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## Application Paper

### Introduction

Christians believe in forgiving their offenders to emulate God who pardoned man of his sins by sacrificing His son Jesus Christ to save humankind to deliver him from the jaws of death. Sin brings death, but God wished for humans to experience eternal life after physical death. The Bible teaches Christians to forgive others as a condition to get pardoned of their wrongdoings by God. The paper discusses the theological definition of forgiveness and its Biblical foundation besides how it applies to my life as a Christian.

#### Part 1: Theological Definition of Forgiveness

According to the Bible, forgiveness refers to the act of pardoning sins, and it happens in two ways namely; God forgiving the sins of man and human beings forgiving their fellow men who do wrongs to them. All men are sinners before the eyes of God and thus must acknowledge their state and ask for forgiveness from their maker. Sin originated from Adam and Eve, the first human beings who lived in the Garden of Eden.

Through the sins of these first parents, the entire human population became sinners, and there is thus no one who can proclaim of being righteous before God. Sin keeps people away from God, but His love for human beings was so great that He gave His son Jesus Christ to die on the cross on behalf of humankind. Through the death of Jesus Christ, God forgave man of his sins. Besides, Christians gained the freedom to confess their sins before the Lord whenever they fall short of His glory.

#### Part 2: Biblical Foundations of Forgiveness

God loved humans and wanted to establish a lasting relationship with him. However, due to his sinful nature, there was a gap between man and God and the only way to bridge it was

through offering a spotless sacrifice to God which would wash away the sin of man. Jesus Christ was the only one who qualified as the perfect sacrifice since he was without blemish before God. Therefore, God sent Jesus Christ to earth, and during the Last Supper, Jesus took a cup of wine and declared to his apostles that it represented His blood of the covenant, and the purpose of pouring it was to forgive the sins of men (Matthew 26:28, NIV).

Jesus Christ conquered death after three days, and His resurrection symbolized God's forgiveness of the sins of man. However, Christ gave a command to human beings to repent their sins for them to receive forgiveness. Moreover, as explained by Frise & McMinn (2010), man does not have the power to forgive a fellow human being, except through prayer. Nobody shall receive eternal life in heaven without acknowledging their status as sinners and ask for forgiveness.

Forgiving others is not at the discretion of the offended party, rather, it is a command from God that since He also forgave man of his wrong doings, people must also have the willingness to pardon those who do wrong to them. It is a sin not to forgive others since it shows the disobedience of man towards his creator. As illustrated in Matthew 6:14-15, heavenly father only forgives human beings who pardon others. Failure to forgive hinders God from forgiving man of his sins.

### Part 3: Practical Application of Forgiveness

As a Christian, the concept of forgiveness sounds too complicated because of its double demands. On the one side, I need God to continually pardon my wrongdoing while, on the other hand, I must forgive my fellow brothers and sisters as a condition to receive God's forgiveness over my life. I firmly believe that leading a sinful life will hinder me from receiving eternal life

in heaven after my days on earth are over. Therefore, I have to confess my sins to God and ask Him to pardon me. Besides, I must not hold grudges with those who sin against me.

It is, however, not easy to smile at someone who has wronged me, and although I can say that I have forgiven the person to fulfill the commandments of God, deep inside, I always feel grudges against anyone who has wronged me. The conviction that I am yet to forgive them entirely fills me with guilt, and I become helpless knowing that it is a sin not to forgive, yet God pardons my sins unconditionally.

In most instances, I am unable to restore my relationship with friends and family after a disagreement especially if I know I am right. When I pray, I always get a feeling that someone wronged me. No matter the effort I apply to convince myself that I already extended forgiveness to my offenders, I want to distance myself from them. The feeling weighs me down and distracts me from praying to God to forgive my sins since I have also failed to pardon those who persecute me.

I have, however, found a solution to my predicament after consulting some religious leaders. I learned that whereas God forgives and forgets, man's nature is different. Therefore, it is almost impossible for a human being to forget the mistakes committed against them even after forgiving the offender. It is beyond human being to forget the injustices suffered at the hands of other people. The knowledge has helped me always to seek God's forgiveness even when my memory is full of all the wrongs done to me despite having forgiven the perpetrators.

#### Conclusion

God's forgiveness is unconditional, but man does not have the power to forget the mistakes of others against him. As a result, it is natural to feel some bitterness long after pardoning a fellow human being. Whereas the feeling could distract individuals from seeking

God's forgiveness of their sins as they feel they have not forgiven others as commanded in the Bible, remembering offenses done to us does not mean we have not forgiven the offenders.

Therefore, we should ignore the feeling and go ahead with confessions of our sins to God and expect forgiveness.

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## References

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