

Faithful and Just to Forgive

A Bible Study on Forgiveness

Introduction

Before we can assess the concept that God is “*Faithful* and *Just* to Forgive” we need a solid understanding of what *forgive* means in this context. “What does it mean to say something has been forgiven?”, “What things are we forgiven of?” “Why do these things need to be forgiven?”. Once we understand the what’s and the why’s of forgive; then we can address the how of forgive – that is, **How** God is “*Faithful and Just to Forgive*”. For this reason this Bible study is organized into the following sections:

How Serious Is Sin? (Why Do We Need Forgiveness?)

What Is Forgiveness?

How Are We Forgiven?

What Happens When We Believe We Are Fully Forgiven?

The Bible study is segmented into six lessons. Each lesson is designed to be covered in a 2 hour session. Each lesson will start on a new page so that the instructor can hand out each week’s lesson individually.

Lesson One: How Serious Is Sin?

(Why Do We Need Forgiveness?)

How Serious Is Sin? (Why Do We Need Forgiveness?)

1. Discuss each Bible reference considering the question “How serious is sin?”

a. Sin is rebellion against God

i. **All sin is lawlessness:** 1 John 3:4: *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

ii. **Sin is evil committed against God:** Psalm 51:4: *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*

iii. **Jesus gave us the greatest commandment:** Matthew 22:37: *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

iv. **We can conclude: The evil acts committed against God called ‘sin’ break this commandment to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**

b. One ‘little’ sin is as bad as all other sins

i. **Anger is as bad as murder:** Matthew 5:21-22: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: ²²But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:*

ii. **Lust is as bad as adultery:** Matthew 5: 27-28: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: ²⁸But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

iii. **No liar will be allowed into heaven:** Revelation 21:8: *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, **and all liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

v. **One ‘least’ sin is as bad as violating all of God’s commands:** James 2:10: *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

iv. **God’s commanded standard is perfection:** Matthew 5:48: *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

v. **We can conclude: ‘Little’ sins are as bad as all the other sins because they break God’s command to be perfect.**

c. Every sin deserves eternal punishment

i. Failing to help the needy results in everlasting fire: **Matthew 25:41-45:** *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴²For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: ⁴³I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. ⁴⁴Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? ⁴⁵Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

ii. Everyone who sins is under a curse: **Galatians 3:10:** *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

iii. Every sin makes a person unfit to come into God's presence: **Ephesians 5:5:** *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, **nor unclean person**, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **Matthew 13:41-42:** The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; ⁴²And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

d. There is no hope of eternal life if you die in you sins. Your eternal fate is sealed!

i. There is no expectation after death: **Proverbs 11:7:** *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth.*

ii. The Judgment immediately follows death: **Hebrews 9:27:** *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

iii. We come into God's presence IMMEDIATELY after our death.: **Ecclesiastes 12:7:** *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*

iv. The Day of Atonement sacrifices symbolize that no unclean thing can come into God's presence.: **See Leviticus Chapter 16**

v. We can conclude: If we are still in our sin when we die we will have no hope of living eternally in God's presence.

2. Discuss the seriousness of your own sins.

Lesson Two: What Is Forgiveness?

What Is Forgiveness?

1. Define “Forgiveness”

a. Forgiveness is:

- i. **Being separated from your sin:** Micah 7:18-19: *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. ¹⁹He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*
- ii. **Taking away your sin:** Psalm 130:12: *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*
- iii. **Forgetting your sin:** Jeremiah 31:34: *...I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more* Isaiah 43:25: *.I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*
- iv. **Not counting (imputing) your sin against you:** Romans 4:7-8: *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. ⁸Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*
- v. **Washing away your sin and guilt:** Hebrews 10:22: *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* Revelation 1:5: *... Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*
- vi. **Pardoning you:** Jeremiah 33:8: *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.*

b. Forgiveness results in:

- i. **Being reconciled with God:** 2 Corinthians 5:18-19: *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*
- ii. **Being able to enter into his presence:** Hebrews 10:18-19: *Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. ¹⁹Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*
- iii. **Being perfected – being made a holy, sinless saint:** Colossians 1:21-22: *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he*

c. Forgiveness is “all or nothing”

- i. **Scripture declares ALL your sins are removed: Colossians 2:13:** *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you **all trespasses**;*

- ii. **No matter when the sin occurs, there was ever only ONE act of forgiveness! (And it occurred 2000 years ago): Hebrews 9:25-26:** *Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now **once** in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. **Hebrews 10:12:** *But this man, after he had offered **one** sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. **Romans 5: 18-21:** *Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by **the righteousness of one** the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. ¹⁹For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.***

- iii. **You can only come into God's presence if you are sinLESS (all your sins have been removed)!: Ephesians 5:5:** *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, **nor unclean person**, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

Lesson Three: How Are We Forgiven?

Forgiveness does not depend on you

How Are We Forgiven?

1. Forgiveness does not depend on you

a. By definition --- Forgiveness cannot be earned

i. **A debt that is paid cannot be 'forgiven':** American Heritage Dictionary - **Forgive:** *to excuse for an offense; pardon; absolve from payment of a debt; to refrain from imposing punishment on an offender or demanding satisfaction for an offense.*

ii. **Don't confuse forgiveness with 'restitution':** American Heritage Dictionary - **Restitution:** *the act of making good or compensating for loss, damage, or injury; indemnification.*

b. By our works --- Forgiveness cannot be earned

iii. **No one is worthy of forgiveness:** Romans 3:23: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*

iv. **Keeping God's commands is only doing what is expected. It can't make restitution for breaking His commands. It can't make you worthy to be forgiven:** Luke 17:7-10: *But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? 8And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? 9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. 10So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.*

c. Discuss the questions "What can you do to ...

i. **Make restitution to God for your sins?**

ii. **Repair the real damage caused by your sin? (i.e. Reconcile your relationship with God)**

iii. **Remove the guilt of your sin?**

iv. **Pay the penalty / serve the sentence / "do the time" you have earned for each one of your sins?**

d. Old Testament Temple ordinances

i. **The life blood of a sacrificed perfect substitute washes sin away:** Leviticus 4:3: *If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin,*

which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.

Leviticus 16:3, 11: *Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering ... And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself ...*

ii. A perfect substitute takes away sin (separates you from your sin forever):

Leviticus 16:21-22: *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: ²²And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness*

e. King David (2 Samuel 12 & 13 - Psalm 32 & 51)

i. Was King David forgiven?: 2 Samuel 12:13: *And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Psalm 32:5:* *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah*

ii. What sins was David forgiven of?: 2 Samuel 12:4, 15: *And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. - - - And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.*

iii. Did David do anything to be worthy of being forgiven?

iv. Why was David forgiven?: 1 John 1:9: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*

Lesson Four: How Are We Forgiven?

Justice Paid Mercy Reigns

How Are We Forgiven? (Continued)

2. Justice Paid; Mercy Reigns

a. God Demands Justice

- i. **Sin must be atoned for!:** **Leviticus 16:3, 11:** *Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering ... And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself ...*
- ii. **God's throne stands on justice:** **Psalms 89:14:** *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.*
- iii. **God cannot tolerate evil:** **Habakkuk 1:13a:** *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity*
- iv. **Forgiveness requires the shedding of blood:** **Hebrew 9:22:** *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*

b. God Bestows Mercy

- i. **Even in the face of rebellion God bestows mercy!:** **Daniel 9:9:** *To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;* **Nehemiah 9:16-17:** *But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments, ¹⁷And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.*
- ii. **God is Love:** **1 John 4:16:** *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. **God is love;** and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*
- iii. **God's Love flows forth as mercy to the undeserving (grace):** **Ephesians 2:4-5:** *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*
- iv. **Christ's sacrifice was an act of Love:** **Romans 5:8:** *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **John 3:16:** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

c. Justice Paid in Full!

- i. **Christ was the substitute sacrifice for sin:** **Isaiah 53:10-11:** *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make **his soul an offering for sin,** he*

shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for **he shall bear their iniquities**.

- ii. **All sin was forgiven at the cross: Colossians 2:13-14:** *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; ¹⁴Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances {in the Greek literally statements of debt – I.O.U.s} that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*
- iii. **Christ was the propitiation (appeasement) for our sin: 1 John 2:2:** *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*
- iv. **Christ atoned for our sin reconciling us to God: Romans 5: 10-11:** *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. ¹¹And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*
- v. **Jesus declared he had paid the price in full!: John 19: 30:** *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished** {literally in the Greek: “Paid in Full”}: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

d. **Just and faithful to forgive (Put it all together!)**

- i. **Christ’s blood is the payment to Justice that allows God to freely forgive!:** **Romans 3: 24-26:** *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: ²⁵Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; ²⁶To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*
- ii. **With Justice paid in full with the blood of Jesus; mercy can reign. There is nothing we can (or are commanded to) add.:** **Hebrew 10:17-19:** *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*
- iii. **It is ‘just’ that God freely forgives!:** **1 John 1:9:** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*

e. **God has declared our forgiveness is an accomplished fact.**

- i. **Have. – Not might have or will have.:** **Ephesians 1:7:** *In whom we **have** redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; **Colossians 1:14:** In whom we **have** redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*
- ii. **It is a done deal!:** **1 Corinthians 6:9-11:** *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you: but **ye are washed**, but **ye are sanctified**, but **ye are justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Lesson Five: What Happens When We Believe We Are Fully Forgiven?

Believe it and Receive it!

What Happens When We Believe We Are Fully Forgiven?

Note: Numerous references are made in this section to passages within 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. You may wish to turn to this scripture to read these references in context.

1. Believe it and Receive it!

a. Believe it and you receive it!

i. Believe it and receive remission (forgiveness) of sins: Acts 10:43: *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name **whosoever believeth** in him shall receive remission of sins*

ii. Believe it and you are credited with righteousness (credited with perfection): Romans 4: 20-25: *He {Abraham} staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; ²¹And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. ²²And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. ²³Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; ²⁴But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, **if we believe** on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; ²⁵Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

iii. Believe it and you are not condemned (are pardoned): John 5:24: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and **believeth** on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

iv. Believe it and you are justified (considered the same as if you never sinned): Galatians 2:16: *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

2. We can recognize the true value of our forgiveness

a. Recognize the magnitude of your sins

i. Review “How Serious Is Our Sin?”

ii. Review God’s commands to see how often we sin.

b. Recognize the high cost of forgiveness

i. The Son of God had to die!: 2 Corinthians 5:14: *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if **one died for all**, then were all dead: Acts 20:28: Take heed*

- ii. **The Son of God was made to be sin!:** **2 Corinthians 5:21:** *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*
- c. **Recognize you don't deserve it but still trust in it**
- i. **We never stop sinning – even though we want to – but instead of despairing we thank God for His undeserved gift of forgiveness!:** **Romans 7:18-19:** *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. ¹⁹For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. ... ²⁴O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? ²⁵I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ...*
 - ii. **The greater the sin, the greater our burden of guilt; and the greater the blessing of forgiveness!:** **Psalms 32:1-5:** *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ²Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. ³When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. ⁴For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. ⁵I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*
- d. **Recognize you don't have to hide or deny our sin**
- i. **Because you are reconciled to God:** **2 Corinthians 5:18:** *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;*
 - ii. **Because our sins are not counted against (“imputed to”) us:** **2 Corinthians 5:19:** *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*
- e. **Understand God's “foolishness”**
- i. **God chose the base things so that no one could glory in himself (i.e. by earning their own forgiveness):** **1 Corinthians 2:25-29:** *Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. ²⁶For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: ²⁷But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; ²⁸And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: ²⁹That no flesh should glory in his presence.*
 - ii. **Christ died for us so we would gratefully live for him:** **2 Corinthians 5:15:** *And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

Lesson Six: What Happens When We Believe We Are Fully Forgiven?

Faith in our full forgiveness unlocks our hearts

What Happens When We Believe We Are Fully Forgiven? (Continued)

Note: Numerous references are made in this section to passages within 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. You may wish to turn to this scripture to read these references in context.

3. Faith in our full forgiveness unlocks our hearts

a. Believe that you have received it and you cannot help but act on it!

i. Believe it and then you will act on it: Luke 7:47-50: *Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. ⁴⁸And he said unto her, **Thy sins are forgiven.** ⁴⁹And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? ⁵⁰And he said to the woman, **Thy faith hath saved thee;** go in peace.*

ii. God guarantees it!: John 14:23: *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words:*

b. We no longer live for ourselves (Perform works with the motivation of gaining something for ourselves – glory, forgiveness, salvation, ...)

i. Our mind is set upon things of God: Romans 8:5: *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*

ii. We are zealous of good works: Titus 2:14 *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

iii. Because it is “not of ourselves” we have no need to work for ourselves. Instead we can perform truly good works (voluntary works which gain us nothing – because we already have it all!): Ephesians 2:8-10: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

c. Our entire being is transformed

i. We change into a “New creature”: 2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

ii. God works in us: Philippians 2:13: *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*

iii. **We change into a “habitation of God” – a holy temple built on the foundation of THE Apostles and Prophets:** **Ephesians 2:19-22:** *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; ²⁰And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; ²¹In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: ²²In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. **1 Corinthians 3:16:** *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?**

4. Recognition of God’s undeserved mercy not only transforms us but also compels us ...

a. to share our belief

i. **Compelled by Love for the one who paid our debt:** **2 Corinthians 5:14:** *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:*

ii. **Compelled by Love to share the message of reconciliation (full forgiveness):** **2 Corinthians 5:20:** *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

b. to share the mercy and forgiveness God showered on us – as he has commanded

i. **Forgive others as Christ forgave us – because we were forgiven first:** **Ephesians 4:32:** *Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving** each other, just as in Christ God **forgave** you. **Colossians 3:13:** *Forbearing one another, and **forgiving** one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ **forgave** you, so also do ye.**

ii. **Show mercy to those who don’t deserve it:** **Luke 6:35-36:** *... for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. ³⁶Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.*

c. to be obedient – not because we have to but because we want to

i. **God’s mercy compels us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices:** **Romans 12:1-2:** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. ²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

ii. **God’s love for us compel us to love him back** **1 John 4:19:** *We love him, because he first loved us.*

d. to give God all honor, glory and praise

i. **Because God did it all!:** **Revelation 1:5-6:** *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

5. Examples

a. David's "Life after Forgiveness"

- i. **The rest of David's life shows he lived for God and shows God always delivered him. He remained a faithful servant through many trials, living his life for God and no longer for himself. 2nd Samuel chapter 22 records a song of praise written by David for God. Clearly David was loved and protected by God.: 2**

Samuel 22:20: He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

b. Paul

- i. **The Apostle Paul drew strength from the fact that he did not deserve the forgiveness he had received. He responded to God's undeserved mercy (Grace) with thankfulness by laboring to be God's faithful servant: 1 Corinthians 15:9-10:**

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

c. Contrast Peter and Judas

- i. **Judas did not believe God could ever forgive him and even though he regretted his actions; his despair and guilt led him to take his own life.: Matthew 27:3-5:**

Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. ⁵And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

- ii. **Peter knew he was undeserving of forgiveness but he believed Jesus had forgiven him; a message Peter preached to others: Luke 22:61-62:**

*The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." ⁶² And he went outside and wept bitterly. **1 Peter 2:24:** He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

- iii. **... and that led him to live a life feeding His sheep knowing it would lead to a martyr's death!: John 21:17-19:** ... And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. ¹⁹ This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

- iv. **He even boldly witnessed before Annas , Caiaphas and the Sanhedren – the same assembly from whom he had hid himself by denying Jesus. See Acts Chapter 4**