

Evangelizing Those Who Wrong You

Session #1

- **evangelize.** (1) to preach the gospel, (2) to impart the gospel to others through word and deed, (3) to be a living embodiment of the gospel in relationship with others.

1 Thessalonians 1:5. “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.”

- Importance of forgiveness
- Unforgiveness: Problem #1

Two words for ‘forgive’ in the NT . . .

- afihmi. “send away”(Matthew 6:12. “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”)

Object: _____

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Matthew 18:30. “...he threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed.”

- karizomai. “grace” (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13)

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forgive. (a) to send away sin from between you and the one who sinned against you and to hold that sin against the offender no more; (b) to release (“send away”) the offender from the consequences they deserve from you as a result of the sins they have committed against you; and (c) to positively favor them with blessings they do not deserve.

“How Do I Get to the Place of Forgiveness?”

4 Steps

...of forgiveness

Step #1: Go to the _____, and do some _____ thinking.

R.C. Ryle. “A spiteful quarrelsome Christian is a scandal It is doubtful that such a one has sat at the foot of the cross . . .”¹

John Bunyan. “Then [Christian] he stood awhile to look and wonder, for he was very surprised that the sight of the cross should ease him of his burden in such a way. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even until the spring in his head sent their waters flowing down his cheeks.”²

A. Thought #1: “Christ has _____ as I am suffering right now, and infinitely more so, which means I am never _____ in any _____.”

¹ <https://www.unlockingthebible.org/marks-of-a-truly-forgiven-person/>

² John Bunyan. Pilgrim’s Progress.

1. Isaiah 53. “(3) . . . a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief . . . (4) Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried.”
2. Mark 15:23. “And they tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.”
3. Romans 8:17. Lit. “[we are] . . . fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed WE suffer together [sumpaskw], in order that WE might also be glorified together.”
 - John Stott. “It is wonderful that we may share in Christ’s sufferings; it is more wonderful still that he shares in ours.”³
 - “...the Lord Jesus Christ is joint-heir with us . . . of the sufferings through which we are called to go at the present time. The unsaved do not have any fellowship in their sufferings; we do.” (*Barnhouse*)
4. Hebrews 4:15. “We do not have a high priest who cannot **sympathize** [lit. “suffer with” = Gr. sumpaqew] with our weaknesses”
5. Matthew 25:45. “Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’”
6. Acts 9. ““(4) . . . Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ (5) . . . ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.’”
7. Example of John Perkins: “The Spirit of God worked on me as I lay in that bed. An image formed in my mind. The image of the cross – Christ on the cross. It blotted out everything else in my mind. This Jesus knew what I had suffered. He understood. And He cared. Because He had experienced it all Himself. This Jesus, this One who had brought good news directly from God in heaven, had lived what He preached. Yet He was arrested and falsely accused. Like me, He went through an unjust trial. He also faced a lynch mob and got beaten. But even more than that, He was nailed to rough wooden planks and killed. Killed like a common criminal. At the crucial moment, it seemed to Jesus that even God Himself had deserted Him. The suffering was so great, He cried out in agony. He was dying.

³ John Stott, The Cross of Christ, 335.

“But when He looked at that mob who had lynched Him, He didn’t hate them. He loved them. He forgave them. And He prayed God to forgive them, ‘Father, forgive these people, for they don’t know what they are doing.’ His enemies hated. But Jesus forgave. I couldn’t get away from that It’s a profound, mysterious truth – Jesus’ concept of love overpowering hate. I may not see its victory in my lifetime. But I know it’s true. I know it’s true, because it happened to me. On that bed, full of bruises and stitches – God made it true to me. He washed my hatred away and replaced it with a love for the white man in rural Mississippi. I felt strong again. Stronger than ever. What doesn’t destroy me will make me stronger. I know it’s true. Because it happened to me.”⁴

8. From John Stott: “I myself could never believe in God were it not for the cross. . . . In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it? I have entered many Buddhist temples in different Asian countries and stood respectfully before the statue of the Buddha, his legs crossed, arms folded, eyes closed, the ghost of a smile plays round his mouth, a remote look on his face, detached from the agonies of the world.

“But each time, after a while I have had to look away. And in imagination I have turned instead to the lonely, twisted, tortured figure on the cross, nails through hands and feet, back lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged into God-forsaken darkness. That is the God for me!

“He laid aside His immunity to pain. He entered our world of flesh and blood, tears and death. He suffered for us. Our sufferings become more manageable in the light of His. There is still a question mark against human suffering, but over it we boldly stamp another mark, the cross which symbolizes divine suffering.”⁵

9. Edward Shillito, “Jesus of the Scars”:

*The other gods were strong, but thou wast weak;
They rode, but thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God’s wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds but thou alone.*

⁴ From John Perkins, quoted in Colossians & Philemon: The Supremacy of Christ, R. Kent Hughes.

⁵ John Stott, The Cross of Christ, 335.

**B. Thought #2: “Sometimes God purposes that those whom He _____
deeply be _____ against.”**

1. Matt. 3:17. “...This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”
2. Acts 2:23. “this man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men...”
3. Acts 4. “(27) For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, (28) to do whatever Your hand and your purpose predestined to occur.”
4. From When God Weeps: Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty, Joni Eareckson & Steven Estes, 53-54): “But these pains are a mere warm-up to his other and growing dread. He begins to feel a foreign sensation. Somewhere during this day an unearthly foul odor began to waft, not around his nose, but his heart. He feels dirty. Human wickedness starts to crawl upon his spotless being—the living excrement from our souls. The apple of his Father's eye turns brown with rot.

“His Father! He must face his Father like this!

“From heaven the Father now rouses himself like a lion disturbed, shakes his mane, and roars against the shriveling remnant of a man hanging on a cross. Never has the Son seen the Father look at him so, never felt even the least of his hot breath. But the roar shakes the unseen world and darkens the visible sky. The Son does not recognize these eyes.

"Son of Man! Why have you behaved so? You have cheated, lusted, stolen, gossiped, murdered, envied, hated, lied. You have cursed, robbed, overspent, overeaten, fornicating, disobeyed, embezzled, and blasphemed. Oh, the duties you have shirked, the children you have abandoned! Who has ever so ignored the poor, so played the coward, so belittled my name? Have you ever held your razor tongue? What a self-righteous, pitiful drunk -- you, who molest young boys, peddle killer drugs, travel in cliques, and mock your parents.

“Who gave you the boldness to rig elections, spur revolutions, torture animals, and worship demons? Does the list never end! Splitting families, raping virgins, acting smugly, playing the pimp, buying politicians, practicing extortion, filming pornography, accepting bribes.

You have burned down buildings, perfected terrorist tactics, founded false religions, traded in slaves, relishing each morsel and bragging about it all. I hate, I loathe these things in you! Disgust for everything about you consumes me! Can you not feel my wrath?"

"Of course, the Son is innocent. He is blamelessness itself. The Father knows this. But the divine pair have an agreement, and the unthinkable must now take place. Jesus will be treated as if personally responsible for every sin ever committed.

"The Father watches as his heart's treasure, the mirror-image of himself, sinks drowning in to raw, liquid sin. Jehovah's stored rage against humankind from every century explodes in a single direction.

"My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?!"

"But heaven stops its ears. The Son stares up at the One who cannot, who will not, reach down or reply.

"The Trinity had planned it. The Son endured it. The Spirit enabled him. The Father rejected the Son whom he loved. Jesus, the God-man from Nazareth, perished. The Father accepted his sacrifice for sin and was satisfied. The Rescue was accomplished.

"God set down his saw.

"This is who asks us to trust him when he calls on us to suffer."

C. Thought #3: "God the Father can be _____ completely on the receiving end of any wrongdoing."

1. 1 Peter 2. "(23) while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but He kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; (24) and He bore our sins in His body on the cross..."
2. Luke 23:46. "And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into Your hands I **commit** My spirit.' Having said this, He breathed His last."
3. Philippians 2. "(6) . . . [Christ] did not regard equality with God a thing to clutch onto, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him a name which is above every name, (10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, (11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

4. Ephesians 1. “(20) . . . He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, (21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (22) And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church”