

Forgiveness



IS A FORKED ROAD

Matthew 6:14-15

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.



Some Christians seem quick to forgive anyone
and everyone whether or not they've
apologized and are truly sorry for any hurt
they've caused.

DENNIS PRAGER

Absalom's Conspiracy

2 Samuel 15

¹ In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. ² He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him,



Absalom's Conspiracy

2 Samuel 15

“What town are you from?” He would answer, “Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.” ³ Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you.



⁴ And Absalom would add, “**If only I were appointed judge in the land!** Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice.”



⁵ Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.



⁷ At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king,
“Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord.
⁸ While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made
this vow: ‘If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will
worship the Lord in Hebron.’”

⁹ The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he
went to Hebron.



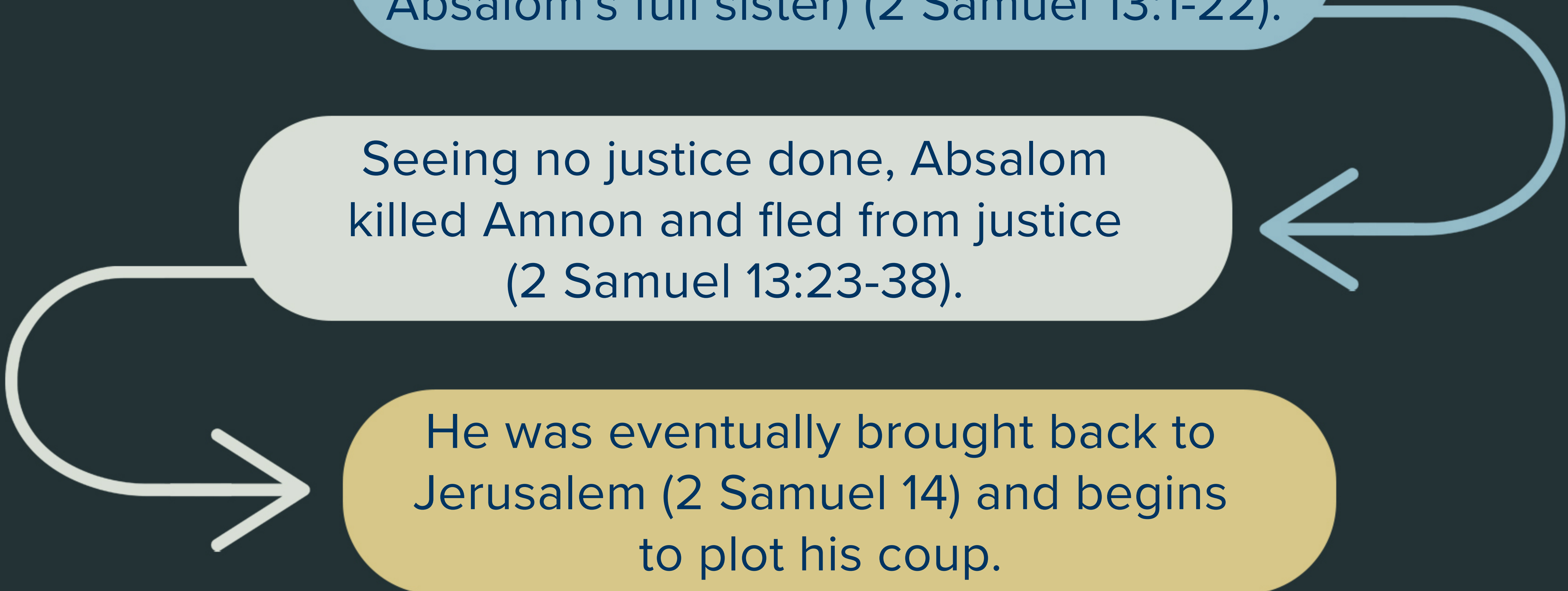
¹⁰ Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’” ¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter.



Amnon (David's son) raped
Tamar (Amnon's own half-sister and
Absalom's full sister) (2 Samuel 13:1-22).

Seeing no justice done, Absalom
killed Amnon and fled from justice
(2 Samuel 13:23-38).

He was eventually brought back to
Jerusalem (2 Samuel 14) and begins
to plot his coup.



A Timeline of Unforgiveness

“In the course of time” (2 Sam 13:1): Amnon assaults Tamar

2 years later (2 Sam 13:23): Absalom murders Amnon and flees

3 years later (2 Sam 13:38): Absalom returns to Jerusalem

2 years later (2 Sam 14:28): Absalom is “restored” to David

4 years of biding his time (2 Sam 15:7): Absalom sets his
rebellion in motion

11 years of unforgiveness

2 Samuel 15:12

¹² While Absalom was offering sacrifices, **he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite**, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.



2 Samuel 11:3

The man said, “She is Bathsheba, **the daughter of Eliam** and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.”



2 Samuel 23:34

From the list of David's 30 mighty men:
Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite

David took Ahithophel's granddaughter and killed her husband.



2 Samuel 15:12

¹² While Absalom was offering sacrifices, **he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite**, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.



David takes Bathsheba (2 Sam 11)

Not quite 1 year: Bathsheba's pregnancy comes to full term.

“In the course of time” (2 Sam 13:1): Amnon assaults Tamar

2 years later (2 Sam 13:23): Absalom murders Amnon and flees

3 years later (2 Sam 13:38): Absalom returns to Jerusalem

2 years later (2 Sam 14:28): Absalom is “restored” to David

4 years of biding his time (2 Sam 15:7): Absalom's rebellion

Ahithophel sees his opportunity

12+ years of unforgiveness

2 Samuel 17

¹ Ahithophel said to Absalom, “I would choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight in pursuit of David. ² **I would attack him** while he is weary and weak. **I would strike him** with terror, and then all the people with him will flee. **I would strike down only the king** ³ and bring all the people back to you. The **death of the man you seek** will mean the return of all; all the people will be unharmed.” ⁴ This plan seemed good to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel.



2 Samuel 17

²³ When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.



2 Samuel 18

⁹ Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

...

¹⁴ Joab said, "I'm not going to wait like this for you." So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. ¹⁵ And ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.



What does this story tell us?

- Sin is a compounding problem.
- Without justice, forgiveness is only a fiction.
- Without forgiveness, sin eats away at you.
- Bitterness will find its allies.

Pain — Whenever we are sinned against, it hurts.

DAVID AUGSBURGER

Anger — Whenever we are sinned against by
one whom we love, the love is manifest as
anger.

DAVID AUGSBURGER

Alienation — There is a unique loneliness when I no longer have the same relationship with someone because of sin.



Is forgiveness this simple?

Psalm 86:5

⁵ You, Lord, are forgiving and good,
abounding in love to all ***who call to you.***



Psalm 130:1-4

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

² Lord, hear my voice.

***Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.***

³ If you, Lord, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.



Acts 2:38

Peter replied, “**Repent** and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins**. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Acts 3:19

Repent, then, and turn to God, **so that your sins may be wiped out**, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord...



Acts 5:31

God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to **repentance** and forgive their sins.



Acts 11:18

When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted **repentance** that leads to life.”



Colossians 3:13

¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.

Forgive as the Lord forgave you.



2 Corinthians 7:8-10

⁸ Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— ⁹ yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰ **Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.**



EMBODYING FORGIVENESS

A Theological Analysis



L. GREGORY JONES

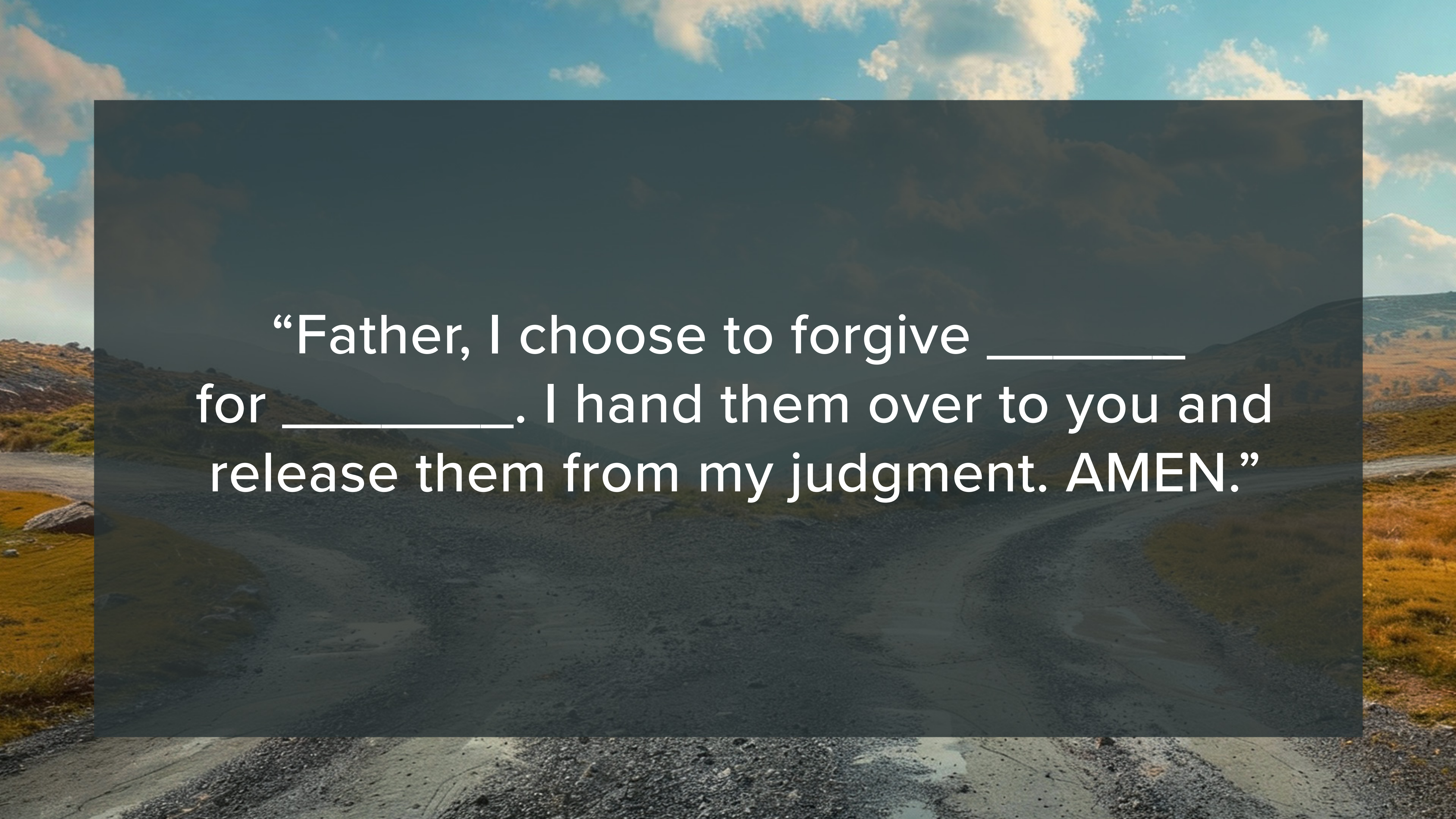
“Forgiveness is not so much a word spoken, and action performed, or a feeling felt as it is an embodied way of life in an ever-deepening friendship with the Triune God and with others.”

GREGORY L. JONES
Embodying Forgiveness

Legal Forgiveness

Legal forgiveness foregoes punishing another personally, even if it is just.

Faces of Forgiveness, by Steve Sandage and F. LeRon Shults

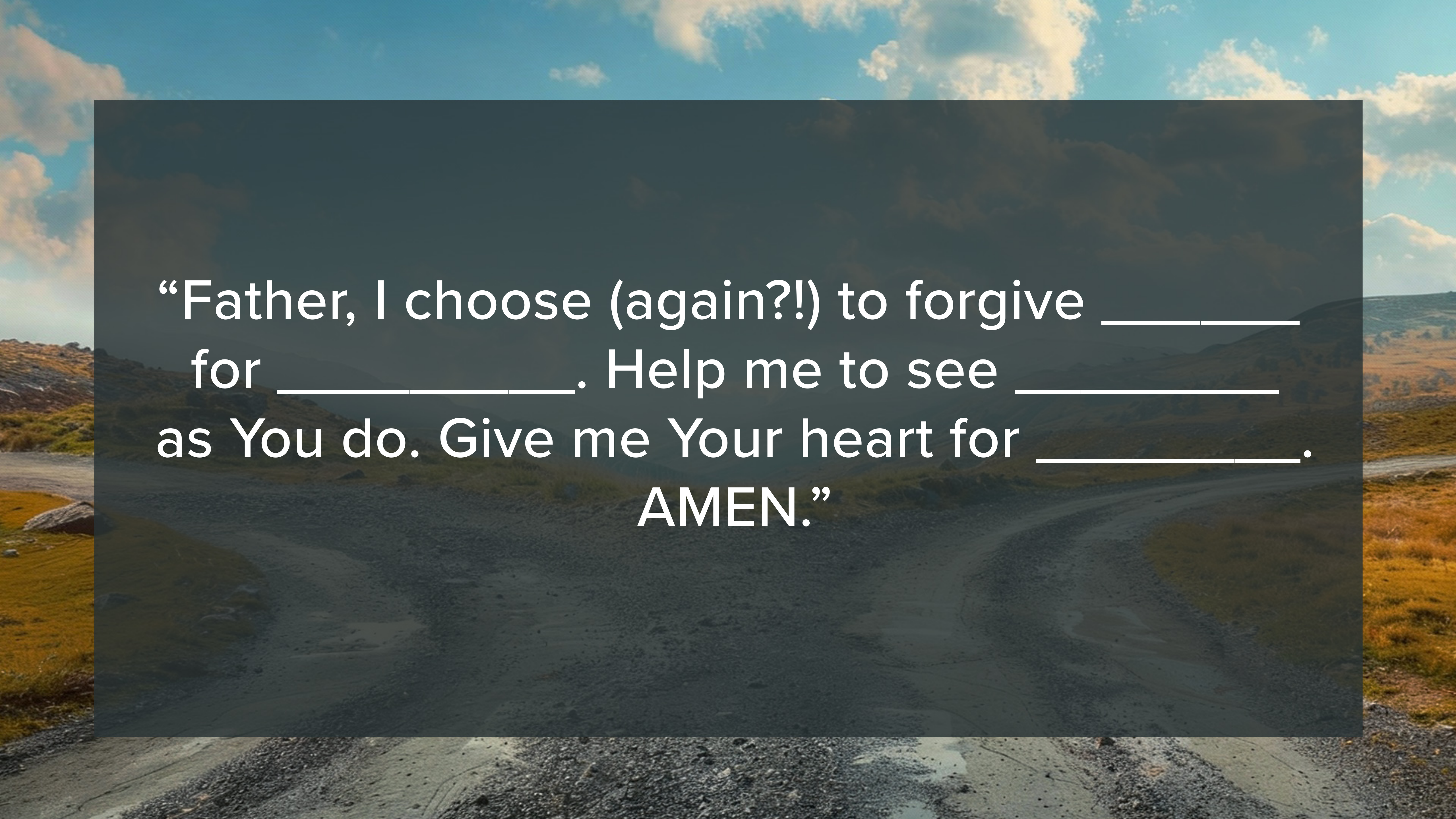


“Father, I choose to forgive _____
for _____. I hand them over to you and
release them from my judgment. AMEN.”

Therapeutic Forgiveness

Therapeutic forgiveness seeks to see the offender in a new light, even offering empathy in light of their self and story.

Faces of Forgiveness, by Steve Sandage and F. LeRon Shults

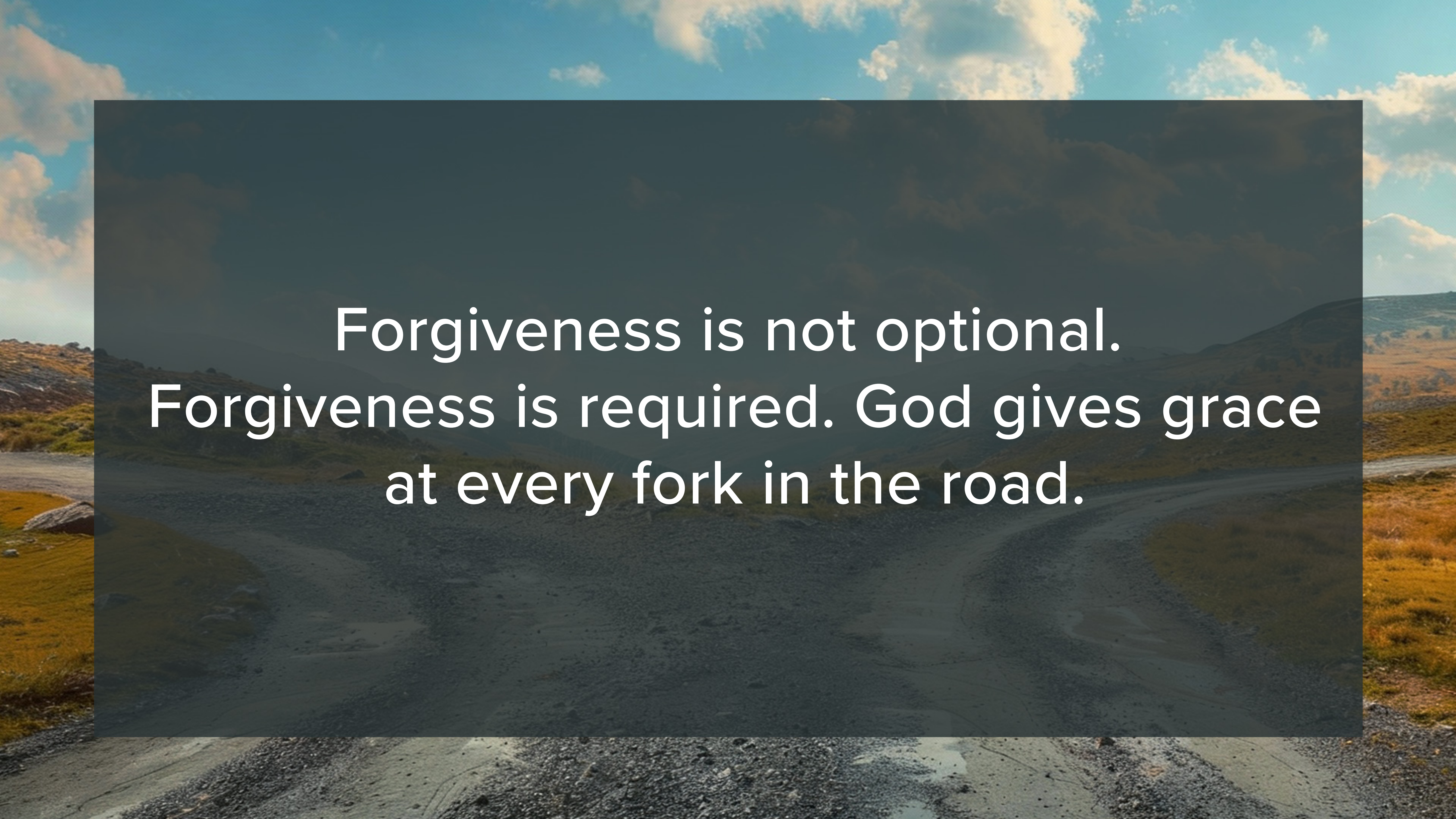


“Father, I choose (again?!) to forgive _____
for _____. Help me to see _____
as You do. Give me Your heart for _____.
AMEN.”

Redemptive Forgiveness

Redemptive forgiveness is full reconciliation in light of the healed past without dismissing or ignoring it.

Faces of Forgiveness, by Steve Sandage and F. LeRon Shults

The background image shows a wide, unpaved road that splits into two paths, creating a fork in the road. The terrain is dry and hilly, with sparse vegetation. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. A semi-transparent dark rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

Forgiveness is not optional.
Forgiveness is required. God gives grace
at every fork in the road.