

The Biblical Concept of Forgiveness

When we think of forgiveness, we usually think in terms of the following:

- 1) The sinner
 - a. is convicted in his/her heart: "I have ...
 - b. is responsible: "I deserve ...
 - c. trusts: "I believe that ...

2) The believer, on behalf of God, declares:

3) In joy, the forgiven sinner ...

The theological / liturgical term for this _____ and _____.

This forgiveness is not ours, but _____. We speak _____.

It is not dependent on our personal _____, but on God's _____.

Review your catechism "Keys and Confession" and the binding and loosing keys.

But there is another kind of forgiveness our society speaks of. We will call this **personal forgiveness**. We want to go away from this study with a clear understanding of

- 1) What the Bible says, so that we practice this
- 2) What the Bible does NOT say. (Have we learned sayings from parents & society and assumed that they were from God, but they are not?)

NOTE: Although our society speaks of forgiveness this way, it is really a misnomer. (We will return to this thought.)

⁴ You may be upset, but do not sin.

When you are on your beds, speak to your heart, but remain silent.

⁵ Offer righteous sacrifices, and trust in the Lord. Psalm 4:4-5 EHV

²⁶ "Be angry, yet do not sin." Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.

Ephesians 4:26 EHV

⁵ The Lord is righteous.

He examines the wicked.

He really hates (lit. his soul hates) those who love violence. Psalm 11:5 EHV

My anger at sin is _____ because

But my passionate reaction against a sin can lead me to

Which are equally

Therefore, God gives us careful instruction regarding vengeance:

¹⁷ Do not pay anyone back evil for evil. Focus on those things that everyone considers noble.

¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, maintain peace with everyone.

¹⁹ Do not take revenge, dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," [Deuteronomy 32:35] says the Lord. ²⁰ But:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him a drink.

For by doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:17-21 EHV

Vengeance belongs to _____ alone. He will _____ evil.

The psalmist teaches us to pray, asking God to guide our hearts:

Compare Christian Worship #462

Your adversaries misuse your name.

²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord,
and detest those who rise up against you?

²² I absolutely hate them. To me they are enemies.

²³ Investigate me, God, and know my heart.

Test me and know my troubled thoughts.

²⁴ See if there is any way in me that causes pain,
and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:20b-24 EHV

It's proper to be angry at sin. God hates sin. Yet God loves the sinner.

We speak poorly when we say that Jesus died for the sins of the world.

Jesus died for the sinners of the world. Jesus died to take away the sins of the world.

Jesus died to separate us eternally from the sorrow and problems of sin.

In heaven all effects of sin will be gone. We enjoy part of that blessing already now, and Jesus wants us to enjoy it fully. He invites us:

²⁸ "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30 EHV

God in his grace offers us a _____ - _____, his own Son.

He doesn't want to be just our burden _____, but to be our burden _____.

When I stay angry, I diminish my own joy. God is offering also to carry my anger.

He asks me to lay it all on him, to release all the negative emotion.

He offers to bear it all.

In fact he already bore it all to the cross!

Surely we can trust him with this one burden!

“Personal forgiveness” =

- Lord, I choose to no longer carry around a burden which you offered to take from me and to carry for me. I release it to you.
- I trust you to keep your promise and deal properly with the evil which so hurt me. Do it in your own time and way.
- I submit myself to your loving care and ask for complete healing.
- Let my mind relax. Let me no longer dwell on this bitterness.
- Give me your peace, the peace which goes beyond understanding. Give me the comfort of your Spirit.
- I am yours, Lord, and you are mine. Into your hands I commend my spirit, gracious and loving Savior.

A clearer term for this might be **reverent submission**. It is:

- 1) A personal trust in the promises of God, learned through experience of God’s eternal faithfulness, and
- 2) A willing submission to his loving headship, with the knowledge that he does all things for the good of his bride, the Church.

Forgive, Don’t Forget!

- Did you grow up being taught “forgive and forget?” I did. It is not biblical.
- God gave us memory. It is a gift of God for a very important purpose:
 - Remember where there is
 - _____ falling into that same trap again.
 - Memory is our way of learning, rethinking, and planning a better strategy for the future.
 - Memory is a gift of God for a very important purpose. Forgive. Remember.

As you consider these final words of strength, blessing, and direction, consider where memory is involved in God’s plan.

⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under God’s powerful hand so that he may lift you up at the appointed time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ Have sound judgment. Be alert. Your adversary, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him by being firm in the faith. You know that the same kinds of sufferings are being laid on your brotherhood all over the world.

- ¹⁰ After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who called you into his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you. ¹¹ To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.