

## The Joy of Forgiveness – Pt. 2 The Process of Forgiveness

In this message we are continuing to explore - **The joy that comes into our lives as a result of receiving God's forgiveness.**

As we saw in the previous message, one of - **The major contributing factors to many of life's problems and anxieties is guilt and not dealing with it properly.**

The focus of this message will be on - **How to properly deal with the sin in our lives and how to appropriate God's forgiveness.**

***Forgiveness brings true Joy!***

***Only when we ask God to forgive our sins will he give us real happiness and relief from guilt.***

**Psalms 32:1-2 - The Joy of Forgiveness** - Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

***God wants to forgive sinners.***

- **Walking in joy** is one of the most essential ingredients that each one of us desires in life.
- **The single most important ingredient** in maintaining your spiritual joy is receiving God's forgiveness for your sins.
- **The kind of joy** as described in Psalm 16:11 can only be ours when we received God's forgiveness into our lives.

**The joys and benefits** of a life lived in companionship with God.  
**We enjoy these benefits** now and eternally.

**Psalm 16:11** - You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

***If we walk in a continued state of forgiveness*** we will maintain this level of joy in our lives. ***Who wouldn't want that?***

**One of the reasons many Christians fail to** walk in the level of joy God desires

- Is simply that **they have un-confessed and un-repented sin** in their lives that **God has not** been able to forgive them for.

***The sin God cannot forgive is the sin that is un-confessed and repented of.***

**Acts 3:19** - Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

**When we repent**, God promises not only to cleanse us of our sins but also to bring spiritual refreshment.

- **Repentance** may at first seem painful because **it is hard to give up certain sins**.
- But **God will provide something better**.
- Many people **want the benefits of Jesus offers** without admitting their own disobedience and turning from sin.

**The Key to receiving forgiveness is confessing your sin and turning from it!**

***Again, the focus of this message*** will be **looking at the process in which God's forgiveness takes place in our lives**.

**The Process of Forgiveness - Three Major Elements of Forgiveness**

There are three major elements in **appropriating God's forgiveness**.

**They are conviction, confession and repentance**

**1. The First Element: Conviction of Our Sins - The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin.**

**John 16:7-8** "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup>"And when He has come, **He will convict the world of sin**, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

**CEV** - But I tell you I am going to do what is best for you. This is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. **8 The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin** and God's justice and the judgment.

Unless Jesus did what he came to do, we would have NO gospel.

- *If he did not die*, he could not remove our sins; he could not rise again and defeat death.
- If he did not go back to the father, *the Holy Spirit would not come*.
- His leaving meant he could be present to the world through the Holy Spirit.

*Theme: David's plea for mercy, forgiveness, and cleansing.*

*God wants our hearts to be right with him.*

Psalms 51:5-6 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. <sup>6</sup>Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

We must be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to expose the truth of ourselves and our sin. There are negative areas in each one of our lives that we do not like owning up to.

*We fail to walk in forgiveness and lack of joy*, because we have not owned up to our weaknesses and faults otherwise known as sin.

Common examples of sins Christians get caught up in:

Trouble in relationships – Are you owning your fault in them or are you blame shifting?

- Failure as a husband and father or wife and mother.
- Lying – Envy – Anger – Bitterness – Lust – Selfish ambition – Hatred – Selfishness – Swearing and cursing.
- These are just a few. I'm sure you can think of a few more.

If we *never* allow the Holy Spirit to convict us of the areas in our lives that are still carnal, we will not be changing as God desires for us.

- We need the courage to own the truth no matter how frightening it may be.
- The courage to own it is what sets us free.
- If we fail to own it, we live our lives in denial and the truth is not in us.

**1 John 1:10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

The Holy Spirit works in many ways in our lives to bring forth His conviction.

We need to be open to the different ways in which He works.

## Ways in which the Holy Spirit Convicts us of sin

### A. He works through self-examination

Theme: *God is all-seeing, all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere present. God knows us, God is with us, and his greatest gift is to allow us to know him.*

**Psalms 139:23-24** Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; <sup>24</sup>And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

*David asked God to search for sin and point it out, even to the level of testing his thoughts and anxieties.*

- This is exploratory surgery for sin.
- How are we to recognize sin unless God points it out?
- When God shows it to us, repent and be forgiven...

### B. He speaks and works through others

**Proverbs 27:17** - As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

- **Mental sharpness** comes from being around people who will sharpen us.
- Two friends ***who challenge each other*** can help each other become sharper.

### Light and Darkness, Sin and Forgiveness:

**1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, ***we have fellowship with one another***, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Real cleansing from sin came with Jesus, ***“the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”***

- **Sin**, by its very nature, **brings death.**
- **Jesus did not die** *for his own sins*; he had none.
- *Just as* Christ rose from the grave, we rise to a new life of fellowship with him.

### C. He speaks and convicts through the preaching of the Word

**2 Timothy 3:16** - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

**CEV - *Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word.*** All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and **showing them how to live.**

The whole Bible, **God's inspired Word,** should be **our standard for testing everything else that claims to be true.**

***Because Scripture is all God breathed and trustworthy, we should read it and apply it to our lives.***

***The Bible safeguards us against false teaching and guides us in how we should live***

#### **D. He speaks and convicts through His still small voice**

**Isaiah 30:21** - Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

- When the people of Jerusalem **left God's path,** he would **correct them.**
- He will do **the same for us.**
- But when we hear **his voice of correction,** we must be **willing to follow it!**

Three Major Elements of Forgiveness: 1<sup>st</sup> Element: **Conviction** of Our Sins

2. The Second Element: **Confession** of our Sins

***Once God has convicted us of our sin, we then must be faithful to confess the sin before Him so that He can forgive us.***

**1 John 1:9** If ***we confess*** our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- ***Confession frees us to enjoy fellowship with Christ.***
- ***It should ease our conscience, take away our shame, and lighten our burden of guilt.***
- ***We should confess so that we can enjoy maximum fellowship and Joy with Him.***

**Three Major Elements of Forgiveness: 1st Element: Conviction of Our Sins**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Element: Confession of our Sins**

**3. The Third Element: Repentance of our Sins - It is one thing to confess our sins before God, but it must also be followed with a sincere repentance of our sin.**

**2 Corinthians 7:10** For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

**“Godly Sorrow” can result in changed behavior, but many people are sorry only for the effects of their sins or for being caught. (“worldly sorrow”).**

- ***There is a certain heaviness that should come upon us when we are made aware of our sins.***
- ***This is a godly sorrow over our offense to God, who has suffered the penalty for all of our sins.***

**Psalms 30:5** For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.

**CLOSE:** As we have seen, forgiveness comes through real repentance and repentance comes from having our sins exposed to us and then confessed.

**Acts 3:19** "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

When we allow this process to be worked out in our lives, **we will experience the same joy that David was crying out for in Psalm 51.**

- ***Psalm 51 Theme: David's plea for mercy, forgiveness, and cleansing.***
- ***God wants our hearts to be right with him.***

**Psalms 51:5-6 You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.**

- **We must be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to expose the truth of ourselves and our sin.**
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