

# Forgiveness

Forgive us as we also have forgiven others ...



Rembrandt: "The Return of the Prodigal Son" (ca. 1668). Source: Wikimedia Commons (public domain).

*In God's economy, grace begets grace. God forgives us so that we may forgive others. But, as we all know, that's easier said than done!*

Jesus' radical teaching on forgiveness drew a response of amazement from his disciples: "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). Many of Jesus' best-known parables and teachings highlight the extraordinary grace of God and the vital importance of reconciliation (e.g., Luke 15:1-32; Matthew 5:21-26, 38-48). Salvation history reaches a climax on a Roman cross where, "... in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us ..." (see 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

God's love, justice, and grace expressed in forgiveness and reconciliation are central to Christian faith and practice. From a secular perspective, God's teaching on forgiveness and reconciliation is about as counter-cultural, counter-intuitive, and just plain scandalous, as one can get. And I suspect that our modern Western therapeutic take on life and relationships has created uncertainty and confusion about biblical forgiveness and reconciliation among even followers of Christ.

This short course seeks to examine forgiveness and reconciliation from a biblical perspective and will be delivered over four live online sessions via Zoom.

- **Session #1: *Forgiveness and the Character of God*** – A brief consideration of God as both Giver and For-Giver.
- **Session #2: *Forgiveness and the Atonement*** – A brief overview of the major theories of the Atonement. How does the crucifixion of Christ relate to God's forgiveness?
- **Sessions #3 and #4: *Forgive as God Forgives*** – Parts 1 and 2. These sessions will focus on practical applications of the Christian's responsibility to forgive wrongdoers as taught in the Scriptures – addressing biblical expectations, challenges, hindrances, and common misconceptions about forgiveness.

**Dates:** Tuesday evenings – 20 & 27 February and 5 & 12 March 2024.

**Time:** 7.00 – 9.00pm (Australian Eastern Daylight Time)

**Venue:** Online – Zoom                      **Online registration:** [klesis.com.au](https://klesis.com.au)

**Fee:** AUD\$33 per person (includes GST). Covers course participation and materials.

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**Places are limited, so do register early. Registrations close: Monday, 15 January 2024 (or earlier if all places are filled).**

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**Instructor:** Stephen Wilson is an elder serving The Point Church of Christ which meets in Redlands City, Brisbane, QLD. He has worked in church ministry, education, and community services for more than 35 years. Stephen holds qualifications in education (BA, GradDipEd), community services (MCouns), religion and biblical studies (MRS, MA), and theology (MTh). He is currently a visiting lecturer in Pastoral Counselling at Nazarene Theological College, Brisbane. Stephen and his wife, Donette, have enjoyed nearly 35 years of marriage and have been blessed with three children: Nathan, Hannah, and Caitlin.

