



Apostles' Creed, part SEVEN

March 21-24

I believe in ... the forgiveness of sins

WHY LEARNING COMMUNITIES? **Circle Two Opportunity...**

To become better and better disciples of Christ TOGETHER so we can face *anything* through...

1. Deeper learning of Biblical truth
2. Stronger "iron sharpening iron" relationships

Ephesians 4:12–16 (ESV) ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

INTRODUCTION

No LC next week – instead put full effort into PRAYER GATHERING and week of Prayer with Fasting. Be sure to focus on praying for "your ones"

- ✓ "Throne Room" Time priority – pay attention to unobvious nudges and attacks, then SLO fast .
- ✓ Week of Fasting with Prayer and PRAYER GATHERING – *Pray for "your one(s)"*

Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the spirits in hell. The third day he arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal Church, the communion of saints, **the forgiveness of sins,** the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

"I believe in ... the forgiveness of sins"

OMW: Level we VALUE God's forgiveness/reconciliation's cost will determine the level of loyalty to Christ, and thus our depth of intimacy which determines the quality of our lives in - joy, peace, confidence, courage, etc.

Understanding and Truly Accepting God's Forgiveness

1. God's forgiveness is about reconciliation and restoration.

- ▶ God is love so everything is always all about love

Scripture after scripture reveals that God longs for us to be in relationship with Him, not just cancelling a debt transaction, but making us dearly loved children upon whom He will pour out His care – "Abba, Daddy"

Romans 5:8–11 (ESV) (pew Bible page 942)

2. God's forgiveness is God's provision.

Romans 3:23–26 (ESV) (pew Bible page 941)

- ▶ God is holy so He cannot abide sin in any form
- ▶ Mankind is terribly sinful and God is fearfully holy.
- ▶ God's holy justice requires that sin be paid for with a sinless sacrifice.

→ Mankind is incapable, helpless and hopeless.

Ephesians 2:1–13 (ESV) (pew Bible page 976)

→ God's holy love provides Jesus' death as payment

OMW Saturday "God's desire for all to come to Him is proven by the sacrifice He made to provide for reconciliation for all."

Propitiation: *The act of appeasing another person's anger by the offering of a gift. (Easton's Bible Dictionary)*

Romans 3:25 (ESV) ²⁵whom God put forward as a **propitiation** by his blood, to be received by faith.

Victoria Sabo – the value of propitiation

Jesus SATISFIED God's wrath against our sin and against US!

Jesus life served as the substitute for mine.

Yes, Jesus loves me! But also ALL mankind

Hebrews 2:17 (ESV) ¹⁷Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

1 John 2:2 (ESV) ²He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

3. God's forgiveness is WAY over the top.

God could have forgiven us and left us at a distance...

† Justice – getting what we deserve

† Mercy – not getting what we deserve - punishment

† Grace – getting what we do not deserve – God's favor

Psalm 103:8–14 (ESV)

4. Receiving God's forgiveness is 100% gift through repentance.

† All gift

Ephesians 2:8–9 (ESV) ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

† Received through "faith" – turning to follow Christ

TRUTH: OMK SUNDAY

The Americanized evangelical version of receiving forgiveness is praying a simple prayer – getting people to THAT has become the point in many circles – a TRANSACTION that is good forever.

WARNING: the result is that people can point to a prayer they prayed as proof that they are good with God and guaranteed Heaven even if they are not following Christ

IMPORTANT: Jesus did not say to pray a simple prayer, His invitation was always "Follow Me". That's repentance. Turning from my selfish, sinful, me-in-charge life to following Jesus' surrendered, transforming, Jesus in charge life

Luke 9:23 (ESV) And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Romans 2:4 (ESV) ⁴Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

A STEP HIGHER AND FURTHER...

5. Christ-followers must obey Christ and be like Christ in forgiving others.

FORGIVENESS - Forgiveness in the NT insists not only on penitence as a condition for forgiveness (2 Cor 7:10), but also on the need to forgive others (Mt 6:14–15). If in the midst of receiving forgiveness one does not forgive others, it is a clear sign that repentance is not complete. Several times in his parables the Lord insists that the readiness to forgive others is a sign of true repentance (Mt 18:23–35; Lk 6:37). So Christ taught that to forgive is a duty, and no limits can be set on it. It must be granted without reserve, even to 70 times 7 (Mt 18:21–22). Forgiveness is part of the mutual relationship of believers: since all are dependent upon God's forgiveness, all are required to forgive one another. "As the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive" (Col 3:13). (Tyndale Bible Dictionary)

To some people, forgiveness may seem like weakness or letting an undeserving person win, but it has no connection to weakness or even to emotions. Instead, forgiveness is an act of the will. Forgiveness is not granted because a person deserves to be forgiven. No one deserves to be forgiven. Forgiveness is a deliberate act of love, mercy, and grace. Forgiveness is a decision to not hold something against another person, despite what he or she has done to you. (<https://www.gotquestions.org/what-is-forgiveness.html>)

➔ Forgiving others is about obedience in response to God's love and forgiveness.

2 Corinthians 7:10 (ESV) For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

† not our feelings before, during or after

† not because others deserve it – it's a free gift

† not about letting the other person off the hook, but leaving justice to God

† not about trusting the offender or reconciliation

HERB: one of enemy priority schemes is to prevent us from forgiving others. Creates or leverages hurt, convinces us that it is impossible to obey Jesus to forgive, then lead us away from Christ in ways we may not even realize

ill. people who claim to follow Christ who are angry and bitter

ill. Wurmbrands, esp. "Sabina" story – forgiveness was the primary message – love for enemies

➔ Forgiving others is

† trusting God to obey when we don't want to

Ephesians 4:32 (ESV) Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

† a deliberate act of our will to exercise love, mercy and grace

Colossians 3:12–14 (ESV) ¹²Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, **forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.** ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

† leaving justice to God

Romans 12:19–21 (ESV) ¹⁹Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

† evidence that we have been forgiven

Matthew 6:8–15 (ESV)

Luke 6:37–38 (ESV) ³⁷"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Additional scripture if there's time (very funny, Herb... "if there is time")
Matthew 18:21–35 (ESV)

Takeaways...



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