, because without the love of God, he would never have taken any steps to redeem us, yet without the justice of God, the specific requirement that Christ should earn our salvation by dying for our sins would not have been met. Both the love and justice of God were equally important.” Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p.569.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:4-9)

V. THE WONDROUS DEMONSTRATION OF FORGIVENESS: THE GOSPEL’S GLORIOUS EFFECT

“Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.” (Romans 5:9-11)

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.”
(Romans 8:1-2)

“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”
(Psalm 103:12)

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.” (Isaiah 43:25)

“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, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.” (Micah 7:18-19)

- A. All sin is forgiven
- B. No wrath or punishment awaits
- C. Full reconciliation between God and man is perfectly complete
- D. Nothing can separate us from his love
- E. We have an advocate and forgiveness when we do sin.

As a result...

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” (Colossians 3:12)



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