

THE DOCTRINE OF FORGIVENESS (6)

Way #4 - Every person is a sinner according to Divine imputation.

Romans 5:12-21. We are a sinner by imputation of God. Our condition apart from Christ is described in Ephesians 2:1-3. We are dead in a relationship with God and we need to be made alive and we need a forgiveness that only God can give.

(Reason #2) - All need the forgiveness of God because all are heading to God's wrath.

Romans 1:18; John 3:36. All unbelievers are heading to the wrath of God and if they do not receive the forgiveness of God, they will experience the fullness of God's wrath.

(Reason #3) - All need the forgiveness of God because all have broken God's law.

Romans 3:19-20; 4:15; Galatians 2:16; 3:19, 22-25. God's law declares every human being as sinful and guilty before God. No human has measured up to the law and that law will shut every person's mouth and show that all deserve God's wrath. The law is God's legal document that condemns everyone. What this means is we need the forgiveness of God because we have broken the law.

(Reason #4) - All need the forgiveness of God because all are heading to eternal condemnation without it.

There is a very real and literal place where people go who have not received God's forgiveness. That place is hell. Matt. 5:22, 30; Matt. 18:8; Luke 16:23-25; Rev. 20:10-15. Unless one receives the forgiveness of God, this is where one ends up.

There are certain attributes of God that must be taken into consideration, when we discuss the matter of forgiveness. These attributes are important because they must be considered when thinking in terms of forgiveness. What these attributes communicate to us is that God cannot just overlook sin and grant unconditional forgiveness. God's love, grace and mercy can offer a forgiveness package but other attributes demand that a forgiveness package must be based on meeting His conditions for the forgiveness:

Attribute #1 - The Attribute of God's Holiness.

God is perfectly Holy and perfectly Righteous in all that He is and all that He does. He is totally and perfectly separated from all evil and sin in everything He does and everything He is. His holiness is intrinsic to Himself. This holiness attribute not only means God will always do that which is good, but also it means He always hates that which is evil. Dr. Chafer said the holiness of God comprises a "great volume of Biblical testimony on this theme" (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 202).

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- 1) Exodus 3:5 - Even the best of God's servants cannot approach God's holiness.
- 2) Exodus 15:11 - No one is equal to God's Majestic Holiness.
- 3) Ex. 19:12, 13, 21-25 - God, in His holiness, is totally set apart from sinful man.
- 4) Ex. 26:33 - God's holiness is so unique it is to be recognized by a special place in tabernacle.
- 5) Lev. 11:44-45 - God demands His people be consecrated as holy.
- 6) Lev. 19:2 - God demands His people be holy.
- 7) **Josh. 24:19 - God's holiness cannot just overlook sin and forgive it.**
- 8) I Sam. 2:2 - No one is holy like God.
- 9) I Sam. 6:20 - No one is able to match God's holiness.
- 10) I Kings 6:16 - God's place of worship is to promote God's holiness.
- 11) **Job 34:10 - God is holy and cannot ever do any wickedness.**
- 12) **Job 42:5-6 - God's holiness should prompt men to repent.**
- 13) Psalm 11:4-6 - God is righteous and holy and He loves righteousness.
- 14) Psalm 22:3 - God is always holy even when His people are not hearing from Him.
- 15) Psalm 47:8 - God's reign is a holy reign.
- 16) Psalm 99:9 - God is holy and is exalted by holy worship.
- 17) Psalm 111:9 - God's holiness is at an awesome level.
- 18) Is. 6:3 - High-ranking holy angels recognize the unique level of God's holiness.
- 19) Is. 40:23-25 - God's sovereign work is carried out in total holiness.
- 20) Is. 57:15 - God is highly exalted in holiness.
- 21) Ez. 39:7 - God desires to make His holiness seen in His people.
- 22) Hos. 11:9 - God's holiness will not let Him abandon His people.
- 23) **Hab. 1:12-13 - God's holiness cannot ever approve evil or overlook wickedness to bless it.**
- 24) Luke 5:8 - Peter recognized Christ's holiness and his own sinfulness.
- 25) John 17:11 - Jesus Christ, God's Holy Son, recognizes the Holiness of God the Father.
- 26) Acts 3:14 - Jesus Christ is identified as being Holy and Righteous.
- 27) Heb. 12:10 - God disciplines His people to produce holiness.
- 28) I Pet. 1:16 - God's people are to pursue a reflection of God's holiness.
- 29) **I John 1:5-7 - To have fellowship with God, we must admit sin and turn away from it.**
- 30) Rev. 4:8 - Highest ranked angelic beings recognize God's holiness.
- 31) Rev. 6:10 - All at God's throne recognize God's holiness.
- 32) Rev. 15:4 - God is to be revered and feared for His holiness.

The holiness of God is an attribute of God that clearly establishes that His forgiveness cannot be unconditional. He cannot just unconditionally overlook sin; His holiness will not permit it.

Attribute #2 - The Attribute of God's Justice.

The justice of God is a legal forensic attribute of God. This attribute means that God will always declare what is perfectly right; He will always do what is perfectly right; He will always judge what is perfectly right.

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- 1) Lev. 19:36 - God demands justice in all business matters for He is a just God.
- 2) Deut. 16:18-20 - All judicial decisions are to be made with Justice and only justice.
- 3) Ps. 19:9 - All of God's judgments are true and righteous.
- 4) Ps. 145:19 - God is righteous in all His ways.
- 5) Is. 45:21 - God is the only righteous God and Savior.
- 6) John 5:30 - God's judgments and Christ's judgments are always just judgments.
- 7) Rom. 3:26 - God is a just God and is able to judicially declare one righteous if that sinner has the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is found by faith in Christ (I Pet. 3:18).

God's perfect justice demands He cannot grant unconditional forgiveness. He cannot just overlook sin because that would mean He did something that was not just.

Attribute #3 - The Attribute of God's Hate.

God has a perfect hatred against evil and therefore He cannot just overlook it.

- 1) Leviticus 18 - This chapter is filled with a list of things God hates.
- 2) Psalm 5:5 - God hates all who do iniquity.
- 3) Psalm 11:5 - God hates one who loves violence.
- 4) Prov. 6:16-19 - God hates specific sins and the people who do them.
- 5) Romans 12:9 - God's people are to hate that which is evil. We are to hate it, not avenge it.

This attribute means God cannot just unconditionally forgive that which He hates.

Attribute #4 - The Attribute of God's truthfulness or veracity.

God cannot lie and He must always declare the truth and any who have a right relationship with Him must deal in truth (Num. 23:19; Deut. 32:4; II Sam. 7:28; Ps. 33:4; Ps. 146:6; Rom. 3:4; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).

God cannot just love people and forgive them unconditionally. It is specifically stated that love is in the context of truth (II John 1-3). **These attributes establish the fact that God cannot offer unconditional forgiveness or every one of these attributes would be negated.**

Clearly those who are lost need the forgiveness of God. There is much on the line.

Type #2 - God offers individual cleansing and restorative forgiveness to His saved family members who sin.

We could call this restorative to fellowship forgiveness. The forgiveness that one receives when one believes on Jesus Christ is so complete that the believer cannot ever come under condemnation (John 3:18; 5:24; Col. 2:13). But there are times when even a child of God sins and needs the cleansing in order to have fellowship with God as his heavenly parent. That cleansing comes through confession to God (I John 1:9).