

FOCUS  
Doctrine

TITLE  
Forgiveness for All

REFERENCE  
1 John 1:5–9

• brown merit •

# 1 John

... LESSON 1

· READ



· REFLECT



· RESPOND



## READ

*This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.  
1 John 1:5–9*

Corrie ten Boom may be an unfamiliar name. She was never as rich as Bill Gates or as famous as Tom Brady. She will never be a household name, but her influence will last for eternity. Corrie ten Boom was a Christian who lived in the Netherlands during World War II. God used Corrie and her family to hide many Jewish people and save them from death in the Nazi concentration camps. No one forced her to put her life in jeopardy the way she did, but she did it because she believed it was the right thing to do.

In February of 1944, she and her family were

arrested and sent to concentration camps for hiding many threatened Jewish people. While in the camps, several of her family members died. Corrie was subjected to all kinds of terrible treatment, but survived while keeping her eyes on Jesus. After the war ended and she was released, she traveled all over the world telling others about Christ and sharing the message of His love and forgiveness.

On one occasion, Corrie came into contact with a former concentration camp guard. This particular guard was known to be very cruel, so it was difficult for Corrie to forgive him. It was so difficult in fact, that she had to pray for God's help. Corrie recounted in her book *Tramp for the Lord*, that as she held the hand of the former guard, she "had never known God's love so immensely." God gave her the strength to offer forgiveness in spite of her difficulties.

Jesus offers us forgiveness when we sin. Probably, none of us have done anything as bad as the things the Nazis participated in, but all sin separates us from God. The Scriptures say that the payment for sin is death. In order for sin to be forgiven, something has to die. That's why in the Old Testament they sacrificed animals—so that the people would be forgiven. When Jesus died on the cross, He was the final sacrifice for sin that opened the door for all of us to have our sins forgiven. When Christians do something wrong, all we have to do is ask and He will forgive our sins freely. There is nothing we have to

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do to earn our forgiveness; it is a gift from God.

However, as Christians, Jesus does say there is a condition to our continued forgiveness; we must be willing to forgive others as well. Matthew 6:14–16 states, “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” Jesus set the example on the cross by forgiving those who nailed Him there. Corrie ten Boom’s experience, along with countless others, also shows us that it is possible to forgive even the worst offense.

No one has ever claimed forgiving people is easy, but it is vital to our Christian walk. Jesus Christ freely forgives us, and we must freely forgive others. Forgiveness is powerful and it can completely change the course of someone’s life. We need to follow the way of our Master, Jesus, and practice forgiveness.

**PRAYER:** God, I know Jesus died on the cross to provide forgiveness and salvation for everyone. I’m sorry for the wrong things I have done and ask for Your forgiveness. Also, help me to forgive those that have mistreated me. I want to show Your love to them. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

**7-DAY BIBLE READING PLAN**  
 Sunday ·  
 Monday ·  
 Tuesday ·  
 Wednesday ·  
 Thursday ·  
 Friday ·  
 Saturday ·



REFLECT

We have all done things that are wrong, but today’s verses make it clear that God forgives and we need to forgive as well. Take a sheet of paper and write down three things you have done that were wrong, then ask God to forgive you for the things you listed. This is just between you and God, and nothing you need to share with the group. If you are sincere, God will forgive you of your sins. When you are finished praying, tear up the paper and throw it away. God will never bring those sins up again and neither should you.



RESPOND

Take time this next week to think of two or three instances when someone wronged you. Have you forgiven them? In your own heart, forgive them of the things they have done to you. If you still are in contact with them, tell them that you forgive them if you have not already done so. It will be a freeing exercise for you and will demonstrate the love of Jesus to those by whom you feel wronged.

The *Fire Bible: Student Edition* provides a reading plan that follows a two-year design for reading the entire Bible. Follow that reading plan in order to earn the green Bible Reading merit.

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