
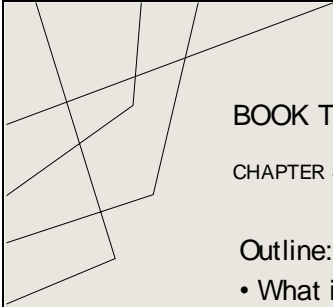


A STUDY OF MERE CHRISTIANITY

Lesson 9
Chapter 3.7 | Chapter 3.8



PEACE THRU CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL



BOOK THREE: CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOUR

CHAPTER SEVEN: FORGIVENESS

Outline:

- What is Forgiveness?

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Slide 4

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

Many people think of forgiveness as letting go or moving on. But there's more to it than that, says Bob Enright, PhD, a psychologist at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, who pioneered the study of forgiveness three decades ago. True forgiveness goes a step further, he says, offering something positive—empathy, compassion, understanding—toward the person who hurt you. That element makes forgiveness both a virtue and a powerful construct in positive psychology.

Outside scientific circles, though, many people are a bit confused about the concept.

One common but mistaken belief is that forgiveness means letting the person who hurt you off the hook. Yet forgiveness is not the same as justice, nor does it require reconciliation, Worthington explains. A former victim of abuse shouldn't reconcile with an abuser who remains potentially dangerous, for example. But the victim can still come to a place of empathy and understanding. "Whether I forgive or don't forgive isn't going to affect whether justice is done," Worthington says. "Forgiveness happens inside my skin."

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

Forgiveness means different things to different people. But in general, it involves an intentional decision to let go of resentment and anger.

The act that hurt or offended you might always be with you. But working on forgiveness can lessen that act's grip on you. It can help free you from the control of the person who harmed you. Sometimes, forgiveness might even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or excusing the harm done to you. It also doesn't necessarily mean making up with the person who caused the harm. Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that allows you to focus on yourself and helps you go on with life.

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

Forgiveness is the release of resentment or anger. Forgiveness doesn't mean reconciliation. One doesn't have to return to the same relationship or accept the same harmful behaviors from an offender.

Forgiveness is vitally important for the mental health of those who have been victimized. It propels people forward rather than keeping them emotionally engaged in an injustice or trauma. Forgiveness has been shown to elevate mood, enhance optimism, and guard against anger, stress, anxiety, and depression.

However, there are scenarios in which forgiveness is not the best course for a particular person. Sometimes a victim of sexual abuse becomes more empowered when they give themselves permission not to forgive.

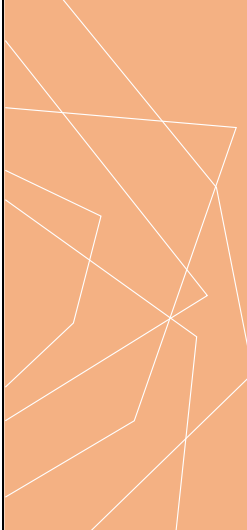
WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

1. “So apparently ‘Love your neighbour’ does not mean ‘feel fond of him’ or ‘find him attractive.’ ... “In my most clear-sighted moments not only do I not think myself a nice man, but I know that I am a very nasty one.”
2. “Does loving your enemy mean not punishing him? No, for loving myself does not mean that I ought not to subject myself to punishment – even to death.”

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Slide 8



Leviticus 19:17-18 You shall not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. You must openly rebuke your fellow citizen so that you do not become responsible for his sin. 18 You must not take revenge. You must not bear a grudge against the members of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

James 2:8-9 However, if you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show favoritism, you are committing a sin, since you are convicted by this law as transgressors.

Ephesians 5:28-29 In the same way, husbands have an obligation to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 To be sure, no one has ever hated his own body, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.

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WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

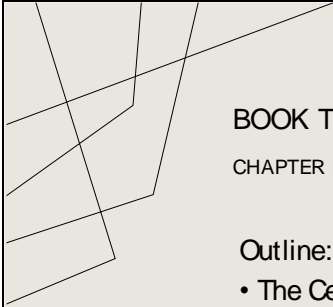
Lewis' connection helps us see...

1. Forgiveness is a product of love.
2. Forgiveness is about more than just the circumstances – good or bad.
3. Forgiveness is always possible.

Perhaps it makes it easier if we remember that that is how He loves us. Not for any nice, attractive qualities we think we have, but just because we are the things called selves. For really there is nothing else in us to love: creatures like us who actually find hatred such a pleasure that to give it up is like giving up beer or tobacco . . .

WHAT IS BIBLICAL FORGIVENESS?

- **Ephesians 4:32** Instead, be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ has forgiven us.
- **Mark 11:25** Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.
- **Luke 17:3-4** Watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. 4 Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."
- **Psalms 32:1-2** How blessed is the person whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 How blessed is the person whose guilt the LORD does not charge against him, in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- **Acts 13:38** "So, gentlemen, brothers, let it be known to you that through this Jesus forgiveness of sins is being proclaimed to you, also forgiveness from everything from which you could not be justified through the law of Moses.



BOOK THREE: CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOUR
CHAPTER EIGHT: THE GREAT SIN

Outline:

- The Center of All Sin
- Dealing with Pride

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THE CENTER OF ALL SIN

- **Proverbs 8:13** To fear the LORD is to hate evil. I hate arrogant pride, evil conduct, and perverse speech.
- **Proverbs 11:2** When pride comes, disgrace follows, but with humility comes wisdom.
- **Proverbs 16:18** Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit precedes a fall.
- **Isaiah 23:9** The LORD of hosts has purposed it, to defile the pompous pride of all glory, to dishonor all the honored of the earth.
- **2 Chronicles 32:26** Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart-- he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem-- so the LORD's wrath didn't come on them during Hezekiah's lifetime.
- **Daniel 4:37** Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and glorify the King of heaven, because all His works are true and His ways are just. He is able to humble those who walk in pride.
- **1 John 2:15-17** Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. 16 For everything that belongs to the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's lifestyle-- is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does God's will remains forever.

THE CENTER OF ALL SIN

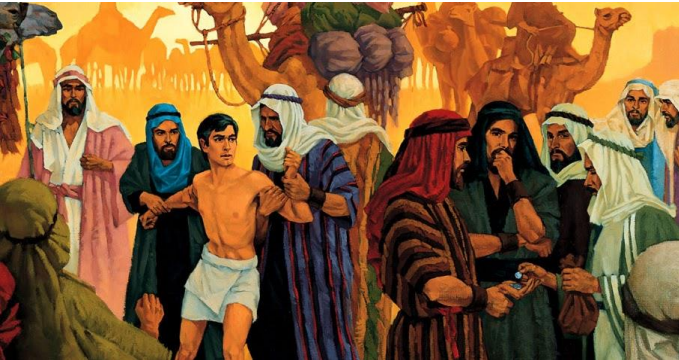
Now what you want to get clear is that Pride is *essentially* competitive—is competitive by its very nature—while the other vices are competitive only, so to speak, by accident. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man.

The Christians are right: it is Pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began. Other vices may sometimes bring people together: you may find good fellowship and jokes and friendliness among drunken people or unchaste people. But pride always means enmity—it *is* enmity. And not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God.



THE CENTER OF ALL SIN

"The chief cause of misery in every nation and family...!"



THE CENTER OF ALL SIN

"The chief cause of misery in every nation and family...!"



DEALING WITH PRIDE

The Problem (James 1:14-16)

14 But each person is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin. And sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death. 16 Do not be deceived, my dear brothers.

The Difference (James 1:17-18)

17 Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the lights, who does not change or shift like a shadow. 18 Just as he planned, he gave us birth by the word of truth so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of his creations.

The Solution (James 1:19-21)

19 Remember this, my dear brothers: Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. 20 Certainly, a man's anger does not bring about what is right before God. 21 So after getting rid of all moral filthiness and overflowing wickedness, receive with humility the word planted in you. It is able to save your souls.

DEALING WITH PRIDE

Four Reminders from Lewis:

1. Pleasure in Praise is NOT necessarily Pride.
2. Admiration of someone or something is NOT necessarily Pride.
3. God's glory is NOT Pride.
4. Be honest about Pride and Humility. You are more prideful than you think, and less humble than you think.

MEMORABLE THOUGHTS

"In other words, something inside us, the feeling of resentment, the feeling that wants to get one's own back, must be simply killed." (p. 120)

"For, of course, power is what Pride really enjoys." (p. 123)

"For Pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense." (p. 125)

"...the devil loves 'curing' a small fault by giving you a great one." (p. 127)

CLASS NINE CHAPTER SUMMARIES

3.7

Forgiveness is a blessing of love. First, God's love to us in Christ. Second, God's love through us to one another.

3.8

Pride is at the core of all sin. It manifests as self-idolatry and is Satan's goal through all temptations.
