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## Does God Really Forgive Me?

**Psalm 103:8:** (NASB) *The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.*



We all do wrong. We all hurt other people. Sometimes the hurt we deliver is the result of oversight, ignorance or immaturity, or careless words and actions or sloppy and selfish thinking. We hurt someone, but we don't really mean it. Sometimes the hurt we deliver is a result of anger or vengeance or jealousy and we absolutely mean to create havoc and turmoil. Either way we do hurt others and we therefore do need forgiveness. So how do we receive forgiveness from others and especially from God? What do we have to do or say or think for forgiveness to take hold? How can we truly know that we are forgiven? Is forgiveness really worth the effort?

**Psalms 103:8:** God by nature is compassionate, patient and loving. We who are *in the position to forgive* must **STRIVE** for compassion, patience and love. We who are *in the position to receive forgiveness* must **TRUST** in compassion, patience and love.

There is a struggle happening on both sides of an issue.

The "growing up in forgiveness process" means we need to learn to trust in the "spiritual comfort food" of God's compassion, patience and love. HIS compassion, HIS patience and HIS love actually applies in our lives. We have to grow into forgiveness.

**There are four key New Testament words regarding forgiveness:**

**Forgive:** Strongs #630 - to free, relieve, release, dismiss, let die, pardon, divorce

This word is broadly used but rarely actually translated as *forgive*.

**Matthew 27:17:** (KJV) *Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I **release <630>** unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?*

**Luke 6:37:** (KJV) *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: **forgive <630>**, and ye shall be **forgiven <630>**:*

**Forgiving:** Strongs #5483 - favor

Broadly used in the sense of "having a big heart," not used to describe the taking away of sin.

**Philippians 1:29:** (KJV) *For unto you it is **given <5483>** in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

**Forgiveness:** Strongs #859 - freedom, pardon

This word is never used in connection with us forgiving one another. It is only related to the pardon granted through Jesus' sacrifice.

**Ephesians 1:7:** (KJV) *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the **forgiveness <859>** of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

**Forgive:** Strongs #863 - to send forth, away

This word is very broadly used and covers both Godly and human forgiveness - it is this word that most clearly reflects our forgiveness of one another.

**Matthew 18:21:** (NRSV) *Then Peter came and said to him, Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I **forgive <863>**, as many as seven times?*

The maturing process of forgiveness: The forgiver must **STRIVE** and the forgiven must **TRUST**.

Forgiving is a process. **Psalms 103:9:** God by nature allows us to **GRAPPLE** with Him, to struggle with and against His principles but will come to a point of firmly ending the struggle with righteousness and peace for greater lessons. We who are *in the position to forgive* must **ACCEPT** that in this time of grappling between sin and righteousness, WE must extend mercy, knowing that God will soon end the struggle. We who are *in the position to receive forgiveness* must **GRAPPLE** to accept forgiveness we feel we do not deserve, because we understand that it is a godly practice and picture of God's eventual outcome.



For people who have a conscience, when they have done wrong to someone else, it has the ability to make them feel so low. In this case, the growth - the maturity - comes through grappling with the fact they really messed up. But God understands this and His plan has an end to all of this. It is a godly principle to accept forgiveness when it is offered.

Can you forgive someone you do not trust? There are two degrees of forgiveness. **Please see more on this in the Bonus Material, comparing the two different situations in [Luke 17:3-4](#) and [Luke 6:27-31](#) based on the type of relationship between the parties.** The first type of response is between two people with a close, personal relationship, like your own family, the church brotherhood or a close friend. If they hurt you, there is an expectation they will be repentant and you forgive them.

There is a second response appropriate for others, including an enemy. We are to love them and bless them anyway, even though we do not trust them and they are not repentant for what they have done. How? By understanding what forgiving really is - sending the situation away from you personally. We cannot pardon one another but we can forgive one another.

**God's forgiveness:** [Hebrews 9:22](#): (KJV) *And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no **remission <859>**.* (pardon)

How is it that God can remove our sins to literally pardon us? God is not arbitrary; He has a specific, intentional plan including arrangements for the pardoning process.

**God through Jesus satisfied justice - a life (Jesus) for a life (Adam). This provided true forgiveness:** [Luke 4:16-21](#): The release here is not just an *opening* of the prison door of sin and death. It is a *full, no strings attached pardon* - an opportunity to go on and live without the previous consequences of sin. Jesus satisfied the "justice" requirement of God.

When forgiven by God, do we undergo just an emotional change or actual change? Being forgiven and forgiving ought not to be like a New Year's Resolution. Forgiveness is to release the experience from affecting your life. God is not arbitrary in His forgiveness, so neither should we be.

Our forgiving attitude towards others can influence God's forgiveness towards us. This puts the responsibility of forgiveness on our own shoulders.

[Matthew 6:9-15](#): *Forgive us our debts* - that which we owe - not money, but our sins and transgressions committed that take us out of balance with God and each other. This is applied to us as we apply it to others. Our responsibility to forgive has a bearing on God forgiving us.

[Matthew 18:21-22](#)

The maturing process of forgiveness: The forgiver must **ACCEPT** and the forgiven must **GRAPPLE**.

[Psalms 103:10](#): God by nature is just and provides many ways of easing the pain of that justice. The Law provided sacrifices as offerings for sin for Israel. Christianity provides Christ, prayer and supplication as an offering for sin on our behalf. We who are *in the position to forgive* must **REALIZE** that as God is merciful in His justice, so we must also be merciful when we apply justice. We who are *in the position to be forgiven* must **LEARN** that receiving the merciful justice of forgiveness is an opportunity to make our lives right again.

**The Pharisees had just accused Jesus of casting out demons by the prince of demons:**

[Matthew 12:31-32](#): (NASB) <sup>31</sup>*Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be **forgiven <863>** people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be **forgiven <863>**.* <sup>32</sup>*Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be **forgiven <863>** him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be **forgiven <863>** him, either in this age or in the age to come.*

[Mark 3:29](#): (Wilson's Diaglott) *...not has forgiveness to the age, but liable is of age-lasting judgment.*

In the age to come, such sins will have to be personally rectified. God does not remove the sin from them; they will have to manage that specific type of sin. The Pharisees are highlighted as a special example - although not begotten by the Holy Spirit, they were of the chosen people, they were very learned in the Law and the prophecies about Messiah, and most importantly, they actually had Jesus right in front of them - they had direct witnesses of the Holy Spirit at



work through his ministry and miracles. Their own pride blinded them from admitting the obvious. They not only ignored the power of the Spirit as Jesus used it, but they further accused the power of God as being the power of Satan. In their enlightened state, this was not forgivable. What does that mean? It means this sin would be carried by them into the Judgment Day and that they would have to earn God's favor in relation to this rather than have it to any degree be removed from them because of the imperfection of the present world. They will carry the FULL WEIGHT of this sin into judgment. While this is not forgivable, it is resolvable, and we are not told specifically what will be needed for them to work their way back in the kingdom. We can assume somehow they will need to demonstrate to God they are sorry and admit they were being evil for their own gain.

**It is impossible for someone who is not a Christian to have this eternal judgment against them here and now:**

1 Peter 4:17: (NASB) *For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God...*

Those who are true followers of Christ have an added liability they must manage.

**An even more serious consequence is to the true Christian if they commit that kind of sin:** Hebrews 6:4-6: *It is impossible to renew them again to repentance* - the word impossible here does not mean "very difficult." It is the same word the book of Hebrews uses to tell us it is impossible for God to lie. It is also the same word used to say it is impossible to please God without faith.

There are MANY qualifications here listed for committing an unforgivable sin:

- Enlightenment and experience;
- The Holy Spirit dwelling in you;
- Understanding of God's word - your eyes have been opened in a special way; and
- Abandoning ALL of these things = consciously rejecting Jesus' ransom on your behalf.

For such a sin to occur to a consecrated, footstep follower of Jesus, they would have to clearly deny the power of the Spirit, deny the blessings of God and deny the ransom of Jesus. We would think it would be a rare case where someone would come into significant knowledge of God's truth and intentionally and freely turn their back on it.

**This text prepares us for NEVER having to worry about an unforgivable sin!**

Ephesians 4:26-32: This is how we should live our life. We must focus on maturing into a forgiving and forgiven person.

The maturing process of forgiveness: The forgiver must **REALIZE** and the forgiven must **LEARN**.

Psalms 103:11: God by nature is mighty, and in His immeasurable might, we find a deep and provable love for those who would be in harmony with Him. We who *are in the position to forgive* must **DETERMINE** to reflect *His* might and *His* love in our dealing with *His* creation. We who *are in the position to be forgiven* must **ACCEPT** that receiving the loving kindness of forgiveness is a God-honoring experience - even when you feel you are not worthy!

Please refer to CQ Rewind Full Edition for information about the different shades of meaning to the word *repentance* captured in three primary words in the New Testament.

Are you willing to have forgiveness (remove the issue from dominating your life) without repentance?

The maturing process of forgiveness: The forgiver must **DETERMINE** and the forgiven must **ACCEPT** the loving-kindness and forgiveness because it is God-honoring. Forgiveness is hard because it is so personal, especially if someone is not specifically asking for your forgiveness. But this is God's own character.

Psalms 103:12: God by nature always had the intention and plan for sin and transgression to run their course and has granted us an understanding of this plan in the offering of His son as our Ransom sacrifice. We who are *in the position to forgive* must **INTERNALIZE** the power of Jesus' ransom as we deal with the imperfections of one another. We who are *in the position to be forgiven* must **APPLY** the grace of Jesus' ransom with deep personal humility. This means using the big picture of forgiveness and applying it to the smaller matters of life.



1 Peter 2:21-24: Jesus rose above the emotion, pain and turmoil of the experience. What was his example?

- To love without the thought of it being returned. This is selfless and rises above the immediate feeling of the circumstance.
- To give without reciprocation.
- To suffer without retaliation. As traumatic as the experience might be, it no longer has an effect on you and it does not dominate your every day. That is a privileged life that comes through hard experiences.
- To rely entirely on the Righteous Judge, our Heavenly Father. Jesus knew everything would work out justly and mercifully in the end, so he was able to go through the experiences joyfully.

Our ability to forgive one another really depends on how we see one another. Jesus saw all of the world as God's lost children who needed redemption.

Philippians 2:2-8 Philippians 1:21: (NASB) *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*

Remember, to forgive is to make someone's sin against us lose its relevance in our life! The event still happened and the results of the event are still intact, but the relevance of the act AGAINST us has been diminished!

The maturing process of forgiveness: The forgiver must **INTERNALIZE** and the forgiven must **APPLY**.

Psalms 103:13,14: Here God shows us the principle of fatherhood. God by nature truly does know our weaknesses and frailty, and the result of His knowledge of us is a fatherly embrace for any who seek it. We who are *in the position to forgive* must **PRACTICE** that family-based approach to those who have wronged us as we accept that we as well as they are all faulty. We who are *in the position to be forgiven* must **EMBRACE** the embrace of forgiveness. We must "hug back" those reaching out to us.

**God through Jesus satisfied justice - a life (Jesus) for a life (Adam). This provided true forgiveness:** Luke 4:16-18: God, through Jesus' satisfaction of justice - a life for a life - provided true forgiveness.

The release here is not just an opening of the prison door of sin and death. It is a *full pardon* from Adamic sin - an opportunity to go on and live without the previous consequences of sin. To forgive is to make someone's sin against us lose its relevance in our life! **Forgiveness =**

Forgiving people does not release them from their consequences.

**Forgiveness releases us from damaging emotions:** Proverbs 14:29 Proverbs 25:23  
Ecclesiastes 7:9 Proverbs 19:11

**Forgiveness transforms us from being mere sinful men to being sons of God:** Matthew 5:43-45: **Forgiveness is a lynchpin of the entire plan of God:** Jeremiah 31:31-34: God will allow sin to run its course with the experience of wronging each other and learning the principles of forgiveness.

The maturing process of forgiveness: The forgiver must **PRACTICE** and the forgiven must **EMBRACE**.

We want to live by God's principles. Forgiveness is a powerful tool to give us a life fulfilled in graciousness, mercy and justice by God's grace.

*So, does God really forgive me?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*