



Wednesday Meeting

7:30pm, 22nd April, 2020

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Meeting Topic:

PART 3: WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOSPEL?

I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name.
(1 John 2: 12)

“Am I really forgiven? What if I sin and don’t repent? What if I backslide?” Forgiveness seems to be a blind spot for many people. We just can’t get it into our heads that God has forgiven us completely and for all time. “That just sounds too good to be true. Nothing comes for free. There must be a price to pay.” After all - Jesus said, *“If you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins”* Perhaps you have heard that *“God won’t forgive you if you are harbouring unforgiveness in your heart.”* Under the law that was true.

Many sincere Christians are trying to pay a price, they think God is a sin collector who will trade some favour to have their sin forgiven, whether that be constant confession, good deeds or hours of prayer. Many live with a fear that if they don’t confess every sin everyday God will hold that sin against them. That somehow they’re not holding up their end of the bargain regarding their commitment to Jesus!

IF this is true there are dire consequences for us all. If you are constantly being told to examine your heart for sin, bitterness, and unforgiveness, then you are going to have trouble trusting that you have been fully forgiven in Jesus’ name, and this sadly is how many people live.

The grace of God has to be received to be effective in our lives. If you don’t believe Jesus has saved you, then you’re going to be short one Savior. If you don’t believe the sins of the world were fully dealt with at the cross, then you’re going to have trouble experiencing his forgiveness here and now. If we don’t understand God’s grace, we won’t understand how God’s forgiveness works. Forgiveness is a manifestation of grace and grace has been given. Grace is on the table. But not everyone receives it. Salvation is not the absence of sin; salvation is the acceptance of God’s grace.



Although the sins of the world were taken away at the cross, many people remain chained to sin through hurt and unforgiveness. They can't let go of the sins of those who have wounded them. Others can't let go of their own sins. They can't forgive themselves. Those who have been wounded by sin may turn to religion for comfort, but religion without grace only makes things worse. The only thing that can free people from the grip of sin is a revelation of God's grace. What people desperately need to hear is the good news.

Many are not happy. They are racked with guilt, unable to forgive themselves or others because they have not seen the lightning rod of the cross. They have not heard the stunning news that Jesus' sacrifice is the once and final solution for their sin. Instead they have been led to believe that God is angry with them, that he is keeping accounts, and building a case against them. His forgiveness is not doled out in proportion to our acts of repentance or confession. It is lavished upon us according to the riches of his grace. It is human nature to keep score but it is not God's nature.

Forgiveness is not something to pursue, it is something to possess and in Christ we have it. The gospel is not an invitation to engage in soul-searching and fault-finding. The gospel is the emphatic declaration that you have been completely and eternally forgiven through the blood of the Lamb.

DO YOU TRULY KNOW IT ?

What does the Bible say about Forgiveness ? – 2 Views

Read:

Leviticus 19:22
Numbers 15:22-31
Deuteronomy 29:19-20
2 Chronicles 7:14
Matthew 6:14-15; 18:35
Mark 11:25-26 KJV

VS

Compare:

Luke 24:46-47
Acts 5:31; 13:38; 26:18
Romans 4:7-8
2 Corinthians 5:18-19
Ephesians 1:7; 4:32
Colossians 2:13; 3:13
Hebrews 8:12; 9:26
1 John 2:2



Questions for discussion:

1. What does forgiveness literally mean? What is the connection between grace and forgiveness?

2. In the Sermon on the Mount, (Matt 6:) why did Jesus say we must forgive others before God will forgive us?

3. How did the cross change the message of forgiveness?

- a) In the new covenant, what does God say about recording or holding our sins against us?
- b) Is there something we must do before God will forgive us?
- c) Do we need to maintain our forgiveness?

4. Are we forgiven because of what we do, what Jesus has done, or both?

5. What is God's remedy for condemnation and guilt?

- a) What are some things that stop us from receiving his forgiveness?