

What God Says About Forgiving

1. God's forgiveness of us

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say, "We have not sinned," we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Psalm 103:10-12

He has not dealt with us as our sins deserve or repaid us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his faithful love toward those who fear him. ¹²As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed

Ephesians 1:7

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

Colossians 1:13-14

He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. ¹⁴In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Isaiah 1:18

Come, let's settle this," says the LORD. "Though your sins are scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are crimson red, they will be like wool.

Micah 7:18-19

Who is a God like you, forgiving iniquity and passing over rebellion for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not hold on to his anger forever because he delights in faithful love. ¹⁹He will again have compassion on us; he will vanquish our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

2. Confessing our own sin

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say, “We have not sinned,” we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Psalms 32:1-5

How joyful is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! ²How joyful is a person whom the LORD does not charge with iniquity and in whose spirit is no deceit! ³When I kept silent, my bones became brittle from my groaning all day long. ⁴For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was drained as in the summer’s heat. ⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not conceal my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Psalms 51:1-12

Be gracious to me, God, according to your faithful love; according to your abundant compassion, blot out my rebellion. ²Completely wash away my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. ³For I am conscious of my rebellion, and my sin is always before me. ⁴Against you—you alone—I have sinned and done this evil in your sight. So you are right when you pass sentence; you are blameless when you judge. ⁵Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me. ⁶Surely you desire integrity in the inner self, and you teach me wisdom deep within. Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. ⁹Turn your face away from my sins and blot out all my guilt. ¹⁰God, create a clean heart for me and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹Do not banish me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore the joy of your salvation to me, and sustain me by giving me a willing spirit.

Proverbs 28:13

The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy.

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.

3. Forgiving others

Colossians 3:12-13

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive.

Ephesians 4:31-32

Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. ³²And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.

Matthew 6:12-15

Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy. ¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us today our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. ¹⁴“For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. ¹⁵But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses.

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter approached him and asked, “Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? As many as seven times?” ²²“I tell you, not as many as seven,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven. ²³“For this reason, the kingdom of heaven can be compared to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle accounts, one who owed ten thousand talents was brought before him. ²⁵Since he did not have the money to pay it back, his master commanded that he, his wife, his children, and everything he had be sold to pay the debt. ²⁶“At this, the servant fell facedown before him and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷Then the master of that servant had compassion, released him, and forgave him the loan. ²⁸“That servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him, started choking him, and said, ‘Pay what you owe!’ ²⁹“At this, his fellow servant fell down and began begging him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ ³⁰But he wasn't willing. Instead, he went and threw him into prison until he could pay what was owed. ³¹When the other servants saw what had taken place, they were deeply distressed and went and reported to their master everything that had happened. ³²Then, after he had summoned him, his master said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. ³³Shouldn't you also have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And because he was angry, his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured until he could pay everything that was owed. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to you unless every one of you forgives his brother or sister from your heart.”

Mark 11:25

And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven will also forgive you your wrongdoing.”

Luke 6:27-28

But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

Luke 17:3-4

Be on your guard. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and comes back to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

Romans 12:17-21

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone’s eyes. ¹⁸If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for God’s wrath, because it is written, **Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay,** says the Lord. ²⁰But **If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For in so doing you will be heaping fiery coals on his head.** ²¹Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

Matthew 5:43-48

“You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor** and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don’t even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

4. What forgiveness does in us

These passages help explain **why forgiveness matters**:

Romans 8:1

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, ²because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do since

it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering

Romans 8:6-9

Now the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷The mindset of the flesh is hostile to God because it does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it is unable to do so. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him

Psalms 32:1-2

How joyful is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! ²How joyful is a person whom the LORD does not charge with iniquity and in whose spirit is no deceit!

Hebrews 10:16-17

This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, the Lord says, I will put my laws on their hearts and write them on their minds, ¹⁷and I will never again remember their sins and their lawless acts.

Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, ¹⁴I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come! ¹⁸Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. ¹⁹That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us.