

# Haven City Church

Fells Point, Baltimore | September 23, 2018

**Luke 17:3-4**

3 So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. 4 Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

Luke 17:3–4

NIV

# **FOUR THINGS:**

1. What is forgiveness?
2. Why should we forgive?
3. How forgiveness works
4. Some objections to forgiveness

# WHAT IS FORGIVENESS

"kpr more usually carries the idea of atonement, and its use in connection with the sacrifices is frequent. Its use for 'forgive' implies that atonement is made.

The New Bible Dictionary

The verb *nś* means basically  
'lift', 'carry', and presents us  
with a vivid picture of sin  
being lifted from the sinner  
and carried right away.

The New Bible Dictionary

The third root is *slḥ*, of unknown derivation, but which corresponds in use pretty closely to our 'forgive'."

The New Bible Dictionary



# THE NT CONCEPT OF FORGIVENESS

Four Greek words are used a total of 69 times to convey the concept of forgiveness.

# WORKING DEFINITION

- Pardon (borrows heavily from the picture of debt and repayment)
- Deciding to recuse one's self from determining the punishment or exacting that punishment. ...letting go of personal involvement in the punishment.

# **PILLARS FOR FORGIVENESS**

# THE OBJECTIVE MORAL LAW OF GOD

- Moral norms are real and objective because they are rooted in a standard.
- Forgiveness pardons actual wrong doing.
- Forgiveness isn't just a social apparatus to help humans get along and resolve conflict.

# THE FACT THAT GOD IS JUST

Nothing slips by. All wrongdoing is dealt with in a system of divine justice. (Genesis 18:25, Hab 1:13, Job 8:3)

- Not only does God determine what is wrong, but he also requires judgement. Forgiveness is not spontaneous, accidental, rogue, or inappropriate.

# UNIVERSAL GUILT

Everyone has sinned and needs the forgiveness of God.  
(Romans 3:23)

- The Bible makes it clear that all humanity has violated the perfect moral standard that God has put forward.
- All are guilty.
- Guilty must be punished.
- The only escape from punishment is forgiveness/pardon.
- Forgiveness/pardon must have a basis. Penitent remorse does not pay off guilt.

# JESUS ATONEMENT ON THE CROSS

Jesus received the punishment for all humanities sin on the cross so that God could offer forgiveness/pardon to all people. (Hebrews 2:9, Colossians 1:13-14)

# PUNISHMENT VS DISCIPLINE

There is a difference between punishment and discipline. (Hebrews 12:3-11)

- Punishment is painful payment for wrongdoing. Discipline is corrective intervention from an outside party with the intent of improving the object of the discipline.



# THREE GOVERNMENTS

There are three different kinds of forgiveness: God's forgiveness, Government's Forgiveness, Personal Forgiveness. (Romans 13, Mark 2:5-10)

# GOD FIRST

When we are told to forgive we are not being asked to do more than what God has already done for us. (Colossians 3:13)

**WHY SHOULD WE  
FORGIVE?**

14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Matthew 6:14–15

NIV

1. We should forgive because God tells us to.
2. We should forgive because we are forgiven.

3. We should forgive because the alternative does not work out justice (our proposed punishment for the wrongdoer does not actually remove the wrong or heal our wound).
4. Attempting to determine the punishment or exact the punishment is emotionally draining and a waste of time because it isn't our role in the first place.

**HOW DOES  
FORGIVENESS WORK?**

conditions & consequences



# CONDITIONS

NONE

SOME

# CONSEQUENCE

NONE

SOME

no conditions  
no consequences

no conditions  
some consequences

some conditions  
no consequences

some conditions  
some consequences

25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

Mark 11:25

NIV

3 So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.

Luke 17:3

NIV

5 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you to some extent—not to put it too severely. 6 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. 7 Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

2 Corinthians 2:5–10

NIV

9 Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10 Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake,

2 Corinthians 2:5–10

NIV

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

NIV

34 Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Luke 23:34

NIV

# OBJECTIONS TO FORGIVENESS



- If I forgive won't they just hurt me again?
- If someone commits a crime against me and I forgive them should I still report the crime to the police?
- How do we forgive but not minimize sin?  
"Oh, it's no big deal." "Forget about it."
- Do we misrepresent the gospel when we forgive an unrepentant sinner?

**Q&A**