

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Who is God?

### God the Son, Our Savior

Intro – Review

Watch the following video:

[The Gospel through Google](#)

A couple of weeks ago, we looked at sin, death, and eternal life. We learned that Sin is our turning away from God, our denial of our relationship with God, and our attempt to live independently from God. We also learned that sin is detrimental to us. Sin causes death. We are born spiritually dead, and, ultimately, we physically die. Yet, God was not happy to see his creation remain in a sinful, fallen, broken state. He wants to reconcile with us and give us eternal life again. God was able to offer us forgiveness at no cost – as a gift. We call this grace.

Yet, how does this grace work?

Chances are, you realize that God gave us this gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Specifically, God sent his perfect sinless Son, Jesus, to earth in order to die on a cross for our sin, so that when we come to believe and follow Jesus, we are forgiven for and cleansed of all of our sin.

Last week, we began to look at who Jesus is. We said that Jesus is the eternal Son of God (meaning he existed in heaven before December 25<sup>th</sup> 00 a.d (also, not his real birthday)), who became a man. It's important to remember that we don't just say Jesus is the Son of God like he a second lesser god, but that Jesus Christ is God, fully and truly. He is God who became fully and truly human and offered His own life in order that we can have life and a restored relationship with Him.

We are all aware that Jesus died on a cross, but why did Jesus have to die on cross so that our sins can be forgiven? For some people, the cross has become one of the most offensive teachings in Christianity. A friend of mine, who thought the death of Jesus to be ludicrous act, once asked a very valid question 'Why would Jesus have to die for my sins?' If God expects us to forgive one another, and that we're supposed to let bygones be bygones, 'Why can't God just forgive us?' 'Why did he have send his Son to die?'

**Why do you think Jesus died on a cross? Why do they think it was necessary for Jesus to die on the cross?**

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Why did Jesus have to die?

The reason why Jesus had to die on the cross goes back to the nature of God. God is holy and Just. For God to stop being holy or just would mean for Him to stop being God.

When people wonder, if God is unimaginably powerful, why couldn't he simply undue our sin like the other miracles in the Bible. For example, God parted the Red Sea, he saved Daniel and his friends when they went into a blazing fire, he fed 5000 people with a small amount of food, why couldn't he simply forgive our sins? The answer is that God would no longer be just.

Think about this for a moment. If a judge pardoned a mass shooter and released him, we would say a great injustice had been done. We could actually blame the judge of committing evil by letting a known killer go free. If a judge pardons the wicked, he is no longer just. So if God had simply said, "All's forgiven," he would no longer be just or holy.

While God loves us, he must still uphold his just and holy character. Punishment is due for our sin. That punishment is death. Yet God desired a relationship with us. In order to fulfill his duty of justice, God decided to take the punishment upon himself. Jesus, being fully man and fully God, was able to pay on our behalf when he died on the cross. Punishment was due, but instead us receiving the punishment, Jesus stood in our place and took the death that we deserve.

What we're seeing here is that forgiveness always cost somebody something. For example, if someone borrowed money from you, but couldn't pay it back, what could you do? There are essentially a couple of options. First, you could try and force them to pay it back. That is, inflict some kind of pain upon them until they were able to pay back what they owed. Second, you could absorb the cost yourself and not force them to pay back the money. There may also be middle-of-the-road solutions in which you both share the payment. Third, you could end the relationship and speak negatively about the person.

Notice that in every option the cost must be absorbed by someone. Either your friend absorbs the cost and pays you back, or you forgive the debt at your cost, or you don't forgive the debt and the cost is the friendship and shaming the person. But the cost or the debt never goes away, it does not somehow vanish into thin air. Forgiveness, in this illustration, means you bearing the cost for your friend's misdeed.

However, most times forgiveness isn't about forgiving a monetary debt. For example, we might offer forgiveness to someone who has personally wronged us. That is, they robbed you of happiness, or joy, or took away an opportunity, or insulted you, or violated your freedom. No amount of money generally fixes those problems, but there is still a sense in which a debt must be paid. Someone has to absorb the cost of the injustice done. You've been wronged and someone needs to pay.

Again we have some options. First, we could seek vengeance and make the person suffer, which is a way of paying the debt. The second option we have is that we can forgive the person. When we choose to not make a person suffer or pay the debt, we choose to suffer instead. It can become emotionally painful for us. The evil in a sense is absorbed, and for a while it might cause us to suffer, but eventually those feelings subside, and the debt no longer remains. So in both illustrations we see forgiveness is costly and in many ways it causes us to suffer. Forgiveness means absorbing the debt of sin yourself and everyone who forgives will experience pain and suffering in order to forgive. The bigger the debt, the more the cost and the more the pain.

So we have to say that Jesus had to die on the cross because our sin was an offense against God, we have wronged God. When God decided that he wanted to forgive us of our sin instead of punishing us for all the ways we have wronged him and one another, why would we assume that the debt of sin could somehow vanish?

On the Cross we see God doing what every human being must do to forgive someone, through on an infinitely greater scale. God could have chosen to inflict pain on us, He could have chosen to make us pay the debt of sin, but instead he chose to absorb the pain and suffering that we owed and absorb the debt that we owed, and brought it upon himself. Why did Jesus have to die? In order to forgive us. There was a debt to be paid--God himself paid it. There was a penalty to be born--God himself bore it. Forgiveness is always a form of costly suffering.

Watch

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/zEctXt2a5TU?start=586&end=745>

**Read the following passages and summarize what they say:**

John 8:34-37

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Romans 6:17-18

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Romans 8:1-2

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Colossians 2:13-14

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Hebrews 12:2.

Prayer

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

-Collect for Good Friday