

## Questions Concerning Forgiveness

### *Series on forgiveness (6)*

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**Introduction:** We need to be concerned about our forgiveness before God.

- A. You should never let someone else study the scriptures for you and then assure you that you are forgiven!
  - 1. We will need the wisdom to discern between many things. (**Heb 5:14**)
  - 2. In this process we must be careful not to deceive ourselves.
  - 3. God wants us to know where we stand. We can, however, deceive ourselves. (**1 Cor 4:4; Rom 10:1-3**)
- B. We have already studied how God forgives and that our actions should mirror His.
  - 1. After our repentance, God blots out our sins (**Acts 3:19**), does not remember our sins any more (**Heb 8:12**), and receives us back to a full fellowship. (**Lk 15:20-24**)
  - 2. The application of these things may appear to conflict with other passages. Here is where we need to ask questions and seek answers!

### *1. Can I commit a sin that cannot be forgiven?*

- A. Jesus warns of such a sin! (**Mt 12:31-32**)
  - 1. I remember mind games I played with myself as a young boy. I was terrified to think that I might have done this.
  - 2. The context shows men who saw the works of the Holy Spirit through Jesus and attributed them to Satan. (**Mt 12:22-24**)
- B. What is this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?
  - 1. To blaspheme means to speak against.
  - 2. It evidently does not have the serious consequences as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit! (**Mt 12:32**)
- C. Some possible explanations.
  - 1. The Holy Spirit was to complete the work of Jesus by revealing and confirming the final revelation of God's word. (**Jn 16:13; Mk 16:17-20**)
  - 2. If this powerful show of God's power was shrugged off by blasphemy, then there was no hope of these people.
  - 3. It may be a sin unique to those who saw these miracles or it describes a hardness of heart or both!
- D. Other commonly misunderstood passages.
  - 1. Why is it impossible for some Christians to be renewed again to repentance? (**Heb 6:4-6**)
    - a. They have a hardened heart! They do not care anymore. (**1 Tim 4:2**)
    - b. Be careful! A continued practice of sin will lead you down this path.
    - c. Does this concern you? Then respond and cleanse your conscience from dead works! (**Heb 9:14; Tit 1:15**)
  - 2. How does someone come to have no sacrifice for sins? (**Heb 10:26-31**)

- a. Willful sin without repentance brings you under the wrath of God and away from the blood of Christ!
- b. You are not to pray for forgiveness of one who is walking in this way of death! **(1 Jn 5:16-18)**
- c. If you will repent, God will forgive! **(1 Jn 2:1-3)**

## ***II. Does forgiveness cause one to surrender the right to divorce?***

- A. Some have concluded that if a mate is unfaithful and then repents then all right to put away the guilty party is forfeited.
  - 1. The Bible gives one the right to put away an unfaithful mate. **(Mt 19:9)**
  - 2. In many cases it is best to take the guilty party back. In some cases it is not!
  - 3. If this one repents he should be forgiven. **(Lk 17:3-4)**
  - 4. If they do not repent there still should be a releasing of personal vengeance. Sadly many make decisions on the basis of vengeance. **(Rom 12:19-21)**
- B. Forgiveness does not eliminate other rights.
  - 1. When a runaway slave became a Christian his debts remained. **(Philemon 1:18-19)**
  - 2. Forgiveness does not wipe away certain consequences of your sin. Wisdom and love may cause others to take a different reaction to you.
  - 3. Divorce is a right that must be used or forfeited on the basis of wisdom and love. One may have so violated trust that they should be put away.

## ***III. Paradoxes in the statements of Paul***

- A. Why did Paul take a different view of those in this passage? **(2 Tim 4:14-16)**
  - 1. Here we see a difference in the personal hurt of Paul and the cause of Christ itself!
  - 2. When one causes others to fall away or never see the gospel the strongest of reactions are in order. **(Acts 13:9-12; Mt 18:6-7)**
- B. Both Stephen and Paul were quick to release their desire for vengeance. The cause of Christ came first! **(Acts 7:59-60; Phil 1:15-18)**
  - 1. Are you willing to do this? Many Christians act more strongly to personal offence than to those who hinder the gospel.
  - 2. When you put the cause of Christ first as a matter of principle, then it will be seen in all areas. Consider the example of attendance.

### ***Conclusion:*** How do you spell first? **(Mt 6:33)**

- A. Every area of our study depends upon what is first in our lives. Those who cannot forgive are serving themselves.
  - 1. Our study of hard questions shows our commitment to Christ and His word.
  - 2. What other questions do you have? It depends on how much you read and study!
- B. How do many spell first? Like this: "second, third, fourth..."