

Connections between God, Us, and Others:

10. Lord's Prayer – example 2: After teaching the Lord's Prayer, Jesus said: "...if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions" (Matt. 6:14-15).
11. Small Catechism: When we **do** forgive: "It shows that we truly believe that God has forgiven us" (Small Catechism Explanation, 1991, question 277).
12. Large Catechism: When we **do not** forgive: "If you do not forgive, do not think that God has forgiven you" (Large Catechism, third part, 94-95).

Comparing Forgiveness:

13. God's forgiveness to us and our forgiveness to others must be the same in these ways: "...forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).
 - a. **Even before** someone sins against us, we plan to forgive him/her.
 - b. **When** someone sins against us, we freely, fully, and immediately offer the gift of forgiveness – even if the person is not sorry.
14. God's forgiveness to us and our forgiveness to others is also different: God's forgiveness to us is **HIS forgiveness**, but our forgiveness to others is **OUR forgiveness**. We forgive because God has forgiven us, but the other person still needs God's forgiveness!

Important Things to Remember:

15. If I think or know the other person is not sorry, I should still offer forgiveness! Why? When we were not sorry for our sins, God was still offering His forgiveness to us, so we must do the same!
16. If I think or know the other person does not deserve my forgiveness, I should still offer forgiveness! Why? We can never deserve God's forgiveness, but He still offers it to us. So, for others, even when they do not deserve our forgiveness, we proceed like God and offer it anyway!

Conclusion

Look at the image on the front: As a confined wild bird rejoices to be free, so we should rejoice in God's forgiveness – free from sin and eternal condemnation! Now, having been set free by God, let us set others free and point them to God by offering our forgiveness – freely, fully, and immediately! Finally, let us pray for all who sin against us! Now, better understanding forgiveness and enjoying God's gift of forgiveness, let us gladly forgive all who sin against us!

Bible verses: New American Standard Bible – 1995

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Forgiveness

- ➔ Understand It
- ➔ Enjoy It
- ➔ Extend It



Introduction

Dear Friend! Life involves many things, but two super-important aspects of life are:

- ◆ Relationship with God
- ◆ Relationship with Others

In both cases, forgiveness is essential! Why? It's **the glue!** This wood joint is amazing, but it will not hold together without **the glue.**

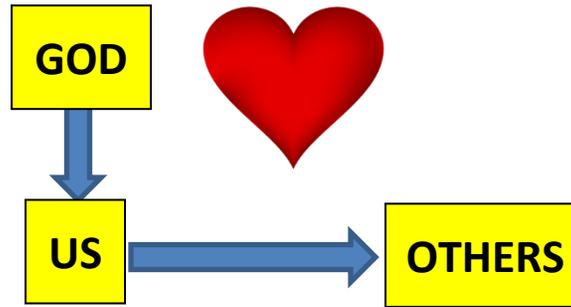


This brochure will help you understand, enjoy, and extend forgiveness, which will keep your relationships **glued together!**

Forgiveness – Who Is Involved?

- ♦ **God** – He has many qualities; for example, He is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, holy, gracious, and merciful.
- ♦ **Us** – From the viewpoint of this brochure, **we** are *repentant sinners*. What does that mean? The Holy Spirit has worked these things within us:
 - **Sin** – *We know we have sinned against God: “Against You, You only, I have sinned...”* (Ps. 51:4).
 - **Hell** – *We know we deserve it: “...whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell”* (Matt. 5:22).
 - **Helpless** – *We know we cannot escape the sentence of hell: “...while we were still helpless... Christ died for the ungodly”* (Rom. 5:6).
 - **Sorrow** – *Aware of our great trouble with God, we are sorry for our sins: Peter said: “...God has made [this Jesus whom you crucified] both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said..., “Brethren, what shall we do?”* (Acts 2:36-37).
 - **Faith** – *Rejoicing that we have God-given faith in Jesus for eternal life: “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life”* (1 John 5:13).
- ♦ **Others** – From the viewpoint of this brochure, **others** are *unbelievers AND are not sorry for the wrongs they have done*.

The Forgiveness Diagram



GOD'S FORGIVENESS TO US

God's Timing to Forgive Us:

1. God planned to forgive us through the Christ before we sinned: “[Christ] was foreknown **before the foundation of the world**” (1 Pet. 1:20).
2. God accomplished His forgiveness through Jesus on Good Friday: “...I will remove the iniquity of that land in **one day**” (Zech. 3:9).

God's Justification to Forgive Us:

3. Jesus fulfilled the law: “I did not come to abolish but **to fulfill**” (Matt. 5:17).
4. Jesus bore all sins: “...the LORD [the Father] has caused the **iniquity** [sin, wickedness] of us all to fall on Him [the Son]” (Isa. 53:6).
5. Since God knows we cannot earn His forgiveness, He offers it to us as a gift: “...**the free gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:23). // Forgiveness and eternal life go together; whenever we have one, *we also have the other!*”

The Thoroughness of God's Forgiveness:

6. God fully forgives: “If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and **to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**” (1 Jn. 1:9).

GOD'S FORGIVENESS TO OTHERS

Remember: For this brochure, *others* are *unbelievers AND are not sorry for what they have done against God nor against us*.

People being Offered Forgiveness:

7. Everyone: “For God so loved **the world**, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:16). // Even when people do not believe AND are not sorry, *God is still offering them His gift of forgiveness*.

People Who Have God's Forgiveness:

8. Only those who are trusting in Jesus for eternal life: “**He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life**” (1 Jn. 5:12). // God's offer is there, but those who keep living in unrepentance also keep rejecting God's gift of forgiveness.

OUR FORGIVENESS TO OTHERS

Connections between God, Us, and Others:

9. Lord's Prayer – example 1: “...forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matt. 6:12). // When we sin, *we owe a debt to God*. In the Lord's Prayer, we ask God to forgive the debts we owe to Him **IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY WE FORGIVE THE DEBTS THAT OTHERS OWE TO US**.