



September 13, 2015
2 Chronicles 6
"All is Forgiven"
Pastor Gary Hamrick

The book of 2 Chronicles is a seamless continuation of 1 Chronicles. We move from the life and reign of King David to the life and reign of his son, King Solomon, which covers the first nine chapters. It's interesting to note that this account shares the details of the high points in Solomon's life, and none of the "low-lights," including 700 wives and 300 concubines, or the children who were sacrificed in the worship of false gods, which happened on his "watch." The primary highlight of Solomon's reign that we read about in this book is the building of the Temple.

In this study, we'll learn about the four things we need to do when it comes to receiving forgiveness from the Lord: humble ourselves, pray, seek the face of the Lord, and turn from wicked ways.

The Temple

1. David not only gave Solomon the plans, he also raised the money for the building fund!
2. Solomon was chosen by God to build the Temple, which would be the first permanent structure devoted to the worship of God.
3. The Temple was built in Jerusalem on Mt. Moriah, and it was an imposing structure that stood approximately 365 years, when the Babylonians destroyed it.
4. The Temple was 90' long, 30' wide, and 45' high.

5. It took 180,000 workers, seven years to build.
6. The Temple was made of white limestone, wood (cedar from Lebanon, plus olive and pine), and lots of gold!
 - a. Pastor Gary estimate the value of the gold used in the temple at approximately \$140 Billion dollars!
7. Many scholars believe Solomon was about 20 or 21 years old when he started the building project.
8. The description of Solomon's dedication of the Temple is found in [2 Chronicles 6:14-15, 20-21](#).

Forgiveness

9. Solomon appealed to the forgiveness of God five times in 2 Chronicles chapter six.
 - a. [2 Chronicles 6:25, 27, 30, and 39](#).
10. This is the first time the word forgive appears in [1 Chronicles](#) or [2 Chronicles](#).
11. The word forgiveness is found on other time; in the very familiar passage in [2 Chronicles 7:14](#), which says: *"... if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*
12. God's love is revealed in the Bible as being unconditional, because his love is without limitations or conditions.
13. We don't have to *do* anything to gain his love or to maintain his love, because God's love is not based on our performance or good behavior; it's based on God's own nature, which is love. (Emphasis added)
14. [1 John 4:8](#) - *"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."*
15. It needs to be emphasized that God doesn't approve of the dumb, sinful things we do, but he doesn't stop loving us because of these things.

16. Unfortunately, far too many people think of God as being like the “does he like me” predictor game that kids play with a daisy (“He loves me, he loves me not...”).
17. Pastor Gary shared a brief summary of the well-known statement made by Swiss theologian, Karl Barth.¹
 - a. Barth (pronounced Bart) was one of the most intellectual theologians of the 20th Century. He published more than 600 volumes of writings and commentaries. During one interview, a reporter asked him to summarize all of the theology contained in his massive works. It’s said that Barth thought for a moment and replied: “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”
18. God’s love is unconditional, but his forgiveness is conditional, and we know this because [2 Chronicles 7:14](#) has “if” and “then” clauses.
19. God is always ready to forgive any person for any sin; but we do have a role in receiving God’s forgiveness.
20. Forgiveness is something we all need, no matter whether it’s forgiveness from God or forgiveness from others; we all need to forgive and to be forgiven.
21. Pastor Gary shared the following illustration from the Ernest Hemingway’s short story titled, *The Capital of the World*.
 - a. In the story, Hemingway tells about a strained relationship between a Spanish father and his teenage son, who lived in Madrid. The relationship between them eventually shattered. When the rebellious son, whose name was Paco (a common Spanish name), ran away from home, which caused his father to begin a long and arduous search to find him. As a last resort the exhausted father placed an ad in a Madrid newspaper, hoping that his son would see the ad and respond. The ad read: “Dear Paco, Please meet me in front of the newspaper office at noon. All is forgiven. Love, Father.” As Hemingway tells the story, the next day at noon, in front of the newspaper office, there were 800 Pacos, all seeking forgiveness.

Four Things We Need To Do

22. Humble Yourself
 - a. The biggest obstacle to experiencing the forgiveness of God is pride.
 - b. Pride is stubborn, arrogant, selfish, and conceited.

¹ <https://www.pentecostalherald.com/articles/article/worlds-most-wanted-words>

- c. Pride makes an excuse for sin, rather than confess sin.
- d. Pride convinces us that we're not really that bad in the big scheme of things.
- e. Pride refuses to take ownership of our sinful condition.
- f. "As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down you cannot see something that is above you." - C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.
- g. Humility is agreeing with God about our sinful condition.
 - i. It's being contrite.
 - ii. It's taking responsibility.
 - iii. It's feeling sorry.
 - iv. It's experiencing brokenness.
- h. Most things in the world become worthless when they are broken, but God says that we become whole when we become broken!
 - i. **Isaiah 66:2b** - *"This is the one I [God] esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."*
 - ii. **Micah 6:8** - *"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*
 - iii. **James 4:10** - *"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."*

23. Pray

- a. Prayer, in its simplest definition, is to communicate with God.
- b. It is the pouring out of our heart to a loving Father, and the turning of our ear to his gentle whisper.
- c. **1 Timothy 2:1** - *"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone."*
 - i. Petition (requests) - To beg or petition God for what we need.
 - ii. Communion (prayers) - May include confession.
 - iii. Intercession - To plead on behalf of others.
 - iv. Adoration (thanksgiving) - To offer worship and gratitude to God.

24. Seek God's Face

- a. **1 Chronicles 16:11** - *"Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always."*
- b. Most of the time, when we seek the hand of God, we only look for what he can give us.
- c. There are three things that seeking his face represents:
 - i. His face is his presence

1. God wants us to seek him for who he is, not simply for what he can give us.
2. He wants us to commune with him, and spend time with him.
- ii. His face is his identity
 1. He wants us to know him.
 2. He wants us to have a proper understanding of who he is, when it comes to his character, nature, purpose, and plans.
 3. **Psalm 27:8** - *"My heart says of you, 'Seek his face!' Your face, Lord, I will seek."*
- iii. His face is his favor
 1. **Numbers 6:26** - *"[The] Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."*
 2. The lifting of the Lord's face toward us is the idea of showing us his favor, accepting us, and being pleased with us.
 3. **Psalm 27:9a** - *"Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger..."*

25. Turn From Wicked Ways

- a. Part of receiving God's forgiveness is to acknowledge that we are on the wrong path, going the wrong way.
- b. God is not worried about offending our sensibilities when he says that we are on a wicked path.
 - i. A wicked path is full of sorrow, sin, grief, distress, evil, trouble, and pain.
 - ii. A wicked path is full of hopelessness, helplessness, and selfishness.
- c. The Greek word for repent, is metaneo, which means to change our way of thinking.
 - i. Repentance is having a change of mind about the path we are on and not only turning back from that path, but also turning to God.
- d. Praying to receive Christ doesn't mean that all of our troubles will go away in an instant; it does, however, mean that we are now on the right path because we have turned from our will and our ways, and turned to God, who will help us.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read **2 Chronicles 6:12-42** and **2 Chronicles 7:14** to provide the foundation for this study.

3. What does forgiveness mean to you?
4. Is real forgiveness possible or do you think people “manufacture” a form of forgiveness in order to be nice or to get along?
5. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences concerning being forgiven or offering forgiveness.
6. Would you say that you keep “short accounts” with people in your family, workplace, neighborhood, etc.?
7. Read and discuss Pastor Gary’s illustration from Ernest Hemingway’s book. (See #19 above)
8. Read and discuss [1 John 4:8](#).
9. Provide an overview for each of the four things Pastor Gary outlined concerning things we need to do in order to receive the Lord’s forgiveness. (See #20 through #23 above)
10. Read and discuss [Isaiah 66:2b](#), [Micah 6:8](#), and [James 4:10](#).
11. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary’s description of the four elements of prayer. (See #21 above)
12. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary’s outline of the three things seeking the Lord’s face represents. (See #22 above)
 - a. What are some of the ways you intentionally spend time with the Lord?
 - b. What are some of the ways you are experiencing the peace, favor, and blessing of the Lord?
 - c. Read and discuss [Numbers 6:26](#) and [Psalm 27:9a](#).
13. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about the ways the Holy Spirit has helped them turn (repent) from their “wicked ways,” and how turning to the Lord has made a major difference in their life.
14. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).