

How is God the image of forgiveness?

John 3:16, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

As such:

Romans 5:8, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Ephesians 1:7, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."

What's more?

Psalms 103:10-12, "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

The reason why:

2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

Therefore:

Acts 2:38, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Do I grasp the importance of seeking forgiveness from God through repenting and believing in Christ, our Savior and Lord?

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WHY MUST WE FORGIVE?

***“If anyone has a complaint
against another; even as
Christ forgave you,
so you also must do.”***

Colossians 3:13

Why must we forgive anyone who offends us?

In Jesus' own words:

Matthew 6:14-15, “If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Jesus' command to forgive leaves no doubt as to the fact that forgiveness is not simply an option, but rather a command from God.

As such:

Mark 11:25, “Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.”

Matthew 5:7, “Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”

What's more?

Luke 17:3, “Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.”

In the same Spirit:

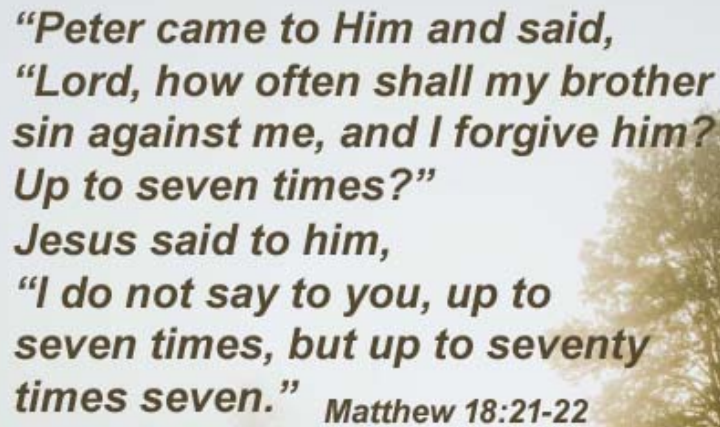
John 3:17, “God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

Therefore:

Romans 12:19, “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance *is* Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.”

Do I understand the responsibility I have as a follower of Christ, to forgive just as He forgave me?

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***“Peter came to Him and said,
“Lord, how often shall my brother
sin against me, and I forgive him?
Up to seven times?”
Jesus said to him,
“I do not say to you, up to
seven times, but up to seventy
times seven.” Matthew 18:21-22***

Ever heard someone say, “I forgive you, but...”

In reality, forgiveness is a difficult and challenging act of love that not only frees the person who offended us, but also frees us from carrying hatred in our hearts.

According to God, to what extent should our forgiveness reach out?

Matthew 5:44, “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

As such:

Matthew 18:35, “My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

Why?

Psalms 103:11-12, “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

What’s more?

Luke 6:37, “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

James 2:8, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Therefore:

2 Corinthians 5:17, “If anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

Considering my attitude towards forgiveness, do I live as a new creation in Christ?

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***"I say to you who hear:
Love your enemies, do good
to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you,
and pray for those who
spitefully use you."***

Luke 6:27-28

Forgiveness is at the very core of our salvation through Christ Jesus.

How then must we also forgive so as to truly abide in Christ?

Ephesians 4:31-32, "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

Romans 12:20, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

As such:

Acts 7:59-60, "They stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

What's more?

Colossians 3:13, "Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do."

Romans 12:17, "Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men."

And as Jesus said:

Luke 6:37, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."

Is there anyone I haven't forgiven yet?

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