

A STUDY ON CULTURE AND FORGIVENESS:

1. Pick one area of culture to focus on, such as social media, politics, art, music, film, television, sports, education, business, etc. Choose an area you engage with regularly.
2. Spend time intentionally observing and reflecting on how forgiveness does or does not show up in that area of culture. You may want to take notes as you notice specific examples over the course of several days or weeks. Consider things like:
 - How are wrongs, conflicts, or offenses handled?
 - What kind of language is used to talk about forgiveness or lack of forgiveness (e.g. cancel culture)?
 - Who is encouraged or expected to forgive, and who is discouraged from forgiving?
 - What conditions are placed on forgiveness being granted?
 - What underlying values or worldviews shape the practice of forgiveness?
3. Based on your observations, reflect on what model(s) of forgiveness seem to predominate. Does it align more with *cheap grace*, *little grace*, *no grace*, OR does it reflect true, costly, Biblical forgiveness? Look for examples that fall into each category.
4. Consider more deeply who is harmed when forgiveness is not rightly understood and practiced in this area of culture. Does it breed bitterness, pride, isolation, inequality, revenge? How might it impact people's hearts and relationships? Who benefits from the status quo?
5. Make an effort to find examples of Biblical forgiveness being displayed, even in subtle ways, within this slice of culture. These examples, though rare, provide a counter-narrative. Reflect on what enables people to forgive Biblically in an unforgiving environment.
6. Ask yourself: based on what I've observed, how can I personally be a minister of reconciliation in this part of culture? How can I forgive others Biblically here, bear wrongs patiently, and point people to Christ's grace?
7. Pray for God to increase your humility, free you from bitterness, and empower you to extend grace. Pray for cultural influencers in this area to have a revelation of true forgiveness found in Jesus.
8. Journal your reflections from this study, including any specific action steps God is leading you to take (people to forgive, conversations to have, habits to change, etc.). Revisit your journal to remind yourself of what God is teaching you.
9. Repeat this practice occasionally with other areas of culture you engage in so you can continue growing in discernment and Biblical forgiveness. Be encouraged that even small acts of grace can have big ripple effects in an unforgiving world.

FORGIVE