

Prayer Diagram X Forgiving other's sins part 3

What is real contrition and what is real forgiveness?

--I wanted us to spend our time together looking mostly at the counterfeits to forgiveness

--If we want to have a good grasp on what forgiveness is, we have to eliminate what it isn't.

1. Let's take a look now at what forgiveness isn't

#1. Excusing is not forgiving -- A man leaves a bar in a drunken stupor and unfortunately finds his way to his car... speeding down the road out of control he head-ons another vehicle killing a young boy inside. The boy's parents are Christians, and are convinced that God would not have them hold bitterness against this man. But instead of dealing with the issue head on, they decide that the man wasn't really to blame it was the alcohol. So, they simply excuse him because he was drunk.

--Is that forgiveness? No!

--Alcohol is an inanimate substance not responsible for any wrong ever; **people** take alcohol and overindulge and abuse it and then **people** go and hurt others.

--Excusing is not forgiveness.

--Can we excuse? Of course, just don't confuse it with forgiveness, excusing cheapens forgiveness.

--Forgiveness is never based on a false narrative!

--Sin is never excusable—God never excuses sin, He never says “Oh, it wasn't really your fault.

--Your sin will never be swept under the rug, and our forgiving of others will not work if that is our approach.

--**Prov. 19:11** – this is one of the options, but you still have to say it was Wrong before we overlook it.

Excusing places the blame on something else besides that person – again, God never does this.

--Forgiveness says, “this was wrong, you did this to me, but I choose To forgive you.”

--**C.S. Lewis: “Christianity means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”**

--Our example is God; He doesn't excuse sin or misplace blame; He places clear blame on the sinner and then forgives the sin.

#2. Trust and/or reconciliation is not the same as forgiving

--Forgiveness isn't the same as trusting – **John 2:24-25** – God forgives people without trusting them all the time!

--Somebody may chaff at the idea that God doesn't trust us -- To those people I have a question: Do you totally trust yourself 100%?

God is our reason to forgive (not an apology or contrition or their willingness to make it up to us).

--Nevertheless, they have to come up with the reason for us to trust.

--Jesus earned the reason for us to forgive, they have to earn the reason for us to trust.

Reconciliation is similar – “if you really forgive then you will reconcile the relationship.” Not true!

--Forgive regardless of whether or not they change or repent = forgiveness doesn't require anything from them.

--To Reconcile requires two parties coming together and making adjustments to their lives.

--God is big on reconciliation: **Matthew 5:24; Romans 12:18**

--God has reconciled Himself to the world through the blood of Jesus.

Does that mean that the whole world is going to heaven? No! They must now reconcile themselves to Him.

--**II Corinthians 5:18-19, 20**

--Sometimes the best way to forgive and to walk in forgiveness with someone is to stay away from them. Sad, but true.

#3. Forgive isn't forgetting – “I have forgiven this person for the hurt that they caused me, but the memory of what they did keeps coming back and I have to fight the feelings of anger when it does. Have I really forgiven them?”

--Your mind is not a hard drive that can be reformatted so the information is permanently deleted, memories are there permanently.

--Forgiveness is agreeing to live with the consequences of someone else's sin, and part of that is the memories.

--Part of forgiveness is choosing to not dwell on memories of the past events.

Forgiveness isn't truly forgetting just refusing to recall or dwell on the past.

Alexander Pope reminds us: “to err is human, but to forgive is divine.”

--Humans do err often, that is why we must learn to forgive; but true forgiveness is a God-thing.

--True forgiveness is a miracle of God, and that is why we are called to dependence on Him so that He can accomplish the impossible through us.