

The Hardest Person to Forgive

As Christians, we readily acknowledge that sin is bad ... it's wrong ... it's the very reason Jesus went to the cross for us.

The severity of sin is a foundational truth in the gospel, yet I continually run into Christians who hold one of two false views of their own sin.



First, many Christians hold their own sin too lightly. *"Yes, it's a sin, but it's not that big of a deal."* They laughingly refer to it as their "one little vice," or they rationalize it away because it's not as bad as other sins. Or they've gotten use to the sinful habit and just write it off as "just a part of who I am."

By that rationale, Adam and Eve could've said, "Hey, it was just a piece of fruit. Fruit's good for you, right? So it's not that big of a deal."

What makes something a sin is when God says it's a sin. Some sins may have greater consequences on those around us, but any sin—no matter how big or small in the world's eyes—keeps us from a right relationship with God. And that's serious.

Christian, we need to be honest with ourselves and honest before God. Let's call our sin—no matter how "small" we see it—what it is: disobedience against a righteous, holy God. God takes our sin seriously, and we should too.

The amazing thing about God is that He has addressed our sin through Christ. Through His death on the cross, Jesus offers forgiveness. All that remains for us to do is give that sin to Him in repentance.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

What an incredible and gracious promise! Yet it's in our response to God's promise that I see many holding on to the second false view of sin.

These Christians don't err in treating their sin too lightly; instead, they treat their sin as too binding. They look to God for forgiveness, but they never let go of the sin themselves. It's not that God hasn't forgiven them; they haven't forgiven themselves.

I get it. Many times, I find the hardest person to forgive is myself. You may too because, well, you blew it. You did the very thing—*again*—you told God you'd never do again. And I'm guessing it's not the first time you blew it. You feel true remorse over your sin and you're beating yourself up for letting God down.

If this is you, there's a key phrase in Micah 7 I want you to see:

"Who is a God like you, forgiving iniquity and passing over rebellion for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not hold on to his anger forever because he delights in faithful love. He will again have compassion on us; he will vanquish our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:18-19).

God hurls our iniquities into the depths of the sea. In her book, *Tramp for the Lord*, Corrie ten Boon said she imagines that, after hurling our sins into the sea, God puts up a sign: NO FISHING ALLOWED.



Stop fishing! Put the pole down and get on with the life God has for you. He wants you to move beyond your sin. He wants to grow you and use you for His kingdom, but He can't so long as you hold on to your sin.

The truth of your forgiveness rests in Jesus; after all, He is the truth. "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32).

Jesus forgives you, so forgive yourself. Run in the freedom of His forgiveness.