

# The Self Government Principle of Forgiveness



“Iniquity is atoned for by mercy and truth. Evil is avoided by reverence for God.” Proverbs 16:6

By John E. Schrock, Businessman

*Underline the key concepts found in this principle.*

To atone means to pay for the iniquity, the evil, or wrong we have done. The payment (atonement) makes restitution and restores us to our former state. The end result is forgiveness. The principle of forgiveness is probably one of the most rewarding principles we can experience in life, because it has a major effect on our health and well being as a person. It will also affect our business dealings, as well as our relationships with others in general.

In order to experience forgiveness, we need to understand why we should accept and receive forgiveness from God. We must first recognize that God is holy and just, and wants us to practice righteousness with each other, derived from His laws. He made the true rules of life and living. These rules are called Truth. They cannot be broken without penalties. They are like the law of gravity. We cannot change its rules, but must learn to live by them. Likewise, God’s law is just, and punishment must follow its violation; otherwise, *God’s Word could not be trusted*. However, unlike gravity—where punishment follows immediately after violation—mercy and forgiveness are available for us while we are in the process of learning the spiritual rules of life, giving us second chances. God’s attitude is that “all people are my creation.” He loves everyone, good and bad. The difference is that the righteous have discovered what makes life work, while others have not.

God knew that we would fall short

of His law of righteousness, so He provided a law of atonement. He calls this forgiveness. If we don’t understand or receive forgiveness, then we are under the penalty and punishment of God’s system of justice. Jesus did not come to destroy or take away God’s law of justice, but to teach us principles of love and mercy, tempered with justice. He offers forgiveness for those who receive Him. Law without mercy makes life hard and tough. It brings on constant guilt and anger which destroys our health and relationships. Without experiencing forgiveness we develop a bad attitude about people and life in general, putting ourselves in a negative, defensive mode toward life.

Beware of these two attitudes:

- 1) The *strict law attitude*: this creates rebellion in kids, workers or a society. They feel like they can never be good enough, so why try.
- 2) The *attitude of looseness*: this leaves them with no goals or parameters to live by which creates an irresponsible attitude with kids, work-

ers, and a society who then feel they can get away with anything.

We must remember that God made the rules. He cannot change the law of justice because His righteousness is always right. He has, however, made another law that brings relief to the pain and agony of life. If we receive and understand the principle of forgiveness we will receive atonement (payment). Atonement is simply forgiveness for our failures, so we can get up and start again, so we can prosper and be glad and walk as children of light. Jesus is more than the way. He is also the truth and the life. He is just, but also has offered us mercy and forgiveness while we are in the process of learning to live under the just rules of His Kingdom.

*This principle is part of the one year character development program:*

**Foundations For Achievement.**

## Thoughts to Ponder:

Forgiveness is a gift of high value and is common amongst the humble.

| Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Why did you give yourself this rating  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| What specific action can you put into practice to test the benefits of this principle? |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| Check list for the daily reading of this principle                                     | M | T | W | T | F | S | S |   |   |    |

Completed

Not completed