



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

WORKSHOP: FORGIVENESS

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: Forgiveness is hard- it just is. When an offense takes place, we want justice but to leave that justice in the hands of an invisible God can be challenging. If we can begin to grasp the justice that has been served *on our behalf*, we can begin to release our hold on seeking our own retribution. The resulting benefits are truly worth the risk.

1. SIN IS INJUSTICE AND INJUSTICE IS SIN

- In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus calls those in need of forgiveness "debtors" or "trespassers."
- **Why is forgiveness hard?**

- God had complaints against His people. He makes His case against them in many places in the Bible.
- **ACTIVITY:** Work with a partner or in a group of 3. Using the Scripture passage(s) you are assigned, your group will identify the injustices against God- make a list. You can call yourselves a law firm if you like. You will be representing God and discovering and disclosing the injustices against Him.



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Use this space to list the complaints you find:

- **2 Chronicles 33:6**
- **Isaiah 1:2-4**
- **Isaiah 5:1-7**
- **Isaiah 5:18-25**
- **Isaiah 10:1-3**
- **Isaiah 30:8-11**
- **Isaiah 31:1**
- **Isaiah 33:1**
- **Hosea 4:10-13**
- **Micah 6:1-5**
- **Micah 6:10-12**

Share out: What is God's case? What are the injustices against Him?

II. GOD IS A RIGHTEOUS JUDGE AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS DEMANDS JUSTICE

- Hebrews 10:30-31
- Judgment is God's business, not ours; we need to stay out of it! His justice is sure and complete, no matter what "evidence" we see. All sin will be accounted for.
- **ACTIVITY:** What kind of Judge do we have? What is God like? Work with a partner or in a small group of 3. Look at the following verses about the justice of God. For each verse, record a few words that describe God's character (specifically in regards to His justice).
 - **Psalm 75:2-5** *When I choose the proper time, I will judge uprightly. The earth and all its inhabitants are dissolved; I set up its pillars firmly. Selah. I said to the boastful, 'Do not deal boastfully,' and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up the horn. Do not lift up your horn on high; Do not speak with a stiff neck.'*
 - **Psalm 103:6** *The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.*
 - **Psalm 140:12-13** *I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and justice for the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks to Your name; the upright shall dwell in Your presence.*



- **Psalms 146:5-9** *Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God, Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever, Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners. The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; The LORD raises those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous. The LORD watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow; but the way of the wicked He turns upside down.*
- **Isaiah 2:17-18** *The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; The LORD alone will be exalted in that day, but the idols He shall utterly abolish.*
- **Isaiah 3:13-15** *The LORD stands up to plead, and stands to judge the people. The LORD will enter into judgment with the elders of His people and His princes: 'For you have eaten up the vineyard; the plunder of the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing My people and grinding the faces of the poor?' Says the Lord GOD of hosts. .*
- **Isaiah 3:16** *But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.*
- **Isaiah 6:1-3** *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!'*
- **Isaiah 28:17** *Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet; the hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place.*
- **Jeremiah 9:23-24** *Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,' says the LORD.*
- **Nahum 1:2-3** *God is jealous, and the LORD avenges; The LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies; and will not at all acquit the wicked.*



- **Sum it up:** So what sort of Judge do we find in these verses? What will He do about sin? What is His standard?

III. GOD'S FORGIVENESS SOLUTION

- **God is all about love, all about mercy, all about grace.**
- What did God do about the injustice problem? God's solution: Christ died for us. "In that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)
- We made the mess, God cleaned it up.
- **ACTIVITY:** "Makeover by God." Go through the list of verses about the death of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Using two different colored pencils, underline who we were *before* (one color) and who we are *after* (second color) our "makeover."
 - **Romans 5:6-11** *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21** *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
 - **Ephesians 1:7-10** *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself...*



- **Ephesians 2:1-9** *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*
- **Ephesians 2:12-22** *... that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*
- **Colossians 1:19-23** *For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.*



- **1 Peter 3:18** *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit...*
- **1 John 3:1** *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!*
- **Philippians 2: 5-8** *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

APPLY IT TO LIFE:

- What is the cost of forgiveness?
- How much of the price has already been paid?
- Even though the debt has already been paid, are there debts that you are still trying to collect? Is there someone in your life that you feel "owes you?"
- How is God speaking to your heart? Is there someone you have refused to forgive? Are you willing to let go of your offense? Is there someone that you need to approach to ask for forgiveness? Are you willing to do that?

