

Understanding and Receiving God's Forgiveness Colossians 1

Introduction:

1. What is our core mission as a church? Why is there a church here at 1851 S. Clyde Morris Blvd?
2. Who would we look to in this dispensation of grace to find out our commission? Who in this Bible is going to lay out for us the core of what we are supposed to be doing?
3. Naturally, we would go to the apostle of the Gentiles, the apostle of the body of Christ, the apostle Paul.
4. What was Paul's commission? We discover it in Acts 26:17-18. Jesus sent Paul out so that the people of the nations may know that God is offering them forgiveness of all their sins. The reason why God sent forth Paul and sends us forth today is because:
 - Many people don't understand how desperately they need God's forgiveness.
 - Many people don't understand how they can receive God's forgiveness.
5. They may know that God forgives, but they don't know how to apply it personally in their lives. Every person in this world should have the opportunity to understand and receive God's forgiveness.
6. It is literally the difference between heaven and hell, life and death.

Why is God's forgiveness necessary in my life?

1. Have you ever had somebody do something to really offend you, but they didn't get it. They just didn't see it. They desperately needed your forgiveness, but they didn't really see that they had done anything wrong.
2. Reconciliation is not likely to occur under these circumstances. There has to be an acknowledgment and admittance that there has been an offence. The light has to turn on.
3. Look what the Bible says about these Christian people at Colosse. vs. 20-21
 - These people were alienated from God and enemies of God by wicked works.
 - Because they recognized their alienated position and had turned to Christ, they had been forgiven and reconciled to God. vs. 14
 - According to Webster's, "forgiveness" is "to pardon an offender, by which he is treated as not guilty."
4. But there are a lot of people who don't get it. They consider themselves "good people." They don't really need God's forgiveness. In their eyes they have never done anything "wicked."
 - We see our sin from a human perspective, comparing our sin to others'.
 - We don't see our sin from a holy God's perspective. For example, the first of the Ten Commandments is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. When we love things more than God, it is not trivial, it's treason.

- If you came up short on that one, try the other nine (lying, stealing, disobeying parents, sexual sin, using God's name in vain, etc.)!
5. Do you know what God's commentary is on the human race? Romans 3:10, 23
 - That is the shoe, and if we were all honest, we would have to say that it fits.
 - My sin has alienated me from a holy God. There is a sin barrier. A person may not realize it, but it doesn't change the fact that it is there.
 - I will not have peace with God until that sin barrier is removed.
 - Forgiveness smashes the sin barrier and brings me into a relationship with God.
 6. The Bible teaches that God desires to reconcile us to Himself, but on what basis can He do this? This brings us to the next question.

Will God really forgive me?

1. You may be thinking, "Why would God forgive me for all the sinful, wicked things I've done?" There is good news!
2. God has already made provision for the forgiveness of every one of your sins.
 - Look at verse 14. This is referring to Christ's work on the cross.
 - I am an enemy of God, but the way of peace has been made through Christ's death on the cross. vs. 20-22
3. When Christ died on the cross, He was absorbing the full wrath of God against sin. Sin must always be punished and dealt with. Romans 5:8-10; 1 John 4:10
4. He took the death penalty against sin (that you and I deserve), so that God could justly forgive you and me. He died for us, in our place!
5. You see, God's forgiveness costs us nothing, but it cost Jesus His life!
 - What wonderful news! God forgives and will not hold our sins against us!
 - Christ's blood made it right and acceptable for God to do this. vs. 14
 - On what basis does God forgive us? Christ! (Not your church membership, baptism, etc.)

How do I receive God's forgiveness?

1. The Bible says that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all. When He shed His blood, He made it possible for everyone in the world to be reconciled to God.
2. But we know that every person will not be reconciled. Many will end up in a place Jesus called hell. Matthew 7:13
3. Why is this? The debt for our sin has been paid, but many will fail to ever apply this payment to their sin-sick souls.
4. God has made full provision for your forgiveness through Christ. The only question is, "Will you receive Christ and the work He has done for you, or will you reject Him?"
 - The people at Colosse had received Christ and placed their faith in Him. This is why they **were** enemies of God, but **now** were reconciled. 1:4, 2:6
 - To be "in Christ" means to be in relationship with Him by faith. 1:27-18

5. Faith in Christ unites us to Christ so that **His** death becomes our death and **His** righteousness becomes our righteousness.
 - Christ becomes our punishment (which we don't have to bear) and our perfection (which we cannot perform).
6. How do you receive God's forgiveness? Simply put your total faith in what Christ has done for you. Romans 5:1; Galatians 3:26
7. This brings immediate forgiveness of all your sins and an eternal relationship with God. You have the promise of God on that!

In Conclusion:

1. Do you know that you are forgiven today? What is the difference between the forgiveness of God and the wrath of God? The difference is Jesus.
2. If you have already received this forgiveness, you have a responsibility to get this life-saving message out to others. We call this "missions."
3. It literally is the difference between life and death for so many.

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