

# Forgiveness, Part 1

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[0:00] Morning, my name is Rick Aldrich. I'm another one of the elders here at Christ the King Church, and it's my privilege to bring the word for us this morning. We're going to be looking at Ephesians 4.32, as you see there in your bulletin, and as we're going to be dealing with what our forgiveness is in Christ. Forgiveness is a troubling doctrine for many, and one which Jesus spent a lot of time teaching on in the scriptures. It's a topic that all believers should endeavor to understand. John MacArthur said that nearly all his counseling is spent dealing with wrong thinking concerning forgiveness. A person might struggle because they don't understand their position before God that comes from forgiveness in Christ. They find it hard to believe that promise in 2 Corinthians 5.17, where it says, therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come. They still have some of their old habits. They have their old evil thoughts. There still remains from their old life that still haunt them, and too often they believe that practice instead of believing what the scripture says about their position in Christ. Also, a wrong understanding of biblical forgiveness can lead to a lot of unresolved interpersonal conflicts. Biblical forgiveness is more than mere words.

It is what one who has been sinned against brings to the table to work with the one who is repenting at the work of reconciliation. There are many other wrong ideas, but these are just a couple examples.

As I said, our framework today is going to come from Ephesians 4.32, where Paul says, Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Today, I want to look at that end phrase. Today, how God has forgiven us in Christ. I want to remind us what forgiveness is and hopefully motivate us to want to be better forgivers.

[1:58] When you talk about forgiveness, most people think they know what you're talking about. And for the most part, they have a pretty good idea and would recognize true forgiveness if they saw it. The problem is that forgiveness has grown to encompass other things that are completely foreign to the scriptures.

Psychology has taken the concept of forgiveness and corrupted it, and that perversion has found its way back into the church. They are trying to deal with the problems of sin and guilt, which do require forgiveness, but they are rejecting the very basis of forgiveness, the gospel.

Objective truth has taken a backseat to emotions and left us with a convoluted mess. First, they do try to deal with guilt. People don't want to feel guilty, so they have to get rid of it somehow.

One way is they try assigning it to someone other than the one who is truly responsible. So they will begin to look for something that happened in the past and use that as an excuse for the way that they are.

Perhaps their parents or some other family member did something or maybe didn't do something. Or if that fails, they look at the culture or society around them and see if there might be something there that they can blame. Another common scapegoat is the church or religion.

[3:06] They would say that the church is regularly blamed for making people feel guilty, and it's the church's antiquated views on sin and morality that don't fit anymore and have afflicted this person with misplaced guilt.

Some go so far as to call it abuse and become very hostile towards religion. Once they have a target to blame, they now have to deal with the anger issues that come from that. And that's where forgiveness comes in.

But it's not the type of forgiveness the Bible talks about. It's more of a therapeutic process by which this person learns to just let it go and not be angry anymore. It's all about taking care of self with no thought towards whom they are angry with, and especially no thoughts concerning God.

And this leads to other problems. Soon, sin is being renamed and reclassified as a sickness or a disease. This leads to other therapies and ultimately distorts people's view of true forgiveness.

True forgiveness is no longer valued and even is deemed unnecessary. It is all about feelings.

There is no pursuit of reconciliation. Forgiveness is a private, personal matter and allows people to avoid one another rather than deal with offenses in a godly manner.

[4:13] Another corruption arises in that people feel the need to forgive themselves. They have done something so wrong that they can't move forward. They just can't let it go. Why?

Because they are not dealing rightly with the guilt. They can't make it right and they can't be sure that they won't do it again. They cannot bring about any change in themselves and they won't submit themselves to God, to the God who can change them and forgive their guilt.

Another problem occurs when the distorted forgiveness is then projected back on God, redefining how people see God's forgiveness. One pastor even wrote recently that hell is full of forgiven people God loves, whom Jesus died for.

Some even take it a step further and say that they may even need to forgive God. Their new definition of forgiveness involves ceasing to feel bitterness and resentment, sometimes causing them to deal with their anger at their circumstances in their life by forgiving God.

Lewis Smedes justified this approach by saying, Would it bother God too much if we found our peace by forgiving him for the wrongs we suffer? What if we found a way of forgiving him without blaming him?

[5:22] A special sort of forgiving for a special sort of relationship. Would he mind? Well, the answer to that is yes, God would mind. God is holy and perfect and doesn't need any pardon. He is the standard for right and wrong.

To say that God needs forgiveness is to imply that he is to blame, that he is wrong. And this is sinful, blasphemous thinking, but unfortunately becoming all too common. This distortion of forgiveness has led some to conclude that God has to forgive everyone automatically.

And there are many in churches today who believe that they are Christians, even though they have never genuinely repented or believed, and it has hampered the church's ability to discern right from wrong and allows evil to flourish.

But we must maintain the biblical concept of forgiveness. It is essential to proper understanding of who God is and what Jesus has accomplished on behalf of his people. And it's necessary because sin is a fatal problem for everyone.

The Bible clearly teaches that all have sinned and are worthy of God's condemnation and his wrath leading to destruction. Beginning in Genesis chapter 3, when sin entered the world, as Adam disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we see as history unfolds for us in Scripture that this truth is evident.

[6:35] Man left to himself will be wicked continually. And the judgment is clearly spelled out. The soul that sins must die. The wages of sin is death.

But I don't want to leave it at just that. We are experts at minimizing our own sin. We see sin in others and are quick to judge. But when it comes to our own sin, we lose perspective. Jesus tries to remedy this in his teaching.

In Matthew chapter 7, Jesus called the sin that we see in others a speck. And the sin we often overlook in ourselves a log. And then in Matthew 18, he gives a parable called the parable of the unforgiving servant.

Jesus contrasts these two debts that are owed. One is so large, too big to ever be repaid. And one is comparatively small. And we are the ones with the huge debt. And those who sinned against us have the small debt.

And this is the way Jesus wants us to see our sin. So the problem comes when we don't rightly see our sin and that we don't rightly see forgiveness either. But let's take a few moments to consider our sins more.

[7:37] First, we often judge our sin by degrees. You know, lying is bad, stealing is bad, but not as bad as murder. Then there are some sins which we barely even see as sins and even tolerate.

And to a certain extent, we can see a little support for this in the Bible as sins are dealt with in different ways. Certain sins do carry more severe consequences. And while we would say there, all sins are practiced, sometimes we suggest otherwise.

In his book, *Respectable Sins*, Jerry Bridges talks about certain sins that we neglect to deal with on a consistent basis. Things like anger and discontentment and worldliness.

And some will tend to view their sins like this and conclude that they are not that big a sinner and, as such, will not value forgiveness very highly. But we need to add another component to our assessment.

Who have we sinned against? Again, we do this somewhat on a human level. We would view offenses against children and other innocent or helpless people as more heinous than the sins against people who can protect themselves.

[8:37] We are more disgusted when we hear of someone scamming the elderly and even in prison with their warped sense of justice. They reserve their harshest treatment for those who are convicted of abuse against children. When I explain this to my children, we talk about how the consequences are more severe depending on who is sinned against.

If they break one of the house rules, they have sinned against their parents and the consequences are proportionate to that. If they break a law, they have sinned against society and the consequences are more severe. Now we get to the Bible and the one they have sinned against is God, their creator, the Holy One, infinite and eternal.

And that is the true measure of our sin. It doesn't matter that it was only a little lie. It was a sin against the infinite lawgiver. It may have only been a piece of fruit, but God told them not to eat it or they would die.

And if we are going to say the judgment is too harsh, we are setting ourselves above God and saying that we know better. Some would say God sending people to hell is too much, too extreme. And either he wouldn't do that or he does that, then he's a monster, not worthy of worship. But let me urge you to view your sin this way. Our creator who made us has a right to demand perfect obedience.

[9:49] And when we fail, he has the right to set the consequences. And he has decreed that the soul that sins must die. The Bible repeatedly shows our condition before this holy judge of being condemned for our sin and deserving of eternal destruction.

So work back from there. If hell is the verdict, then our sin is that bad. It's that big against the holy God. But the Bible also shows us another picture.

From the beginning, God has desired to be seen as merciful and loving, a God who forgives sin.

And he also shows that he is our only hope for forgiveness. Right after Adam and Eve sinned, God came and pronounced curses on them and on the serpent.

And to Satan, he prophesied that salvation would come from the woman's seed and defeat Satan.

God later clarified that the seed of the woman would be Abraham's seed and that through this seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Through Abraham's grandson, Jacob, the nation of Israel was formed. And we see this promise to continue to be refined as we learn of the Messiah throughout the scriptures from the prophets of Israel.

[10:56] And all the while, God is teaching us that what he wants them to, he's teaching them and us what he wants us to know about him. When Moses sought to know God more intimately by seeing his glory, God revealed this about himself to Moses.

In Exodus 33, I'm going to turn there. If you would like to turn there and follow along with me, I'm going to be looking at a few verses throughout Exodus 33 and 34. But in Exodus 33, in verses 18

through 19, Moses said, Please show me your glory.

And God said, I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name, the Lord. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

And then if we go down into chapter 34 and verses 6 through 7, it says, The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation.

So I want to see several important facts that emerge from these verses. First, in verse 7 there we see, Forgiveness is an outworking of God's compassion and grace.

[12:20] The God who forgives iniquity is the God who is merciful and gracious and slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Forgiveness is a matter of divine grace.

It is from God. Second, because God's forgiveness is a matter of grace, it is a gift of God's sovereign grace. God bestows forgiveness on those whom he chooses to forgive.

None are worthy of this grace, and thus no one has any claim on God's grace as manifested in the forgiveness of sins. God said to Moses, I will be gracious on whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

So God forgives those who he chooses to forgive, and forgiveness is something which we, as guilty sinners, have no right to expect or demand. Third, the grace of God in forgiving sinners in no way sets aside the justice of God, which requires the punishment of guilty sinners.

Some may think that they are being gracious when they overlook sin, and they might be, but when they simply refuse, sometimes it's just simply refusing to deal with it. Many parents think they are gracious when they do not punish their children for disobedience.

[13:27] But notice that God's grace does not set aside punishment for sins. It is substituted on Jesus who was punished for our sin. Even at this very early point in the history of God's dealings with his people, God makes it very clear that his grace does not mean he takes a soft view towards sin.

God deals severely with sin. When he forgives men for sin, he still punishes that sin, and that punishment for sin, as we shall see, is borne by our Lord Jesus Christ in our place.

Finally, note that the forgiveness of sins in no way removes any obligation from the object of God's grace to obey God. Based upon God's self-revelation of his glory here and the declaration of his grace and compassion by which he forgives sin, Moses goes on to appeal to God for the Israelites.

Down in verse 9 of chapter 34, he says, O Lord, if I have found favor in your eyes, he said, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin.

Take us as your inheritance. So here we see Moses pleading for divine forgiveness for his people, and he receives the assurance that God will be present with his people as he leads them into the land of Canaan.

[14:39] But immediately we see the outgrowth of forgiveness is an obligation to live in accordance with the covenant God has established with his people. If we continue on in 34, they're starting in verse 10.

There we are. And he said, Behold, I am in making a covenant before all your people. I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the Lord, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. Observe what I command you this day. Make sure that's how far I want to go. Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your midst. You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their ashram, for you shall worship no other god for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice and you take of their daughters for your sons and their daughters, whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods.

[15:58] You shall not make a name for yourself any gods of cast metal. So to be God's people, to have God dwell in their midst, it requires a solution for sin, but it also requires a standard of righteousness which serves to define just what sin is.

And so we see that coming to the people here in this and it continues on. We go on after that and he begins to give commandments about the Feast of Unleavened Bread and we begin to see some of the workings of the Ten Commandments concerning the Sabbath and other things.

And these things are just showing us again that there is requirements that go along with this grace of forgiveness that God shows us. That work of reconciliation is still being done there.

And we see that if sin can't be overlooked but must be punished, how can this be accomplished? So under the Old Testament laws, we continue to look into what Moses has written down for the Israelites.

we see that men could offer sacrifices to God for their sins. In particular, we think of the Day of Atonement, this annual day, which was an occasion when the sins of the nation were dealt for for the past year.

[17:11] But the Day of Atonement didn't really pay for any sin or put away sin. It simply put off divine judgment. Where we liken the sins of Israel to a financial debt, then the sacrifice that was offered on that Day of Atonement would be similar to paying off the interest for the past year.

Sin was not put away, but it was put off for another year. Year after year, the debt increased. And someday, somehow, there must be a payment for the sin. And so there would be. The nation of Israel very quickly began to sin against God by disobeying His covenant.

And over and over again, we see the Israelites sin. And over and over again, God graciously puts up with this willful and disobedient people. Finally, the first generation of Israelites was forbidden to enter into the promised land.

They died in the wilderness. And their sons and daughters were about to enter that land as the book of Deuteronomy begins. The Mosaic covenant is once again reiterated, reiterated, and the Ten Commandments are repeated in Deuteronomy 5.

But there is no note of optimism here. The problem underlying Israel's rebellion is the condition of the hearts of the Israelites. Deuteronomy 29.4 says, But to this day, the Lord has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.

[18:28] And throughout the whole book of Deuteronomy, it's clear that the Israelites will not keep God's covenant with them and that the nation will experience the cursings that are spelled out in this book, particularly in chapter 28.

And in spite of their disobedience, there is still hope for the nation because God is a forgiving God. And His forgiveness is not based on man's worth or merit. Consequently, Moses actually tells the people that after they have been driven out of the promised land and lived in captivity among the nations, God will fulfill His promise and bless this nation.

If you want to turn over to Deuteronomy chapter 30, we're going to look at a few verses there where Moses tells them this, that we see the promises. In chapter 30 of Deuteronomy, verses 1 through 5, it says, And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey His voice in all that I command you today with all your heart and with all your soul, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you.

And He will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are in the uttermost part of heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will take you.

And the Lord your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possess, that you may possess it, and He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. So we see God promises to bring about these promises to these people when they have repented and returned to Him.

[20:03] He goes on to indicate that the repentance of the Israelites is a result of His work in their hearts, giving them a new heart which seeks

to please Him and which loves to keep His commandments. We see this in 6 through 10.

It says, And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and that you may live. And the Lord your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you.

And you shall again obey the voice of the Lord and keep all His commandments that I command you today. The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground.

For the Lord again will take delight in prospering you as He took delight in your fathers. When you obey the voice of the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes that are written in this book of the law, when you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

When we look carefully at the words there next that He says, I mean, we see Him given this heart, but we also, I think, need to make a crucial observation as we go on and read the next few verses.

[21:13] Beginning in 11, it says, For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that you should say, Who will ascend to the heaven for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?

Neither is it beyond the sea that you should say, Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart so that you can do it.

We see here, He calls it the commandment. It is just one commandment. It is not ten or more. And this one commandment that is being commanded, He says that this commandment is not too difficult.

And so what is this one commandment? It is in effect when you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. We see that in verse 10.

So if the law were to be summed up in one commandment, what would it be? And we know that answer from Scripture. Matthew 22, Jesus is with the Pharisees and the Sadducees and it says in 22, starting in verse 34 through 38, it says, But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

[22:22] And one of them, a lawyer, asked a question to test Him. Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law? And He said to Him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

this is the great and first commandment. And so when we break this greatest of commandments, we are the greatest of sinners. The commandments of the Lord found in the law here are impossible for men to keep.

And to avoid, it's impossible for men to keep to avoid sin or to bring about the forgiveness of sins. This is what the Israelites are told. And history has shown that God's people cannot keep the law. If they suppose their law keeping will bring about God's blessings and assure them of God's forgiveness, they are wrong. Attempts at law keeping only prove men to be guilty sinners worthy of death.

So because the forgiveness of sins was not something men could bring about, these men of God began to look forward to a time when God would accomplish this task. All through the rest of the Old Testament, this theme would be developed as we see the outworkings of the covenant made with Moses and the eventual promise of even a new covenant.

[23:32] Finally, in the fullness of time, God sends his son, the one promised in Genesis 3, the seed who will come to deal with the problem of sin. He sends the Messiah, the promised one.

He comes to fulfill God's promise to forgive men's sins and to create a new heart within. From the beginning of his ministry, Jesus showed that his mission was to forgive sins. Why don't you turn with me to Luke 5.

We're going to look at verses 17 through 26. Let me read that to us. And one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem.

And the power of the Lord was with him to heal. And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed. And they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd.

They went up on the roof and let him down with his bed, through the tiles, into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said, Man, your sins are forgiven you.

[24:39] And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone? When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, Why do you question in your hearts?

Which is easier to say, your sins are forgiven, or to say, rise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, he said to the man who was paralyzed, I say to you, rise up, pick up your bed, and go home.

And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, We have seen extraordinary things today.

Jesus' actions and words here in Luke are truly remarkable. And he boggled the minds of those who understood the implications of what he was doing. If we have learned anything from the Old Testament, it is that God alone can forgive sins.

God's solution for sinners was the coming of the Messiah who would bear the sins of men. When Jesus was confronted with the paralytic lowered through the roof, he did not deal with his physical problem first, but rather he dealt with his greater spiritual dilemma, his sins.

[25:53] When Jesus told this man that his sins were forgiven, Jesus claimed far more than the people expected. A mere man, perhaps a prophet, might be able to cast out demons or perform miracles of healing, but only God can forgive sins.

When Jesus healed this man and forgave him of his sins, Jesus boldly proclaimed that he was the Messiah, the one who had come to accomplish the forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation.

It is he who can and will change the hearts of men to love God and men. So then as we come to the time for our Lord to be crucified for our sins, he spoke these words to our disciples which we heard earlier as he instituted the Lord's Supper.

In Matthew 26, it says, now as they were eating, Jesus took bread and after blessing, he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body. And he took a cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

The forgiveness of sins has been accomplished once and for all by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. He was sinless, yet he bore our sins. So that we might be forgiven.

[27:10] God did not overlook our sins but he punished them in Christ. The good news of the gospel is that those who believe in Jesus Christ can have their sins forgiven. Later after he rose from the dead, he's walking with a couple disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24 and it says that he opened their minds to understand the scriptures and said to them, thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem.

You are the witness of these things. And so we see Jesus just telling us this is what the gospel is. Preaching repentance and the forgiveness of sins starting in Jerusalem to all the nations.

And so this is the gospel that we preach and seek to spread. The forgiveness of sins is not man's work but God's. And in Acts 5.31, Peter also announces that God not only grants the forgiveness of sins but also repentance.

Men are to repent but it is God who brings men to repentance. Salvation is wholly the work of God and not of men. Forgiveness of sins is entirely God's work and all we must do to receive it is to repent and believe in Jesus Christ to trust in his sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection.

Forgiveness of sins is impossible for men to accomplish. But God has accomplished the impossible through Jesus Christ. In order to receive this forgiveness we need to confess our sins.

[28:41] That is to agree with God's judgment on them and the fact that we are deserving of eternal wrath. And then when Jesus died on the cross to

pay for our sins we need to understand that he did indeed pay for them.

All of them. 1 John 2.2 says that he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. He died for every single one of our sins and he provided the payment for those.

1 John 1.9 says if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Jesus paid for all the sins of all of us.

Just before he died on the cross Jesus cried out it is finished. He used a Greek word there that had to do with commerce but the meaning of it was the debt has been paid in full.

All of our sins were atoned for by the death of Jesus on the cross and this has great implications for us. That means when we ask the Lord to forgive our sins he does. He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and he forgives us in some marvelous ways.

[29:47] Let me just detail these as we close our time today. First he forgives us graciously. That is again we don't deserve it. God did not forgive us because we were good.

Romans 5.8 says that it is while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. He forgives us because he is gracious which means that he treats us far better than we deserve.

He also forgives us freely. God does not make us earn our forgiveness by doing some great deed. Forgiveness is not cheap. It costs the unimaginable price of the death of the Son of God on the cross but it is free to us.

We don't have to pay anything for it. The gift of God is eternal life as it tells us in Romans 6.23. He forgives us freely. He also forgives us deeply. No matter what our sin he forgives us.

It doesn't matter what sin you have committed God will forgive you. King David was an adulterer and a murderer and a liar and God forgave him. The Apostle Paul said he was a blasphemer and God forgave him.

[30:50] Peter denied three times that he even knew Jesus and God forgave him. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6.9-11 speaking of adulterers homosexuals thieves and drunkards that such were some of you but you were washed.

He indicated that all these sins can be forgiven. So do you have anything worse on your spiritual resume? Not likely. He can pay for all he has paid for all these sins. It says in John 1.9 again 1 John 1.9 The blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin.

There is no sin you have committed that God will not forgive if you bring it to him. We can take comfort in that. He forgives us deeply. That means no matter what the sin we can thank God for forgiving us.

And not only that he also forgives us repeatedly. Again here we can claim 1 John 1.9 which says if we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins.

The word faithful means that he will do it every time. He forgives us repeatedly. Just think of it. Jesus commanded Peter that we are to forgive our brothers 70 times 7 then we know that he will do the same thing for us.

[32:00] He is not asking us to do something which he himself will not do. And that's good news. How many of us have had to avail ourselves of him as his repeated forgiving grace for the same sin over and over?

How many times do you have to ask God to forgive you for words that we say? Or how many times do you have to come back to him in prayer for the same anger? Or for not doing what you knew you should have done or whatever your besetting sin is?

Thank God that there is no limit on his forgiveness of us. So as I close today I just want to invite you again as Ben did if you have not already received the forgiveness from God and maybe God is showing you that your sin is worthy of condemnation and even death understand that it's not too big.

I urge you repent and believe in Jesus Christ that Jesus Christ paid that price on the cross and that if you turn to him God will forgive you today. God in Christ has forgiven us so let us thank him and praise him for this great gift.

Join me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father we do confess that we are great sinners. You are a great God and we have sinned against you and Father we do not even comprehend what that means fully but Father help us to continually understand what a great forgiveness you have shown us.

[33:23] Father I just again thank you that you have revealed this to us in the word that you have sent your son Jesus Christ to die as a payment for sin that you raised him from the dead showing that that payment was accepted.

Father I pray that even now if you are convicting some of their sin and their need for forgiveness I pray that you would do that work in their lives and that you would cause them to turn to you in repentance today and believe and that you might forgive them.

Father continue to be with us as we worship and think on this great gift and we pray these things in Jesus name Amen.