

gracepoint

A M E T H O D I S T C H U R C H

Homegroup material



I. Introductory Discussion Questions

1. What stood out for you most about the “God promises forgiveness” sermon?
2. Read Psalm 103 vs 8-14 below. What does this passage reveal to you about God’s forgiveness?
 - **Psalm 103 vs 8-14:**

“The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbour his anger for ever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.”
3. What do you think David meant when he said that God remembers that we are dust?
4. Read the following Scriptures and discuss what you think God’s forgiveness really means for those who are in Christ?
 - **Romans 8 vs 1-4:**

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. But the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; so that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”
 - **2 Corinthians 3 vs 17:**

“And the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”
 - **Hebrews 4 vs 16:**

“Therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

5. Do you think that it is sometimes easy for us to take God's grace and forgiveness for granted? Why?
6. How do you think we can ensure that we don't take forgiveness for granted?

ii. Believe

1. In order for God's promise of forgiveness to become a reality in our lives, it requires some action on our part, the first part of which is to believe that God really does want to and can forgive us. Is this easy or difficult for you? Why?
2. Sometimes our problem is that we trust in other things to save us, instead of trusting in God and His grace. What are the things you are tempted to rely on in your life, instead of God?
3. On the other hand, we may feel as though we are too far gone or too messed up to be forgiven by God. How do you think we can overcome this feeling? (Read the Scriptures below).

- **Isaiah 1 vs 18:**

"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."

- **Isaiah 44 vs 21-23:**

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for you are My servant; I have formed you; you are My servant; O Israel, you shall not be forgotten by Me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins; return to Me; for I have redeemed you. Sing, O heavens; for the LORD has done it."

- **Micah 7 vs 18-20:**

"Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not keep His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will turn again; He will have pity on us. He will trample our iniquities. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. You will give faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from the days of old."

- **Acts 10 vs 43:**

"All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

iii. Confess

1. 1 John 1:9 makes it clear that confession is required to receive God's forgiveness. It says, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Why do you think our forgiveness is dependent on our willingness to confess our sins to God?
2. In your understanding, what is confession?
3. If God knows everything and already knows all the sins we've committed better than we do, why do you think confession is important?
4. Confession reminds us of what we have done wrong and brings us to a place of acknowledging our sin and our need for God's grace. Therefore, do you think that for those in relationship with God the occasional blanket confession ("I'm sorry for anything and everything I've done wrong") is sufficient? Why or why not?
5. If we fail to confess our sins to God, it does not mean that we lose our salvation, but it may mean that our relationship with God becomes strained. Perhaps at times when we feel like we aren't moving forward in our spiritual journey or that God isn't speaking to us, it is because there is unconfessed sin our lives. Have you ever had an experience of this?
6. How do you think we can be more serious about specific confession of our sins?
7. How do you think we deal with sins we don't even know we have committed?

Someone once said that what he does is that he takes ten minutes each night before going to bed and he plays his day like a movie in his mind and asks God to convict him of any sin or show him anything in his day that was not pleasing to Him.
8. Do you think confession can help us grow in our faith? How?
9. Confession also frees us. Read and reflect on Psalm 32 vs 1-5 below.

- **Psalm 32 vs 1-5:**

"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the LORD— and you forgave the guilt of my sin."

10. What do you think are the things that hold us back from confessing our sins to God? How can we overcome these things?

IV. Repent

1. Confession is the first step in receiving God's forgiveness, but once we have admitted that we have sinned or have done wrong, we need to be willing to do something about it, which is repentance. How would you define repentance?
2. Repentance literally means "to think differently" or "to turn away from". How do you think we practically turn away from our sin and toward God?
3. Read 2 Chronicles 7:14 below and note the conditions set for receiving God's forgiveness:

- **2 Chronicles 4 vs 14:**

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

4. How do you think we can be truly genuine in our repentance?
5. How do you think we can deal with habitual sin – or sin that gets us stuck in a cycle out of which we can't seem to break free? Do you think God forgives this kind of sin? (See the Scriptures below...)

- **Lamentations 3 vs 22-23:**

"It is by the LORD's kindnesses that we are not destroyed, because His mercies never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."

- **Psalms 103 vs 12:**

"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

IV. Ask

Is there anything for which you need to ask for God's forgiveness right now?

Give each person in the group a piece of paper and let them spend a few moments in reflection, thinking about what they need to confess and repent of. Ask God for forgiveness.

V. Call to action

1. What will we do with what we have discovered in this session?
2. How will we hold each other accountable to this?