

The Centrality of the Cross

1. The Bible Wheel Cross
 2. The centrality of the second cycle – from Isaiah to Christ
 3. Isaiah as a miniature New Testament with the Cross as central
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The Cross and Law

Natural Law defines ends. Death (separation) is the consequence of sin

First Cycle:

Creation: what we were created to be. God is Holy and sin separates us from His presence, which is a form of death – symbolized by judgements. *“All fall short of the glory of God”*

Second Cycle:

Redemption, justification: forgiveness. Christ provides a way back by removing that separation. Christ removes the separation. This means we can receive God’s Spirit = God’s presence. A relationship with God is now possible, hence the third cycle. *“God so loved the world”*. Christ took on the consequences of sin – he took on the separation.

Third Cycle:

Sanctification: Restoration of a relationship. Receiving the Spirit

How Often Should We Forgive?

Forgive 70 x 7 times. Always forgive – never judge.

Is Forgiveness Conditional Upon Acknowledgement or Repentance?

It is not conditional upon these – *“Forgive them because they know not what they do”*

Is Forgiveness the same as Reconciliation?

Forgiveness is not reconciliation – we are not doormats. Forgiveness is not dependent upon acknowledgement or repentance, but a healed relationship is. Restoration of relationship is not a necessary consequence of forgiveness, but forgiveness opens the door for restoration. Rather, restoration requires the aggressor to repent and change – and this is part of sanctification.

How do we know when we need to forgive?

When we feel a negative emotion towards someone

How do we forgive great evil?

By asking God to forgive them, even when we feel we cannot, then allowing that forgiveness to flow through us.

How is natural law related to forgiveness?

Natural Law posits positive ends for everyone – including our enemies. By not forgiving we harbour ill will towards the offender – which goes against Natural Law. By forgiving and maintaining conditions for restoration, we act in accordance with the natural law.

Restoration is not Automatic

Restoration of a relationship is not automatic. It requires the offender to repent and change. If they do not change, then they remain hostile or dangerous to the other, and consequently a restoration is not possible. When a person forgives another, this does not mean they become a door-mat.