

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Study Series: Forgiven to Become Forgivers
Lesson 2 - Steps to Receiving God's Forgiveness

Wednesday, May 11, 2022
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Breakdown of "Forgiven to Become Forgivers" Bible Study Series		
Date	Topic	Key Texts
5/4/2022	Lesson 1 - Understanding God's Forgiveness	Romans 4:7, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
5/11/2022	Lesson 2 - How to Receive God's Forgiveness	1 John 1:8-10, Luke 15:11-32
5/18/2022	Lesson 3 - Going from Forgiven to Forgivers	Ephesians 4:31-32, Matthew 18:21-35
5/25/2022	Lesson 4 - Learning to Become a Forgiving Person	Luke 6:27-36, Matthew 18:15-17
6/1/2022	Lesson 5 - Benefits of Living a Forgiving Life	Romans 12:18-21, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11
6/8/2022	Lesson 6 - Forgiveness and Healing	James 5:16, Psalm 103:2-5
6/15/2022	Lesson 7 - Loving Those Who Hate You	Matthew 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-31
6/22/2022	Lesson 8 - Lessons from Story of David and Saul	1 Samuel 19, 1 Samuel 24
6/29/2022	Lesson 9 - Forgiveness and Reconciliation	Matthew 18:15-17, Romans 12:18
7/6/2022	Lesson 10 - Living Un-offended	Matthew 11:6, 1 Corinthians 13:5

Key Text: 1 John 1:8-10 *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."* NKJV

In lesson 1, we learnt the following about the nature of God's forgiveness:

1. God's forgiveness is a gift of God and a product of His grace.
2. God's forgiveness cannot be earned or bought (with money, service, good works etc.). Ephesians 2:8
3. God's forgiveness (like every other gift from God) is received by faith. Ephesians 2:8
4. God's forgiveness relies on His faithfulness, not our feelings.
5. God's forgiveness is available to both unbelievers and believers.
6. God's forgiveness is final. Luke 7:48 - Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." (Romans 4:7-8)

Question: If forgiveness is all that we say it is, why do people (even) believers struggle to receive God's forgiveness? Why do many people (even believers) make statements like "I can't forgive myself"?

HINDRANCES TO RECEIVING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

1. Lack of knowledge of God. If we don't know the nature of God, it is impossible to understand His forgiveness. **Numbers 23:19** *"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? The reason we have scriptures like this is because we have the tendency to confuse God with man.*
2. Lack of knowledge of the ways of God. **Isaiah 55:8** *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:25*
3. Our Human nature – It is human nature to earn something, hence the concept of grace is foreign and requires renewing of our mind to grasp.
4. The enemy - One of the devices of the enemy is to make us feel unforgiven even after God has forgiven us. This makes people even run away from God after sin instead of running to God.
5. Lack of consequence make us feel unforgiven. Many people will rather pay some penalty to feel worthy of God's forgiveness. The problem with that is no one can afford the penalty of sin, "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)
6. Sometimes the physical consequence of our sin makes us think we have not been forgiven.
7. We sometimes confuse God's discipline with paying the price of our sin.

Question: What is God's discipline or correction? How do you correlate God's discipline with His forgiveness?

HOW TO RECEIVE GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness must be received because it is a gift. However, it is a conditional gift in the sense that we must learn to receive it. While giving it is not conditional, receiving it is not.

How Does an Unsaved Person Receive Forgiveness?

Acts 2:37-38 *"When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'" 38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

Ephesians 1:7 *"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace"*

1. Repentance – to change the way you think about yourself and sin. Acts 20:21
2. Faith in Jesus Christ. Acts 20:21, Romans 10:9-10
3. Be baptized – Public acknowledgement of Christ. Mathew 16:16

Question: Why does an unsaved person not need to confess their sins?

How Does a Saved Person Receive Forgiveness?

We've learnt that being saved does not mean a believer will not sin, it means a believer should not enjoy a life of sin. Sin is still a problem both for believer and unbeliever (Romans 3:2), it alienates us from God. For a believer, sin does not cause you to lose your relationship (sonship) with God, but it causes you to lose your fellowship with Him. Forgiveness restores us back to fellowship with God.

Proverbs 28:13 *"He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."*

1 John 1:8-10 *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." NKJV*

1. Do not conceal your sin: You may be able to hide from people, but not from God. Hebrews 4:13
2. Confess our sins to God: To confess (homologéō) means "to concede", "not to refuse", "to admit", not to deny" or "declare oneself guilty of what one is accused of"
3. Rely on God's faithfulness: Don't trust your feeling.
4. Repent and show fruit of repentance: Don't go on sinning. **John 8:11**- *"...Go now and leave your life of sin."* **Romans 6:1-2** *"... Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! ..."*
5. If your sin directly impacts people, you should retribute (or pay back). Luke 19:8
6. Sometimes you need to confess our sins to people for healing and deliverance. James 5:16.

Lessons from the Story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Luke 15:20-24 *"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' 20 So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. 21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate."*

1. Pride prevented him from going back to his father for a long time.
2. Repentance: He came to his senses. Wrong thinking hinders forgiveness.
3. He was moved by His suffering more than the Character of his father.
4. He has an inaccurate understanding of the father. Vs. 19 "I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants."
5. The Father is always ready and excited to have you back.