
Forgiveness

Study 2 – The Need – Steve Hyndman

The following is a summary of the transcript of the Study prepared using the AI facility
ChatGPT – Open AI.

The full study can be viewed at the following URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hyZy1bclyI>

As we delve into today's session, I hope you can sense the profound love and power inherent in our subject. Yesterday, we explored the mechanics of forgiveness, focusing on God's righteous requirements. We identified three essential steps in this divine process: **confession of sin, repentance (a heartfelt change), and conversion (a complete 180-degree turn from past behaviors)**. This transformative journey mandates us to abandon our old ways and embrace a new, God-ordained lifestyle.

This divine process isn't merely spiritual; it has deep psychological underpinnings, often beyond our full understanding. However, God's wisdom guides us through this journey to teach us to genuinely turn from sin rather than cyclically seeking forgiveness. His ultimate desire is for us to achieve true repentance and transformation.

We discussed the importance of understanding what disconnects us from God and clarified that it's not our human nature or mortality that God has an issue with, **but the sins our nature produces.** Isaiah 59:1-2 emphasizes this: our iniquities separate us from God. **While our nature is flawed and problematic, it's the sin that arises from it that grieves God.**

Our innate biases and tendencies, described as the carnal mind, are significant issues. David acknowledged this inherent flaw, describing it as a "loathsome disease." Yet, the ultimate change, as Paul notes, will come in an instant when our nature is transformed. God's primary concern is when sin reigns over us, turning us into habitual lawbreakers. **We all sin, but the danger lies in ceasing to strive against our sinful nature and allowing it to dominate us.**

True repentance and transformation involve a combination of prayer and immersion in God's word. Our relationship with God is crucial in overcoming sin. Our nature produces things that are abhorrent to God, and recognizing this through the lens of the Bible helps us understand our need for forgiveness and transformation.

Let's reflect on some manifestations of our sinful nature: murder, envy, adultery (both literal and mental), fornication, anger, jealousy, and pride. John equates hating a brother to murder, and Jesus emphasized this when he challenged those without sin to cast the first stone at an adulterous woman, leading to everyone's departure. **These sins highlight our deep need for forgiveness and a transformation that only comes through a genuine relationship with God.**

Jesus, being sinless, never succumbed to the bondage of sin. This is illustrated when his disciples questioned him about a man born blind, assuming it was due to sin. Jesus clarified that it wasn't due to the man's or his parents' sin but to manifest God's works. This emphasizes that our afflictions are opportunities for God's work to be revealed in us.

Brother John Thomas described human nature as inherently sinful, with its principal channels of waywardness being the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. **While this nature is our misfortune, it becomes our responsibility to subdue it through God's word.** Paul's struggle with his sinful nature, as he describes in Romans 7, reflects our collective struggle and the need for divine help in overcoming it.

Paul further contrasts the carnal mind with the spiritual mind in Romans 8, highlighting that to be carnally minded is death, while to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Our goal is to suppress our carnal nature through the spirit of Christ, which is unrelated to human philosophies like humanism or post-modernism.

Now, understanding that sin separates us from God, let's consider the question of forgiveness. **Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother, suggesting seven times.** Jesus responded with "seventy times seven," indicating that forgiveness should be abundant and not limited. This number, 490, likely references Daniel's 70-week prophecy, emphasizing God's expansive grace and mercy.

In essence, **Jesus was teaching that forgiveness should not be counted or limited.** God's ways are far above ours, and his mercy is boundless. The 490 years in Daniel's prophecy symbolically remind us of the ongoing need for repentance and forgiveness.

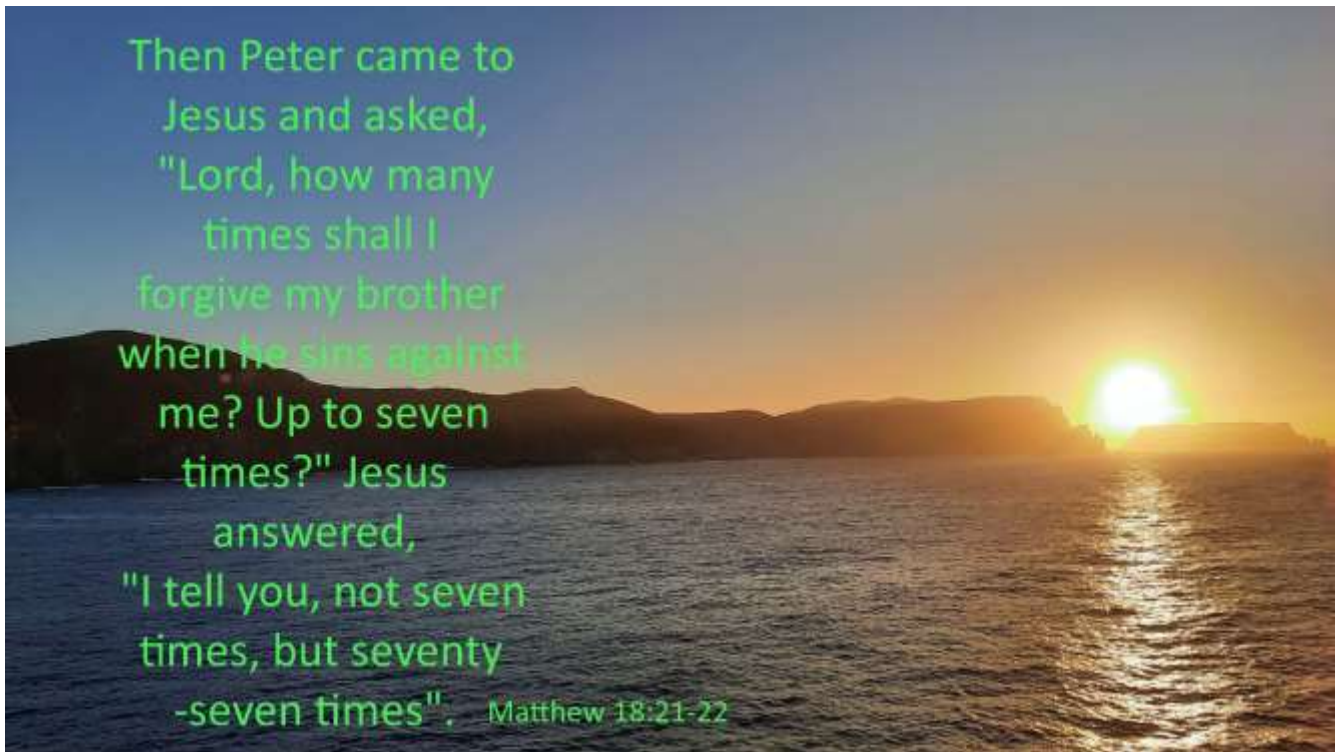
Thus, as we navigate our lives, constantly falling short of God's glory, we are reminded of our perpetual need for his forgiveness and the transformative power of living in alignment with his spirit. **Let us strive to embody this spirit, continuously seeking to suppress our sinful nature and cultivate a genuine relationship with God.**

The concept of forgiveness connects biblical themes from both the Old and New Testaments.

As mentioned earlier, the prophecy in Daniel 9, speaks of 490 years determined upon the people and the holy city to accomplish significant spiritual goals: finishing transgression, making an end of sins, making reconciliation for iniquity, bringing in everlasting righteousness, sealing up vision and prophecy, and anointing the most holy. This period culminates around the time of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, traditionally dated to the month of Nisan in AD 33. **Jesus' crucifixion is seen as fulfilling these prophetic aims, providing reconciliation and ending the transgression.**

The narrative then shifts to Matthew 18, where Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who sins against him, suggesting seven times. **Jesus responds with a parable,** emphasizing unlimited forgiveness. The parable is rich with references to Daniel 9 and highlights how God's forgiveness extends beyond human limitations.

The parable tells of a servant who owes an enormous debt, equivalent to 200 years' wages, which he cannot possibly repay. This debt symbolizes the gravity of human sin. The servant's request for more time to repay the debt, which is impossible, underscores the point that human efforts cannot atone for sin. Instead, **forgiveness is a divine gift, not something that can be earned or compensated for.**



The master, moved with compassion, forgives the entire debt, illustrating God's boundless mercy. This act of forgiveness goes beyond what the servant asked for, highlighting the generous and unconditional nature of divine forgiveness. The master's actions reflect God's character, as described in Psalm 103, where God is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

The parable continues with a warning: the forgiven servant fails to show the same mercy to a fellow servant who owes him a much smaller debt. This highlights the importance of extending the forgiveness we receive from God to others. The true measure of our appreciation for God's forgiveness is reflected in how we forgive those who wrong us.

The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15 further illustrates this theme. The prodigal son, having squandered his inheritance, returns to his father in repentance. The father, who has been watching and waiting for his son's return, runs to him, embraces him, and restores him to his place in the family. This parable emphasizes the joy and readiness of God to forgive those who repent.

In conclusion, the message emphasizes that forgiveness is central to the Christian faith. It is a complete, unearned gift from God, meant to transform our hearts and minds. By recognizing the magnitude of our sin and the depth of God's mercy, we are called to extend the same forgiveness to others, reflecting God's love in our relationships. This journey of forgiveness is both a path to healing and a deeper understanding of divine grace.

Steve Hyndman
