

# FORGIVENESS AND THE JUSTICE OF GOD

Pastor Dave Groleau ■ Grace Bible Church ■ September 20, 2020 ■ Social Media: #GBCworship

*“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. -Romans 12:14, 17-21 (ESV)*

## **1. God keeps score so you don't have to.**

(“I will repay,” so transfer judgment to Him.)

## **2. God does not reward bad behavior.**

(“Be at peace” but don't become a doormat.)

## **3. God alone holds mastery over penalty and grace.**

(Overcome evil with good.” Build a heart of justice and grace.)

Addendum: Forgiving yourself is a celebration of grace.

*Perfect humility dispenses with modesty. If God is satisfied with the work, the work may be satisfied with itself; “it is not for her to bandy compliments with her Sovereign.” -C.S. Lewis*

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### APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Read Matthew 5:45-48. Take note of the word PERFECT in the last verse. Is this something we can do (or become) except by the power of the Holy Spirit within us? Pray that we can become more like Jesus in this whole forgiveness process.
2. Read Romans 12:17-21.
  - a. What does verse 18 imply about personal responsibility? Who should take the initiative in this forgiveness process?
  - b. Read verse 19. Pastor Dave said, "The one who seeks to take vengeance on another is trespassing on the function of God. God claims exclusive rights to that role." Have you considered this before? How should we apply this concept?
  - c. Read verse 20. Look up Proverbs 25:21-22 and Psalm 11:4-7. What does this say about the justice of God?
  - d. Read verse 21. What does it mean to be "overcome by evil"? Have you experienced this when you've been seriously hurt by others? How do we overcome evil with good? Read I Peter 3:8-12
3. Pastor talked about "doormat" theology. Did this concept ring true to your heart or did you recoil a bit? Can we be forgiving and grace-giving while still demanding justice? Think of times when you were leaning toward being a doormat. Does the balance of this concept appear a bit clearer now?
4. Read 1 Peter 4:8. Does this mean we are to ignore, forget, or just let an offense go on? Is there a way to release vengeance, to truly forgive, and yet "reserve full trust" to not allow the offense to continue?
5. If there is still time, ask if anyone might want to talk about dealing with their own process of forgiving themselves. Remember that 1 John 1:5-2:2 is a lesson for us throughout our lifetime.

### GBC UPDATES

- **Sunday 5:30 pm** –Grace Student Ministries (grades 7-12) meets in the Fellowship Hall for their weekly Bible study.
- **Sunday 5:30 pm** –Young Adults Ministry meets at the Shelter House for their weekly Bible study.
- **September 22:** Patchwork Kickoff meets at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your copy of JEREMIAH: DARING TO HOPE IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD by Melissa Spoelstra. Books can be purchased through Amazon or Christian Book Distributors.
- **September 27:** Journey Wall church-wide meeting from 3:30-5:30 pm in the auditorium.
- For ministry updates and events, please check our website: [www.gracebiblecw.com](http://www.gracebiblecw.com).