

Forgiveness

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I. Introduction.

II. God's forgiveness.

A. The basis of God's forgiveness: Jesus came to be crucified in order to bear the weight of our sins. (Isaiah 53:3-12)

B. The characteristics of God's forgiveness.

1. Cleansing. (Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:9)

2. Immediate. (2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9)

3. Complete. (Psalm 103:3; Colossians 2:13; Isaiah 55:7)

4. It is not based on what we deserve. (Micah 7:18-19; Psalm 103:3-4, 8-10)

C. When God forgives, sins are forgotten. Our sins are completely removed. (Hebrews 10:17; Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; Isaiah 43:25; Psalm 103:12; Micah 7:19)

D. Prerequisites of forgiveness.

1. Confession, which is agreeing with God. It needs to be specific. (1 John 1:9; Psalm 32:3-9)

2. Repentance, which is a change of mind that issues in regret and a change of conduct.

3. Forgiving others. There is power in a forgiving spirit. (Mark 11:25)

III. Our forgiving one another.

A. Keep short accounts. (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15)

1. Make lists of those you have hurt and those who have hurt you.

2. Make things right with people.

B. Do not relieve your own soul at the expense of another.

C. Ask a person if they will forgive you.

D. Do not go beyond the circle of offense.

E. The limit of our forgiveness should be how much we want to be forgiven.

IV. Steps.

A. Empathetic repenting.

B. Unilateral forgiveness.

V. Our forgiving ourselves.

A. God's grace is really free. There is really no cost.

B. Forgiving ourselves is one of the most difficult thing.

C. We stand in the presence of God forgiven. (Romans 8:1; Colossians 1:22)

Application questions:

1. What does it require to be forgiven by God?

2. How can we overcome our struggles with forgiving people?

3. How would you characterize God's forgiveness to someone who has never experienced it?
