



Forgiveness or Self-love

By Claude Sikubwabo

How to Define God In Forgiving

Like the instructions embedded in genes—immaterial and intelligent energies—concepts like forgiveness and love are not tangible objects and therefore cannot be exhausted. Think of them as software programs or files. How many copies of the same original program can you create? Infinite. Now apply this to love, blessings, or peace—how much of these can you hold within yourself or share with others? Infinite. As we've already seen in earlier examples, love never runs out; everyone possesses it. The key lies in choosing to express it. This same principle applies to forgiveness.

What is God's forgiveness? Remember that God is infinite, ever-present, and good only. Forgiveness is good and therefore a characteristic of God. When you withhold forgiveness, you do not feel good. This also means that you are withholding it from being activated in your own life. Remember what the bible says about forgiveness. It says in Mark 11:25: "And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. As you can see, by refusing to let go of that bitterness, you keep it inside of you and it prevents you from feeling the Presence of God or good.

The first step in expressing forgiveness is through your thoughts. Choosing to think about forgiveness is, in itself, an act of self-love. As we've established, your body is constantly attuned to your mind, responding to your thoughts and carrying them out. When you think of forgiving, you adopt a positive mindset, which your body translates into positive feelings.

Simply by engaging in this thought process—even before taking any action—you are already rewarded with a sense of relief and inner peace. Interestingly, forgiving someone doesn't always require their presence or direct communication. While we often tell someone directly that we forgave them to confirm resolution or ensure they feel better, forgiveness begins internally. When you decide within yourself to forgive, the act of forgiveness is already complete.

This is especially important when dealing with individuals who are no longer present or events from the past. How do you approach a person who is no longer with you or revisit events that have already passed to say, "I forgive you"? The truth is, you don't need to. Forgiveness doesn't depend on physical interaction. It's a decision within you—a release of resentment and a choice to let go of the negativity tied to those moments. So, ask yourself: are you truly thinking that you cannot forgive them? The power to forgive lies entirely within you, and it is infinite.

When people break the word "forgive" into "for-give," they aren't just playing with words; they're revealing its true origin and meaning. The preposition "for" signifies moving forward or toward something, while "give" means to offer. Together, "forgive" means to offer something from this moment onward that you've been withholding—namely, a positive attitude.

This positive attitude can take many forms: a gift, a prayer, or simply an understanding. So, when you ask what is God in forgiving, God is this positive energy that makes you and the forgiven feel good. And what is the most important thing you offer? Peace—to replace the irritation, grievance, or resentment you've been carrying. Notice that these destructive feelings reside within the one holding them. Therefore, the first recipient of the peace you offer is yourself.

It's essential to remember that you can only give what you already possess. This creates a powerful cycle: by choosing to forgive, you generate peace within yourself, allowing you to share it with others. The act of forgiveness, then, is as much about healing yourself as it is about resolving conflicts with others.

When you initiate forgiveness, this is how you define God in forgiving; forgiveness and God are the same thing.

I have forgiveness/peace (this is a thought)→

I feel good for having forgiveness→

I forgive (I decide to extend it)→

The forgiven feels good(if they choose to receive, decide to have peace)→

I have more than enough forgiveness→

I forgive constantly→

I feel good constantly→

The Direction Of Favor

By offering forgiveness or love, I am not doing a favor for the person I forgive; instead, I am defining God and doing myself a favor. The other person may choose not to receive or activate the forgiveness or peace within themselves, but that doesn't chip any piece away from my favor. I still retain the full benefit of my act, and my mission for peace is complete.

Forgiving is like giving your heart a bath. Imagine you could open your chest like a jacket, take out your heart, and wash it every day. If you forget to do so, your heart becomes itchy, inflamed, or uncomfortable. If you forgive one person but withhold forgiveness from another, it's like giving your heart only a partial bath—leaving one side still unclean and irritated. No one would want that for their heart.

Dr. Don Colbert explains this beautifully in *The 7 Pillars of Health*, saying, "Bitterness and unforgiveness are like acid. They consume the very container they are kept in. Unfortunately, that container is you." So, do yourself a favor—offer forgiveness to yourself and others, and you should feel what God's forgiveness is, in return.

Forgive history, too! Always remember that forgiveness is an act of self-love before it becomes an act of love for others. Love isn't cheap, and as you practice forgiveness, you may find yourself in a battle with your ego, which seeks to punish others. However, ego itself is not a tangible entity and cannot punish anyone—you give it permission to act. Whenever the ego urges you to punish, remember that it exists within you. Allowing it to exercise this destructive power is like pouring acid into yourself—it consumes you, not others.

If you believe that the bitterness you feel comes from the person or event that offended you, it's because you are revisiting and reliving the pain. Instead, choose forgiveness: let go of the subject and notice how your feelings shift almost immediately. Forgiveness isn't just an act of grace—it's a powerful step toward reclaiming your peace and freedom.

Exercise Forgiving

Here's an exercise to try: Set a timer for five minutes. Use this time to focus on recalling an incident or person you believe offended you. Pay attention to how you feel as you think about it. Try to describe those feelings—tense, anxious, nauseated, or even terrified. Once the timer goes off, switch your focus.

Now, imagine how that person or situation could transform into something positive, or simply let go of the entire subject. Instead, visualize something you've always wanted to achieve—a trip to a foreign country, a relaxing beach getaway, or a career promotion. Engage your imagination fully: how does it feel? What does it sound like, smell like, and look like? If there's food or drink involved, imagine tasting it.

By using all five senses, you immerse yourself in the experience, just as if you were actually living it. This process is called “sensory-rich imagery,” as described by Ray Clear in *The Neuropsychology of Self-Discipline*. Write down some words to describe these new feelings. You'll likely notice they are much more pleasant than the ones you felt earlier. What better proof do you need that your thoughts directly influence your emotions?

From now on, whenever sad or negative memories resurface, remind yourself that you have the power to replace them with something uplifting. Use those moments as cues to redirect your focus to something meaningful. For example, when I catch myself endlessly scrolling through YouTube for entertainment, I remember that the real entertainment lies within my own mind. I close the app, and if time and circumstances allow, I center myself and begin meditating.

Let this serve as a reminder of your responsibility to hold yourself accountable to the promise of forgiveness. Even if you feel disheartened because those who have hurt you are relatives, and it pains you to see your family lacking peace, remember that change is always possible. Just as you have the capacity to change, so do they—because everything evolves with time. You don't need to know how this transformation will happen; trust in the wisdom of the Greek poet Menander, who said, “Time heals all wounds.” Allow time to heal

your sorrow, the pain of your loved ones, and the struggles of all people. Your patience will bear fruit, as Mayte Garcia so beautifully reminds us.

The Scriptures may seem to command forgiveness, as seen in Ephesians 4:32: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you,” and in Mark 11:25: “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.” However, these verses should not be interpreted as warnings of divine retribution if you fail to forgive. Rather, this is the prophetic language of encouragement, urging us toward spiritual growth.

It’s also worth noting that the consequences of withholding forgiveness come not as punishments from God, but as self-imposed burdens. As we’ve explored, your decisions of attachment—not external forces—create your suffering. Choosing to forgive, then, is not only an act of grace toward others but a profound act of self-love and liberation.

The Voice of Liberation

If you insist that it is God who is responsible for punishment, as you were previously taught, you are also correct in the sense that you are an extension of God. Therefore, when you punish, you are ultimately punishing yourself—your true Self, which is your soul. The commanding tone often used by prophets was intended to evoke a sense of urgency and caution, similar to how the concept of sin has mostly been used to influence people through fear. While the prophets may not have understood the physiology or spiritual mechanics at work, they had an awareness or divine revelation that the Spirit within us cannot thrive in negativity. Negative energy and spiritual energy are fundamentally incompatible. What we perceive as punishment, as discussed earlier, is the body’s way of alerting us to harmful energy by generating feelings that are other than goodness.

It is your choice—through your free will—to either release this negative energy or continue dwelling in it. This is your revelation, right now. Appreciate or ignore it! Make a Choice! Society has conditioned us to believe in suffering, judgment, and punishment as necessary, which can leave us feeling trapped and resigned to these oppressive ideas. Many attempt to cope by numbing their minds, but this is not how we were designed to live. The Spirit within you is always urging you toward freedom, peace, and happiness. Listen to it! If begging would yield much more of you, I am begging you, for you.

Even modern political systems in advanced societies, like those in the West, echo this truth with concepts like “the pursuit of happiness” as an inherent human right. This reflects the universal understanding that it is in our nature to seek happiness—a state of peace, love, and contentment. You were created to feel good, to love, and to live in harmony with yourself and the world around you. Listen to the Spirit within, urging you to embrace this truth.

It is deeply disheartening to recognize how some religious teachings continue to amplify messages of judgment, punishment, sin, guilt, and hell, instead of exploring why prophets

used such language in the first place. Early religious leaders may not have understood the psychological and physiological effects of this negative messaging, but in today's world, this understanding should be common knowledge.

Human beings are often conditioned to feel low, anxious, fearful, or hopeless—states of mind learned through life experiences and, at times, even taught as an unavoidable part of existence. These negative states become ingrained, perpetuating a cycle of emotional and spiritual distress.

This is why forgiveness is such a critical topic. Without the ability to forgive—without finding peace—you cannot fully experience “what is God’s forgiveness” and the meaning of true life. Forgiveness allows you to break free from the heavy burden of negativity, opening the door to genuine healing and the fullness of life. This is how you define God in forgiveness and in your life. “Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect;” Matthew 5:48 urges you. You cannot be perfect in bitterness.

Should this new way of defining God touch your soul, please shout out the healing power of forgiveness by leaving us a feedback through email, or social presence and spread the word to others; Amen!