

Series: Forgiveness Brochure Contents – Part 1

# “Forgiveness is a Promise!”

Based on Various Passages – NIV

*Ash Wednesday – 2010*

Wednesday † February 17 † 11 a.m. † 7 p.m.

**Introduction:** *Forgiveness is so important!* It literally MAKES or BREAKS every relationship:

- If God forgives me through Jesus; then I am in a right relationship with Him – *He is my Father and I am His forgiven child!*
- It is *similar* between † husband and wife, † brother and sister, † friend and friend, † neighbor and neighbor. If they BOTH REALLY FORGIVE each other; *then the relationship continues!* But whenever forgiveness is absent, *each relationship will continue to be broken!*

During this Lenten season 2010, we will focus on forgiveness in various ways. May God enable us to:

- Better understand forgiveness!
- Rejoice in God’s forgiveness in Christ! (and)
- Offer sincere forgiveness to all who have ever sinned against us!

## 1. **God’s Promise of Forgiveness to Us!**

### a. **Jeremiah 33:4-8 – God’s promise of forgiveness!**

Around 600 B.C., when Jeremiah was a prophet, the southern kingdom of Judah was quickly moving toward

destruction – *because of their sins!* Even though Jeremiah called the people to repent, they continued in their sins; nevertheless, take note of God’s promise of forgiveness:

<sup>4</sup> ...this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says about the houses in this city and the royal palaces of Judah...: “They will be filled with the dead bodies of the men I will slay in my anger and wrath. I will hide my face from this city because of all its wickedness.”

<sup>6</sup> “Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security. <sup>7</sup> I will bring Judah and Israel back from captivity and will rebuild them as they were before. <sup>8</sup> **I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me.**”

**Take note:** *The Lord will cleanse* – not the people; *the cleansing will include all sin* – not just some!

Here is a similar promise from Jeremiah 50:20: **“In those days, at that time,” declares the LORD, “search will be made for Israel's guilt, but there will be none, and for the sins of Judah, but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant I spare.”**

**Take note:** Forgiveness is so wonderful because it removes all guilt and all sin. Because of God’s great mercy in Christ, *HE SEES US as innocent and sinless!*

b. **1 John 1:8-9 – God’s faithful promise of forgiveness encourages confession!**

<sup>8</sup> If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> **If we confess our sins, he is**

**faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

**Take note:** In light of our HOLY God, *it is essential to be without sin*; therefore, people try to be without sin in two ways:

- *They CLAIM to be without sin*, but such people are self-deceived – because all have sinned!
- *They CONFESS their sins* – admitting them, being sorry for them, and believing in Jesus for their forgiveness!

For all who confess, God will *fully forgive* and *perfectly purify* in every needful way!

**c. Luke 23:41-43 – God’s promise of forgiveness opens paradise to sinners!**

He confessed his sins: <sup>41</sup> “We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

He verbalized his faith: <sup>42</sup> “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

He heard Jesus’ wonderful promise: <sup>43</sup> “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

**Take Note:** God’s forgiveness is essential, wonderful, and certain – *only in Jesus Christ!*

2. **Our Promise of Forgiveness to Others!** Having received God’s forgiveness in Christ, *we are now able and willing to sincerely forgive all others!* When we extend forgiveness to others, we are also promising these things:

- a. **I will not bring this sin up to use it against you!** God says: **“I will...remember their sins no more.”** (NIV Jeremiah 31:34) We may not be able to forget; nevertheless, *we promise to never use it against the person who has sinned. If we do; then we need to seek that person’s forgiveness!*
- b. **I will not bring this sin up to others!** It’s forgiven, over, and done with, *so don’t discuss it with anyone!*
- c. **I will not allow myself to dwell on this sin!** Again, it’s forgiven, it’s in the past – even thinking about it is counter-productive, so forget it and focus in a positive, God-pleasing direction!
- d. **I will never let this sin be a reason for not having a friendship with you!** Think about that statement; if you have really forgiven the sin; then you have promised to ✦ not use it against the person, ✦ not discuss it with others, and ✦ not even think about it. *When we really do such things, past sins will not hinder our present relationships!*

**Conclusion:** God’s forgiveness to us is a wonderful and complete promise; *it fully restores us to Him in Christ!* Therefore, let us extend that same promise to ALL WHO HAVE EVER SINNED AGAINST US! And all God’s people said: *Amen!*