

Flourishing in the Workplace – Part 6 - Forgiveness

Celebrate! Throw a party! Jesus is standing at the door and knocking! Open the door and invite him in to dine with you (Rev 3:20).

Give thanks with a grateful heart! For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life! (John 3:16)

Relax! Jesus didn't come into the world to condemn you, but to save the world through him! (John 3:17)

Rejoice! If you confess your sins God is faithful and just and will forgive your sins and purify you from all unrighteousness! When you confess your sins, they are forgotten, never to be remembered again. Your slate has been wiped clean! God's forgiveness has no timetable or expiration date. It is made from grace and love which endure forever. Yes, you will still have to deal with the consequences of your sin, but you can move forward without bearing the shame or the guilt of your sin.

Forgiveness has been there all along! Avail yourself of what is truly freeing – sincere confession and repentance. There is no need to stubbornly prefer the illusion of self-dependence. There is no need for self-righteousness, or self-justification. Jesus invites you today to enter into the blessedness of forgiveness.

Notice the order of the Lord's prayer – God first reveals himself to us, then he meets our physical, emotional, spiritual and relational needs, to bring us to the place where we can ask for forgiveness. When we have praised our Father for the call and grace of his Kingdom and placed our lives in the flowing river of his generous provision, only then are we able to see which of our responses to our circumstances are a sin against Him. The glory of God in Christ is that he forgives these sins, by pre-paying the debt that they incur on the cross.

Read

Matthew 6:9-12 Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts

Luke 18:13-14 ¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

1 John 1:8-10 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

Micah 7:18–19 ¹⁸ *Who is a God like you,
who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance?*

You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.

¹⁹ *You will again have compassion on us;*

you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

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Ps 139: 23-24 ²³ Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.
²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Ps 103:10 -12 ¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.
¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;
¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

2 Cor 7:1a Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Heb 3:12-13 ¹² See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

See also Ezekiel 33:10-20

Questions

- 1) How should we respond to God’s forgiveness?
- 2) Sometimes we make dumb mistakes, sometimes we make foolish choices, sometimes we say or do things without having thought through the consequences.
 - a) Does God forgive these? Why?
 - b) What are some of the ways that God reminds us of his forgiveness?
- 3) Read Ps 139:23-24 again
 - a) What are some of the ways that God illuminates anxious thoughts and offensive behaviors in our lives?
 - b) Complete the following table

What are Things that cause anxious thoughts in you (particularly about your work)	What are Promises or truths from Scripture that could dispel that thought

- 4) It is easier to blame circumstances, other people, the economy for the situation we find ourselves in, than owning up, repenting and confessing to our sins. Guilt works in secret and loses its power when it is allowed out into the open. We are called to be witnesses of Christ’s love so that other people will want to know what makes us glow. Sin causes that light to flicker, dim and eventually be snuffed out. Our sinful behavior can be like a bucket of cold water poured on the zeal and love of others so that little by little they grow cold.

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What are some sinful behaviors that contribute to the atmosphere of your work environment?	What are Healthy counter behaviors?

When work is	What are sinful responses	What are healthy responses
Meaningful / Fulfilling		
Boring		
Draining / Frustrating		
Destructive / Corrosive		

a) What can break the power of sin in these circumstances?

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- 5) What impact does God's forgiveness of us have on our coworkers, customers, work environment?
- 6) Read Heb 3:12-13 again
 - a) What does Godly encouragement look like? Is it always positive and uplifting?
 - b) What needs to be in place before you can meaningfully share your struggles with another person or encourage another person?
 - c) What are some ways you encourage others?

Application

- 7) Share a word of encouragement with your partner.