

# FORGIVENESS #2

## MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING FORGIVENESS:

1. Forgiveness is changing our feelings so that we no longer feel upset, hurt, or angry about the person who sinned against us.
2. Forgiveness is releasing the offender from their obligation to keep GOD'S law.
3. Forgiveness allows the offender to escape punishment for their sin against us. We are letting them "get away with it".

## GOD'S PUNISHMENT OF ALL VIOLATIONS OF HIS LAW IS THE BASIS OF FORGIVENESS

- GOD has established a universal code of law.<sup>1</sup>
- Every human being is obligated to obey GOD'S Law.<sup>2</sup>
- Every human being violates GOD'S Law (a.k.a. "sins").<sup>3</sup>
- Justice requires every violation of GOD'S Law be punished.
- Only GOD has the authority to punish violations of His Law

GOD punishes all violations of His Law ultimately in one of two ways:

- For BELIEVERS He transferred the guilt of all our sins to JESUS and then punished JESUS on the Cross with the death we deserved.<sup>4</sup>
- For UNBELIEVERS He will review the deeds of each individual and apply a just punishment for their sin in the Lake of Fire.<sup>5</sup>

## **FORGIVENESS is only possible because GOD punishes all violations of His Law.**

### WHEN GOD FORGIVES A BELIEVER:

...He releases the believer from having to personally bear the punishment for his sins **on the basis that** JESUS has already suffered the punishment for his sins.

...He accepts the substitutionary death (the blood sacrifice) of JESUS as the full and sufficient payment of the believer's sin debt.

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 7:12 (ESV) *So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.*

<sup>2</sup> Romans 2:12-15.

<sup>3</sup> Romans 3:23. Strictly speaking, Jesus of Nazareth is the one human being who never violated God's Law.

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 53, 1 Peter 2:24, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 3:21-26, Colossians 2:13-15.

<sup>5</sup> According to Revelation 20:11-15, the record of each person's deeds will be evaluated by the Judge (Jesus). This is in accordance with justice i.e. the punishment must fit the crime. God is just and every unbeliever will receive a sentence commensurate with their violations of GOD'S law. This indicates there will be degrees of punishment in the Lake of Fire.

**WHEN A BELIEVER FORGIVES A FELLOW BELIEVER:**

...he acknowledges that GOD alone has the authority to punish sin and in the case of his fellow believer has already punished his sin at the Cross.

...he accepts the punishment JESUS suffered on behalf of his fellow believer as the full and sufficient payment for the sin debt his fellow believer owes him.<sup>6</sup>

...he gives up any vengeful intentions and instead seeks to obey the law of love by doing good to his fellow believer.

**WHEN A BELIEVER FORGIVES AN UNBELIEVER:**

...he acknowledges that GOD alone has the authority to punish sin and he believes GOD'S promise in Romans 12:19<sup>7</sup> that GOD will avenge all wrongdoing.

...in light of GOD'S promise, he releases (surrenders) to GOD the punishing of the offender.

...he seeks to obey the law of love by doing good to the offender if possible.

**FORGIVENESS MUST BE GRANTED BEFORE:**

- Reconciliation can occur and a process of rebuilding trust pursued.
- Prosecution of criminal sin can be sought from a free heart that seeks...
  - ...the good of the offender.
  - ...the protection of others.
  - ...to honor and uphold the law.

### *Grace News and Needs*

**VOM Needs for January:** Washcloths and Monetary Gifts for Action Packs.

**2023 Giving Receipts:** Look for Bob Davey on the patio in between services.

**Prayer Quilt:** Tie a knot and pray for John Koslowski's salvation and for peace in the midst of physical illness.

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<sup>6</sup> This in particular seems to be the way in which we "...forgive one another as God in Christ forgave you..." Ephesians 4:32.

<sup>7</sup> Romans 12:19 (ESV) *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."*