

Getting and Giving Forgiveness

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[0 : 00] Well, we are continuing to deal with the number of questions and issues that you have submitted, because several weeks ago we kind of polled you, distributed three by five cards, and we asked you to jot down on them anonymously. We didn't want anybody's name on them.

Any areas that you would like to consider or any particular study that you would have us undertake, and that way we know we will be addressing issues that are of concern to you, and that's what I call scratching where people itch.

So that's what we're trying to do, and out of the number of suggestions that you submitted, one of them had to do with the subject of forgiveness, and that's what we're going to be dealing with this morning because it is a very important subject.

In fact, the subject of forgiveness is so important that there is no greater singular need that every human being has than that of enjoying receiving the forgiveness of God.

That tops the list. There isn't anything that transcends that. That's the number one issue.

Forgiveness. What extent God has gone to in order to be able to offer to us a forgiveness that is full, free, forever.

[1 : 34] That's the extent of it. And what it costs God to provide that kind of forgiveness is what the cross of Jesus Christ is all about and what took place there.

You would be surprised. Well, maybe you wouldn't be surprised. Maybe you happen to be one of them, and that is an individual who lives a relatively tortured life and conscience because you have not been able to come to grips with forgiveness.

And it may be that you feel that you are unforgiven, can't be forgiven, or it may be the reverse where you are locked up preventing you from extending forgiveness to someone else who has deeply wronged you, that has led you to say, I wish I could forgive them, but I just can't because they hurt me too deeply.

And people like this sometimes spend needless, sleepless nights and agonizing hours over the subject of forgiveness, whether it is getting it or giving it, and they become almost paralyzed because of it.

It dictates to their mind what they're going to think about and all the rest. In fact, it kind of makes a person a prisoner within themselves because they are all locked up with this subject of forgiveness.

[3 : 19] And while we are saying that it is by far and away the most important need that every individual has, it is almost indescribable to say that it is at the same time the most glorious, liberating experience that one can receive and know and be assured that they have it.

And it is just an amazing thing, the subject of forgiveness. And the first place that we need to look at is found in the Sermon on the Mount, and it is in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 5.

If you will look there, please. I'm sorry, chapter 6. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 6. This is the longest exposition given by our Lord during His three to three and a half year ministry here on earth.

That which would be probably second is the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25. But the Sermon on the Mount is perhaps one of the most famous in all of the Gospels that people appeal to. And I dare say that it contains a verse of Scripture that is no doubt uttered literally, and I'm not exaggerating, literally millions of times every day.

[4 : 48] all across the world in multiple languages. And it is commonly referred to as the Lord's Prayer. So in Matthew, chapter 6, and we're going to begin with verse 5 to get a little bit of context.

Jesus is saying... Excuse me. I hope I can get through this froggy voice. Matthew, chapter 6 and verse 5, Jesus says, And when you pray...

He's talking to a multitude of people. He says, And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners in order to

be seen by men.

Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. And their reward, of course, consists of the accolades and the acknowledgement that people who see them and hear them praying, praise them.

And as they walk by and they see a rabbi on the corner and he's bowing in prayer and he's reciting his prayer and people walk by and say things like, My, what a holy man.

[6 : 09] What a wonderful, righteous man. I wish I could be like him. Jesus said, Those kind of people who are standing on the corner and praying for that reason to receive the accolades and acknowledgement from humans, they have their reward.

And that is their reward. And that's all the reward they get. That's it. And then he makes a contrast and he says, But you, verse 6, when you pray, go into your inner room and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetitions as the Gentiles do. In other words, Jesus is saying, you are not to engage in saying prayers.

Fellas, here's a big difference and I want to hammer this. There is virtually no value in saying prayers.

There's enormous value in praying. but there's a huge difference between praying and saying prayers.

[7 : 32] Saying prayers is just like an automatic remote thing that you just kind of crank up and you flood heaven with the repetitious prayers. That's the very thing that Jesus is condemning.

He's saying, don't do that. Don't get into the rut of just saying prayers as if there's some kind of magical incantation involved and if you pray this prayer enough times and say it enough times then all of a sudden it clicks in and it works.

Because you said it often enough. Baloney. And yet, that is precisely what the world is stuck on.

They think there is value in repetitious saying prayers over and over again as if God has an angel in heaven with a tablet and he's checking off how many times and when you pray this prayer the thousandth time bingo!

There comes the answer. It kicks in because you prayed it and you prayed it enough. And the idea is you just kind of wear down heaven until heaven concedes and gives in to whatever it is you pray for.

That's complete nonsense. And you know what? That is precisely what humanity has done with it. Precisely. And he gives the example.

[8 : 59] He's saying do not be like them. Your father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then in this way. And he didn't mean this to be a repetitious prayer to be said over and over and over again like on a prayer wheel.

But he's giving it as an example. And he's saying these are the kinds of things that your prayers should include. He doesn't mean in fact he's just given a forbidding of that and yet people turn right around and do the very thing that he said don't do that.

And that's exactly what we do. and I'm talking about what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer and I don't want to beat this horse to death but if you want to read what is truly the Lord's Prayer read John's Gospel chapter 17.

That is the Lord's Prayer. This that we have here is just a model it's an example but was never intended to be repeated word for word over and over and over and over again.

Let's look at it. Pray then in this way Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name and it's simply acknowledging God is and where he is and that his name is holy and that means separate and undefiled.

[10 : 27] Thy kingdom comes big item big item thy kingdom come the prayer is for God's kingdom to come now that prayer has not yet been answered we are not now living in the kingdom of God we are living in a world that is fallen and failing and contains sin and sinners and all the rest of it when the kingdom of heaven comes when it is actually realized the most significant thing about it will be the will of God that is being done in heaven will come to earth and the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven and fellas this is not it we see around us everywhere conflict death disease the world is in a mess you've got to be blind not to see it this is not

God's world this is the world of Satan and Paul makes that clear in 2nd Corinthians 4 when he says Satan is the God of this age of this world and that's a long story how it got to be that way but that is

exactly what it is let's go on thy kingdom comes so thy will would be done on earth as it is in heaven give us this day our daily bread this is realizing that God is in charge of all that we need and this is a prayer for daily sustenance and forgive us our debts as look at this as or in accordance with or the same way that we forgive our debtors and do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever amen and verse 14 for or because if you forgive men for their transgressions your heavenly father will also forgive you now fellas I've hammered this before and I'm going to keep hammering words mean things the bible was never given to confuse us or confound us it was given to enlighten us to instruct us it is given with the intent that it be understood because you cannot properly respond to what you do not understand you have to know what the text is saying so you can provide an intelligent response even if your response is disobedience you've got to know what it is you're being disobedient to so that's a very important concept for if if do you see the conditionality of that little two letter word but there's a lot hanging on it if if you forgive men for their transgressions your heavenly father will also forgive you could a condition be clearer this is a big if this is to the Jews this is God working with the Jews this is a prayer for the Jews well Joe if you will just hold on we'll make that very clear okay you're just getting ahead of me I don't want the kingdom to come I've got to lay a case for this first okay so just rest and relax okay if you forgive men for their transgressions your heavenly father will also forgive you but here's another conjunction contrast but if another if if you do not forgive men then your father will not forgive your transgressions could anything be clear as I've said words mean things guys and this is found right there in the context of this prayer that is so often repeated and in it it says forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors now

I want you to turn to another reference in Colossians chapter two and I cannot tell you how great the contrast is Colossians chapter two this is in further back in the new testament it is among the writings of the apostle paul and it provides a stark contrast and this by the way what I'm going to share with you now is one of the things that leads some people to say aha you see the Bible is full of contradictions and here is a contradiction because what we are going to read in Colossians does clearly abandon what we have read earlier in Matthew gospel chapter six and let's look if we may at Colossians two beginning with verse six as you therefore have received

[16:19] Christ Jesus the Lord so walk in him now when he says you have received Christ Jesus the Lord it is clear from the context he is talking to those and writing to those who have they have received Christ Jesus as their Lord that's why Paul is writing this to them these are believers they are Christians they are born again individuals and they have placed their faith and their trust in Jesus Christ and they are the ones of whom Paul is speaking and he says as therefore you have received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk in him and for anybody who says well I wish I could but I just can't do that it's beyond me baloney baloney the the the scriptures never give demands or requirements that you cannot meet

God never makes unreasonable demands from anybody any command or order that is given by God through the word of God is fully capable of being carried out by you and by me what we really mean at times when we say well I can't I just can't do that I just can't do that I would like to forgive but I can't I just can't forgive we're getting our I can't mixed up with our won'ts because you can we choose not to and therefore we don't but it doesn't sound nice to say I won't it sounds better to say I can't which means it's beyond me and I can't help it because I can't but when you say I won't then the ball is in your court your will is involved so he goes on to say walk in him having been firmly rooted and now being built up in him and established in your faith just as you were instructed and overflowing with gratitude what's the basis gratitude it's the salvation it's the redemption that you have in

Jesus Christ and when you realize what God has done for you through Jesus Christ if you are not and have not been stunned overwhelmed fully grateful for what God has done for you in Christ you just don't understand maybe you have not been a recipient because no one can come to a personal faith in Jesus Christ and ever be the same and the first and foremost thing that ought to characterize your thinking is wow man I am really grateful to God for what he has done for me for Jesus my Lord I am so overwhelmed with gratitude for the position for the righteousness that is bestowed upon me because of what

Christ did you know what I just can't imagine not wanting to live for him and all I want to do is please him because he has done so much for me that I could not do for myself there's a little Sunday

school song used to sing years ago after all he's done for me how can I do less than give him my best after all he's done for me fellas the things that ought to characterize the Christian more than anything else is an overwhelming sense of gratitude of thanksgiving thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift oh my wow let's move on verse seven having been firmly rooted and now being built up in him and established in your faith just as you were instructed and overflowing with gratitude and people who aren't grateful just don't understand what

God has done for them see to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men according to the elementary principles of the world rather than according to Christ that guys that is to be our new standard according to Christ as opposed to according to the elementary principles of the world and according to the tradition of men forget all that stuff won't get you anywhere we need to be marching to the beat of this drummer the person of Christ for in him all the fullness of deity deity is that which makes God God his person and character all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form this is the word made flesh in the person of Jesus and dwelt among us and John says and we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father and in him in him precious two words in him the apostle

[22 : 11] Paul uses that phrase in him and in Christ so many times in the letters he has written and he never gotten over the experience of being in Christ in fact this man Paul the apostle formerly Saul of Tarsus was so grateful for what God had done for him through Christ that he vowed to spend the rest of his life just telling people about it and willing to offer up himself as a soldier of Christ out of gratitude for what God had done for him in him you have been made complete boy that's a precious thing in him you have been made complete people who are not in Christ have something lacking and most of them don't even know it all they know is in their inner being there is a yearning an absence a deficiency an empty spot and they don't have any idea how to fill it and some try to fill it with money some try to fill it with fame some some try to fill it with sex some try to fill it with notoriety some try to fill all kinds of things and none of it works none of it works because that which is lacking is that which only

God can provide St. Augustine said our hearts are hearts are restless and they cannot rest until they rest in thee and a heart that is given to Christ is just priceless absolutely priceless you have been made complete he is the head over all rule authority and in him you were also circumcised what is this circumcised what has got to do with anything this is hearkening back to the Jewish demand for the circumcision of the baby boy who was born on the eighth day circumcised and so on and that circumcision the cutting away of the flesh of the male organ was a symbol of dedication to God and it was specifically required of the Jewish people and it became a big big item when Gentiles that is non-Jews started putting their faith in this Jewish Messiah Jesus the question then was well don't they also have to be circumcised no no and the whole 15th chapter that we won't take time to go to but the whole 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles was given to address that very issue whether Gentile that is whether non-Jews who put their faith in a Jewish Messiah Jesus of Nazareth whether they also had to be circumcised like the Jews and keep the law of Moses like the Jews which in effect made them converts to Judaism and Paul the Apostle former Jew himself makes it very clear and says no no no no what has happened and fellas here's the key what has happened because of the cross God has put everybody on the same plane for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and the price that

Jesus Christ made on that cross was intended to be applied to the entirety of the human race for as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive the cross changed everything if you are going to require circumcision for anybody if you are going to say forgiveness can be granted from God only if you forgive others what you are doing in effect is you are placing yourself on the other side of the cross don't go there don't go there that's all laden with condemnation for the soul that sinned shall surely die on the other side of the cross there is nothing but death and condemnation and justice and tell me and let me tell you fellas you can't stand justice none of us can none of us can withstand the justice of God because the justice of God requires death as a payment for sin and if not that of a perfect sacrifice then yours that's why

Jesus came Jesus came to die your death in his own body on the cross that's everything the cross as I've often said don't ever lose sight of this guys the cross and what happened on that cross became God's centerpiece for the whole of creation for all eternity that was the pivotal point nothing compares with the cross for in that cross God redeemed a fallen sinful humanity he did it because despite our sin our waywardness and rebellion God loved us anyway in that while we were yet

sinner

[28 : 32] Paul said Christ loved us and God commendeth his love toward us and that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us Jesus didn't die for good people there weren't any he died for sinners he who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf so that so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him that is amazing that's absolutely amazing John Newton was so struck by it he wrote a song about it and called it amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me once was lost but now I'm found was blind but now I see wow in him you've been made complete he is the head over all rule and authority in him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without what does that mean what in the world is a you know when a little baby boy in the

Jewish economy was circumcised at the age of eight days how was it done well it was done by hand there was a Jew in the community in every Jewish community had a certain man a certain individual he was the town circumciser that was his responsibility when a baby boy was born when it was eight days old he'd show up at the doorstep of those people and he would go in there and with a flint stone with a sharpened flint stone he would take the little penis of that baby and pull the loose skin off the top and slice it off around the top and of course that baby would scream and holler and cry well what you can expect well of course he would because it was painful but it was all over and then that made him an official child of Israel and I tell you somebody from experience I had that done to me but

I was 21 years old and I won't go there because there's a story other than to say that it sure did smart and I felt sympathetic to every little 8 day old Jewish baby boy and when I went to the urologist and my penis started closing up and I thought good heavens what's going on here I'm not going to be able to urinate is this thing going to close all the way and I got really concerned about he was 21 years old and married about 6 months and I went to urologist and he said alright drop your pants let me take a look he says I'll never forget his words he says oh hell that's got to come off and I felt faint I went what what what's he talking what's got to come off what's what are you talking what's got to come off and he says you got to be circumcised what he said yeah he said this is a condition he said

I seen it before it happens it's kind of rare but we don't know why it is but that skin just starts closing in and you have to be circumcised okay and he said but we won't do it like the Jews do he says you won't you won't he said you'll be out you won't know a thing I said well thank god for that and well that's the end of that story but I was one really concerned guy so the circumcision he's talking about here guys is not a physical circumcision he's talking about a spiritual circumcision in the same way he's talking about a spiritual heart as opposed to a real heart that is beating and thumping inside of us there's a spiritual heart and there's a physical heart there's spiritual baptism and there's physical baptism one is with water and one is dry cleaning and yet they are both baptism because it means to be identified with and to be of the same substance you buried with him in baptism that's the spirit baptism in which you were also raised up with him through faith in the working of

God who raised him from the dead and when you your transgressions down south they say plum dead that's as dead as you can get you're plum dead dead in your transgressions dead very much alive physically walking around talking eating and drinking but so far as God is concerned dead dead to him alive to people but dead to God but when you come to faith in Jesus Christ you are made alive to God in addition to being alive physically and it's the most incredible thing that could happen to a human being dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh he made you alive together with him having forgiven us most of our transgressions you going to let me get away with that no how about having forgiven us the minor ones you can't expect

[34 : 21] God to forgive the biggies can you yeah God wipes the slate clean and when God wipes it clean it's clean it's as if it's as if God has a book on you and your name is at the top of the book and on the left he's got your liabilities and on the right he's got your assets so we all know that profit and loss has to do with weighing your assets against your liabilities and you look at the liability column below your name and it's blank there's not a thing there it's blank and you look at the other column the assets and it says complete in

Christ wow that's that's not most that's everything that's everything that's your eternal life that's your eternal destiny that's your salvation it's all wrapped up in this and you did not do one single thing except exercise your non meritorious will in believing in Jesus Christ as your substitute that's it that's it it is by grace through faith and that not of yourselves not of works lest any one should boast

and isn't it refreshing to know out of all of the people who will be in heaven not a single one of them will be a bragger not a one will be a bragger nobody is going to walk around with his chest stuck out saying you know how

I got here don't you I gave such and such amount of money to the salvation army I did this I did that I did the other thing and all these people with all this hot air going around all over heaven I'm here because I was just a really nice guy I didn't kick the dog and I didn't beat my wife and on and on and on none of that nonsense in heaven there will not be anyone hey guys there will not be anyone in heaven who in themselves deserves to be there not a one and all of us all of us Roger all of us will be forced to say and we will say it with gladness and joy I am here because of him and we'll all point to the son of God Jesus did it all Jesus paid it all all to him I owe sin had left a crimson stain he washed it white as snow are you kidding me listen guys this is why the word gospel means good news there has never in the history of the universe been news this good this is the ultimate God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation so because we are in Christ we are made the righteousness of God think of that the second Corinthians five the last couple of verses we are made the righteousness of God think of that clothed robed in the righteousness of Christ not our filthy rags of sin but with the spotless garment cleansed white of snow because of what Jesus did for us on the cross and guys this is what grace is this is what grace is great grace means God's riches at Christ's expense grace grace grace grace

God's riches at Christ's expense why should he love me so why should he love me so why should my savior to Calvary go why should he love me so I've never figured that out because I'll tell you what if I were God I wouldn't love me like that no way shape or form but God has this incredible compassion you know what God has I hope you won't misunderstand my saying it this way because I don't know how else to put it but God has a weakness God has a thing for his creatures it is an enduring love that will not let him let go of us that is amazing

[40 : 05] God loves us so much well that that I told you about that word in John 3 16 God so loved the world it's not a good translation but the word so hutos in the Greek it doesn't mean that God loved us this much so that God started out loving us a little bit and then as time went on his love for us grew and grew and grew until finally it provoked him to do something no no no no that's not the way it is the word hutos so in the Greek means for God loved in this way God's love for us was never a quantitative thing whereby it grew and increased over time that's the way we love our wives our mates we start out loving them when we marry them and we think we couldn't love them any more than we do when we marry them but you know as well as

I do that your love for your mate increases and grows over years so after you've celebrated that 50th wedding anniversary you know you love her a lot more and in a lot different ways than you did the day you stood at the altar and married her but God's love is not a qualitative thing or a quantitative thing it's qualitative it's a quality of God's love God's love was of such a kind of such a nature that it wouldn't allow him to let go of us think of that you mean to tell me that we in our sin are somehow irresistible and attractive to God you gotta be kidding me but that's what the text says God so loved

God loved in this manner that he gave his only begotten son so that whosoever there's that will thing whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life and here he says having forgiven us all are transgressions not most of them all of them and it would be a wonderful thing if people could only come to grips with this and believe what it says but there are those who hear this and who say something like well it just can't be that simple well fellas there's nothing simple about it and what we need to keep in mind is this when we pose the idea that my sin your sin is too great or too many for God to forgive you must realize in taking a position like that you have denied the efficacy of the price

Jesus paid on that cross you are saying in essence what Jesus did on the cross wasn't enough because my sin is such that it takes more than the death of Christ to affect my forgiveness what arrogance what supreme arrogance but you know something even if a man believes that God can and will still forgive him but he's got to come away from that arrogance and he's got to recognize that his sin is great but but but where sin abounded grace did much more abound wow you cannot listen guys this means the whole human race the whole human race with all of their sins combined cannot exhaust the efficacy the benefit that was resident in the price that

Jesus Christ paid on that cross because of who he was he was the God man God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself this is amazing this is the best good news the world has ever heard and we have the pleasure and the responsibility of communicating it wherever we can and yet it is such a glorious concept that man has difficulty getting his brain around it you know there are objections to salvation by grace because one of the objections is hey that's not the way the world works that's not the way the world works there's no free lunch and that's true that is not the way the world works but that's the way God works and as

[45 : 45] God wrote to Isaiah through Isaiah and Isaiah 55 my thoughts says the Lord are not your thoughts neither are my ways your ways for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts so God does something that is completely contrary to the way we humans think and the way we exercise our fallen reason which says that's too easy that's too easy you mean all I have to do is believe on Jesus Christ that he died on the cross for my sin and God will save me yep well that's too easy I can't argue with that it is so easy anybody can do it it is so easy because Jesus did the hard part Jesus was separated from his father for you how can deity how can deity be separated from deity

I have no idea that's beyond my pay grade I have no idea all I know is Jesus cried out my God my God why have you forsaken me and the three hours of darkness Jesus was just on that cross six hours he was beaten half to death loss of blood before he was ever put on the cross he was on the cross for six hours and from noon to three o'clock in the afternoon the sun refused to shine well well might the sun in darkness hide and shut his glories in when Christ the mighty maker died for man the creature sin and there was an earthquake and it was it was the moment for all of humanity when God the father and God the son were somehow separated in a way that we finite mortals cannot understand because father son and spirit in eternal existence from eternity past had never ever under any circumstance enjoyed any kind of a rupture or a cleavage in their person three and one and one and three and I don't understand that but I do know that deity exists on a plane and in a sphere that is so far removed from humanity I've often tried to illustrate it this way and I know it is inadequate but that which separates a human being from an insect like an ant crawling around on the ground a lot of difference isn't there between an intelligent human being and an insignificant little ant what's the difference between them well it's considerable but fellas that distance that separates humanity from deity is even greater infinite infinite with no barriers no boundaries the infinite incomprehensible

God became one of us in the fullness of time God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem those under the law God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself most amazing thing that ever happened I've gone enough questions or comments anybody feel free yeah Roger yeah that's that's my message on forgiveness part two you didn't think I could do all this in just one message but you're right and that becomes the basis by the way Roger thank you for pointing that that becomes the basis for our being not only able but willing to forgive those who have wronged us and fellows we can do things to each other you know

I say that it's always about the offense it's the offense that's the thing the offense what do I mean the offense an offense are things that we say and things that we do to one another that injure and hurt and hurt a lot and cause great pain and they come in all shapes and sizes our injuries the things we inflict on one another cause people pain and despair and everything that goes with it and someone has said that even though there are just two things that create an offense the things we say and the things we do we have found them to be adequate we don't need any more and we say things and do things to one another that hurt deeply some of the offenses that we commit we call them minor offenses and they're kind of easily just left off you know and then there are the medium sized offenses and they hurt more and then there are the big ones the kind that just wring your heart out and the pain the pain is indescribable like the pain that comes from forsaken wedding vows or the pain that comes from being guilty for having taken a life things like that they are really the big ones and yet we are enjoined in Christ to be forgiving why because God forgave us and for us to say

[52 : 54] I would be willing to forgive but I just can't is really not being very truthful but it's possible that someone can sell themselves that bill of goods but you need to know that there's no truth in it and the truth is we can forgive but we often will choose not to because if you truly forgive that means you can't hold it against them anymore that means you don't have the luxury of nursing a grudge you can't do that and that's the way God has forgiven us when we say how you know the

Old Testament talks about what has God done with our sin he has cleansed it he has pardoned us he has forgiven us he has cast our sins behind his back they are buried in the deepest sea they are sought for and not found all these things God has done with our sin and it doesn't mean when he says

I will remember your sin no more it doesn't mean that God is forgetting God doesn't forget when he uses that word I will remember your sin no more it means your sin will never be used against you that's what it means to be forgiven it doesn't mean that it doesn't even mean that God takes away the consequences of the sin because you can be forgiven of a sin and yet that sin resulted in all kinds of consequences on down the line and God doesn't erase the consequences because God is a God of reality he doesn't go around wiping out reality it's there and it's history but it will not be used against you so that the penalty is not forthcoming and there's just one reason why you're not paying the penalty that's because Jesus paid it in your place that's the whole thing anything else anybody has to mention yes

Don't I keep thinking of that phrase we all laugh at when you say don't forgive get even yeah well that's the world's way of looking at it yeah exactly exactly and you know something fellas this is one of the great things one of the great things that separates just one of many things that separates Islam from Christianity Islam does not have a built in premise or reality for forgiveness it is only revenge it is get even and that's that's the the value that persists in the mid east even to this day and this is on the basis of which they operate and I will close with this I already closed once didn't I well let me close again but anyway as long as the food's not here but when the food comes then it's all over in a book called Captive in Iran that many of you have read it's a story about two women who were born and reared as

Muslims and they came to faith in Jesus Christ and they took it upon themselves they were so enamored with God's forgiveness through Christ they took it upon themselves living there in Tehran in the capital of Iran and they decided that they were going to take the good news to the Iranian people and what they did was they bought a lot of Christian literature translated into the language that the people could read and they went around communities neighborhoods distributing that the gospel tracts written in the language that people could understand and they had done this for months and they thought they were getting away with it and then one day there came a knock at the door and it was the official police from the imam and they were taken into custody arrested and imprisoned two women this is a true story

I'm telling you these women were in their late twenties they were both single and they had come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and they couldn't keep that from their Iranian counterparts from their friends and they started distributing this literature and they were arrested and put into prison and the conditions there were absolutely unbelievable I can't even think of the name of the prison now but it's the main prison that they still use today they're in Iran and there in that prison those women had a tremendous ministry among other prisoners that they would never have had if they had been on the outside so God does work all things together for good and the women were actually eventually released and it makes a wonderful story if you ever see the book don't hesitate to get it and read it it's called Captive in Iran okay I can't compete with the food so I'm forced to quit okay