

The Biblical Meaning of Forgiveness

Telling someone they need to forgive somebody else is easy. We use the phrase “forgive and forget” in our human efforts to restore relationships, but is that really what forgiveness means? Ultimately, forgiveness begins with God. Together, we’ll let Scripture teach us what forgiveness is, when it’s needed, and what it reveals about God’s character. Along the way, we’ll consider the nuanced meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words commonly translated as “forgiveness.”

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we’ll cover in the episode.

- How would you define forgiveness?
- Why does forgiveness matter?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [The Biblical Meaning of Forgiveness](#)

READ , [Exodus 34:4-9](#), [Matthew 6:12-15](#), [Psalm 51:1-9](#), [Hebrews 4:14-16](#), [Colossians 1:9-14](#), [1 John 1:5-10](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In segment 1, hosts Scott Hoezee and Darrell Delaney discussed three Hebrew words and one Greek word commonly translated as “forgiveness” in the Bible. The meanings of these words—“to lift off a burden,” “divine forgiveness,” “atonement,” and “to let something go”—give us a deeper understanding of the biblical concept of forgiveness. As you listened to the words and their descriptions, what struck you? How do they compare to how you defined forgiveness above?
- In segment 2, Darrell and Scott reflected on [Psalm 51](#) and identified two things we learn about what’s involved in forgiveness: 1) Our sins are first against God and heaven, 2) God’s forgiveness of us is rooted in and builds on the foundation of God’s abundant compassion and unfailing love. Why are these two points important and valuable to remember?
- Why does it matter that God understands how hard it is for us to forgive?
- As we seek to understand the biblical concept of forgiveness and its application in our daily lives, how does it benefit us to remember that God is the initiator?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Luke 15:11-32](#), [Matthew 9:1-8](#), [Mark 2:1-12](#), [Luke 5:17-26](#), [Isaiah 6:1-7](#), [2 Corinthians 5:11-21](#)

CONCLUSION

As he closed the episode, Scott said, “Forgiveness is always there because of God’s great mercy and compassion.” All forgiveness is rooted in God’s loving and compassionate character. In what ways has your understanding of forgiveness grown or changed through this study of the biblical meaning of forgiveness?

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/the-biblical-meaning-of-forgiveness>

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