BMC Psychology

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Open Access

A systematic review of divine forgiveness self-report measures

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Abstract

Background Divine forgiveness (DF) can be defined as the perception of being absolved from sin by a Higher Power. Psychological research is increasingly recognizing DF as a relevant construct with implications for well-being, coping, and spirituality. Despite this growing awareness, empirical studies on DF have often relied on conceptually and psychometrically questionable measures, limiting theoretical and cross-cultural advancement. The aim of this study was to systematically review the existing quantitative self-report measures of DF, assessing their characteristics and psychometric properties.

Methods A systematic search was conducted across four databases (Web of Science, Scopus, PsycINFO, and PubMed), following PRISMA guidelines.

Results Sixty studies met inclusion criteria, most of them based on U.S. samples and employing short, predominantly unidimensional scales. Our analysis showed that the majority of instruments captured general beliefs about having been forgiven by God while only a few explicitly assessed experiential, emotional, or multidimensional aspects of DF. Psychometric evidence was limited: most studies reported only internal consistency, while factorial validity, invariance across groups, and broader validity evidence were rarely examined.

Conclusions Overall, these findings highlight the need to develop theoretically grounded and psychometrically robust instruments that assess the multiple facets of the experience of DF, and that are sensitive to cultural and religious diversity. The available DF measures should be considered preliminary tools that require further development in order to fully capture the complex, multidimensional, and culturally embedded nature of the construct.

Keywords Divine forgiveness, Self-report measures, Psychometrics, Religions, Systematic review

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Introduction

In the mid-1980s, psychological research began to empirically explore a construct that had traditionally been considered to belong solely and exclusively to the theological or religious domain, namely forgiveness [1]. Research in this area has witnessed a sharp rise over time, but most of the effort and resources have focused on interpersonal forgiveness and, later, on self-forgiveness. As a result, to date the considerable number of publications on forgiveness focuses on these two aspects [2]. However, by the end of the 20th century, scholars had already noted that forgiveness is a deeply transformative experience that encompasses not only human relationships but also the spiritual and transcendent dimensions of life [3]. Therefore, to fully understand the role of forgiveness in human behavior, it is essential to consider its religious roots and the broader themes that exist at the intersection of religion and forgiveness [4, 5].

Despite this awareness and the fact that more than 85% of the world's population is affiliated with a religion [6] and is expected to continue identifying with religious traditions in the future [7], the construct of divine forgiveness (DF) has received surprisingly little empirical attention. This is particularly noteworthy given the flourishing body of research on forgiveness (see, for example, [8, 9]) and the increasing scientific evidence linking religion and religiosity with interpersonal, intergroup, and self-forgiveness (e.g., [10–19]). DF, which lies at the intersection of religion and forgiveness, "currently makes up less than 2% of all psychological studies conducted on forgiveness" ([20], p. 1).

Recently, DF has been defined as a "perceived absolution for a transgression or sin from a Supreme Being or Higher Power that is manifest in the individual's cognition, affect, and/or behavior" ([1], p. 455). Within the present review, DF is not treated as a theological claim about God's actions, but as individuals' perceived experience of being forgiven by a Higher Power. It is therefore approached as a subjective, meaning-based experience, not as a direct assessment of divine agency. DF may be considered or experienced in relation to one's inherent sinful nature or a specific personal transgression [16]. Although research on DF is beginning to emerge, it remains conceptually and methodologically fragmented, lacking a cohesive theoretical framework within psychological science [1, 2, 20, 21]. In fact, in many of the published studies that consider DF prior to 2023 (the year the John Templeton Foundation funded a series of empirical studies on DF worldwide), DF is not even the main focus of the research, but one of many variables examined [22]. Also, its measurement is mostly done through a single "conceptually and psychometrically questionable" ([2], p. 1) item: "I know that God forgives me" ([23], p. 37). While single-item measures may be practical in large-scale surveys[1], they present clear limitations when used to assess complex constructs. For instance, single items do not allow the estimation of reliability or the examination of factorial structure and may be more susceptible to measurement error. Moreover, an item such as "I know that God forgives me" primarily captures a cognitive endorsement and does not necessarily reflect the experiential or affective aspects of feeling forgiven. As a result, relying on a single indicator may oversimplify a construct that recent theoretical work suggests is multifaceted. This may ultimately constrain both conceptual clarity and meaningful cross-cultural comparison.

Although DF is conceptually comparable to other forms of forgiveness (i.e., interpersonal, self-, and intergroup forgiveness), it represents a distinct construct within psychological research. Interpersonal forgiveness refers to forgiveness granted by a person who has been wronged, and is focused on reducing negative thoughts, feelings, intentions, or behaviors toward the offender while increasing positive ones [24]. Self-forgiveness, instead, is the process through which an individual acknowledges their wrongdoing, reduces self-condemnation, increases self-compassion, and restores a sense of moral agency and self-worth [25]. Intergroup forgiveness is typically defined as a transformation of a person's motivation toward a perceived perpetrating outgroup, which also involves changes in the ingroup's shared emotional responses, moral interpretations of past wrongdoing, and perceptions of intergroup trust [26]. DF diverges from all these types of forgiveness because its referent is transcendent: the source of forgiveness is not a human being, but a Higher Power or Supreme Being. As such, DF may engage different psychological processes, including beliefs about divine justice and mercy, existential meaning-making, and religious coping mechanisms [1, 20]. This transcendental dimension differentiates DF from other forgiveness constructs and highlights its role in influencing domains of life that surpass interpersonal boundaries, extending into spirituality, morality, and identity.

It is also possible to identify shared features across these various types of forgiveness. Similar to human forgiveness, DF can be assessed at different levels of specificity, namely as a disposition or as a transgression-specific experience. Dispositional DF is the general tendency to feel forgiven by God for one's sinful nature

[1] Brief measures have clear advantages in population-based research, including reduced respondent burden, higher completion rates, lower costs, and greater likelihood of adoption, which can enhance cumulative scientific progress. When developed rigorously, short scales can retain adequate reliability and validity. That said, item number should reflect a balance between construct coverage and feasibility. Rather than identifying a single "ideal" length, we suggest that future work may benefit from developing and validating measures of varying lengths, tailored to different research contexts and purposes.

without referring to a particular event, while transgression-specific DF is the feeling of having been forgiven for a specific sin or transgression [1]. In this case, the focus on a concrete wrongdoing typically involves confronting aversive emotional responses, such as guilt or shame, as part of the process through which individuals come to experience forgiveness, although the presence and intensity of such emotional responses may vary across individuals and contexts. Moreover, as is the case for other forms of forgiveness, DF has a multidimensional nature that has very recently become increasingly evident. For instance, Paleari et al.'s [27, 28] studies have revealed that, when they sin, believers in the major monotheistic religions (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism) may experience God as compassionate and merciful, but also as angry and distant. Importantly, such emotional appraisals may reflect individuals' perceptions of their wrongdoing or moral failure and should not be equated with the theological definition of DF per se. At the theological level, constructs such as divine mercy, justice, and forgiveness are conceptually distinct, and should not be conflated with individuals' subjective emotional experiences. From a psychological perspective, these emotional experiences represent subjective responses that may arise from multiple sources, including perceived guilt, moral transgression, or one's perceived relationship with God, rather than constituting indicators of DF itself. While some emotions may be directly associated with the perceived experience of being forgiven, others may primarily reflect individuals' appraisal of their own sin or moral standing, rather than the presence or absence of DF. Believers may further perceive that God forgives them even if they do not change, yet also that certain circumstances—such as repentance and making amends for the wrong done—may facilitate the experience of DF. God's forgiveness can be experienced for transgressions/sins perpetrated against God, people, and nature; it can be felt unconditionally or only if certain conditions, determined by faith traditions or believers' moral and religious values, are met [16, 29]. Moreover, conceptions of DF differ across religious traditions, which may influence how believers interpret and experience being forgiven [16]. Such variation may not be fully captured by instruments developed within a single religious or cultural framework. In light of these nuances, it may be empirically valuable to examine whether different dimensions of perceived DF can be distinguished, rather than assuming a unitary representation of the construct.

As Fincham [1, 2] has recently emphasized, there is empirical evidence associating DF with a variety of variables, such as religion and spirituality (e.g., [30, 31]), sociodemographic variables (e.g., [32]), personality traits (e.g., [33]), interpersonal and self-forgiveness (e.g., [4, 29, 34–36]), as well as physical and mental health and well-being (e.g., [5, 37–42]). Moreover, it is well recognized that such forgiveness from God is central in the major Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism) (see, for example, [16, 20, 43, 44]) and forgiveness in its different forms is a key theme across religions [45].

DF's conceptual overlap with, and distinction from, other forms of forgiveness, combined with the wide range of DF correlates and the ubiquity of religion, underscore the importance of examining DF within psychological research. Rather than assuming a unitary representation, it may be empirically valuable to investigate whether different dimensions of perceived DF can be distinguished in individuals' and communities' lived experiences [4, 5]. Nonetheless, as mentioned above, this field appears to lack robust, theory-driven and psychometrically sound self-report measures [1, 2, 20]. As a result, researchers have traditionally faced difficulties in selecting and comparing instruments across studies, in generalizing their findings—especially across different religious and cultural traditions and languages—and in producing valid and reliable results. Recognizing these limitations, this comprehensive systematic review seeks to contribute to the theoretical refinement and empirical advancement of DF research by examining the range and quality of the currently available self-report measures of DF.

The present study

To promote the theoretical refinement and empirical advancement of DF research that is well-informed and overcomes current limitations, a clear assessment of the field's present state is required. To this end, the present study aimed to systematically identify and examine empirical studies in the psychological literature that reported quantitative self-report measures of DF. Specifically, we aimed to identify, summarize, and compare the current quantitative self-report measures of DF, evaluate their psychometric properties (where available), and examine the extent to which the measures comprehensively assess the domains of this type of forgiveness. A thorough assessment of the content coverage and psychometric evidence of available self-report measures of DF can inform future research and contribute to the development of more comprehensive and cross-culturally valid instruments.

Materials and methods

The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement [46] guided both the methodology and reporting of this systematic review. The PRISMA statement contains a 27-item checklist of elements considered essential for ensuring transparency in performing and reporting of systematic reviews and is widely accepted among researchers. A completed PRISMA checklist as it pertains to the current review is

available in the Supplemental Materials. This systematic review was preregistered in the Open Science Framework database (link: osf.io/c7r8y). This current study is part of a larger project aiming to advance the study of DF by developing and validating a self-report measure of DF across the three main monotheistic religions (i.e., Christianity, Islam, and Judaism). While this focus reflects the scope of the broader project, the concept of DF may extend to a wider range of religious and spiritual traditions, including polytheistic and non-theistic frameworks, which warrant further investigation.

Eligibility criteria

Following the PRISMA guidelines [46], specific eligibility criteria were defined. To cast a wide net, publications were eligible for this systematic review if their characteristics met several liberal criteria. (a) The study included a quantitative measure with as few as two items referring to the perception or concept of God's forgiveness. (b) Studies that met criteria "a" were included regardless of whether the measure was validated, whether it was a dispositional measure or a transgression-related measure, or whether they included dedicated DF scales or DF-related subscales embedded within broader multidimensional instruments. (c) The study contributed any novel data through the application of DF measures, rather than merely synthesizing prior research. (d) To further minimize the likelihood of excluding relevant studies and to strengthen the methodological rigor of the systematic review [47], grey literature (i.e., preprints, dissertations) was not excluded a priori. (e) We considered journal articles and grey literature written in English, Italian, or Spanish, that could be retrieved through database searches and, when necessary, for which authors responded to access requests. The inclusion of studies published in English, Italian, or Spanish was determined by the linguistic competencies of the research team. (f) Finally, no restrictions were applied based on the year of publication.

Literature search

To systematically identify eligible relevant research published in peer-reviewed journal articles or available as grey literature, several search strategies were applied. First, 4 bibliographic databases were systematically searched, namely Web of Science, Scopus, PsycINFO, and PubMed. All databases included in the search strategy are widely recognized as comprehensive and authoritative sources for psychological research and are therefore well-suited to the review's research area. In each database, the following combination of keywords was searched: (("god" AND "forg*") OR "divine forg*" OR "deity forg*") AND ("scale*" OR "measure*" OR "question*" OR "item*" OR "subscale*" OR "asses*" OR "instrument*" OR "factor*" OR "dimension*" OR "domain*" OR "survey" OR "inventory" OR "psychometric").

Given our awareness of several DF measures currently in development and expected to be published in 2025–2026, we intentionally designed this review as a comprehensive synthesis of instruments available up to November 4, 2024. This temporal boundary ensures that our work provides a solid baseline against which forthcoming scales can be evaluated and compared.

Screening and selection of studies

The results of the selection process are reported in the PRISMA flow diagram (Fig. 1). A total of 1,538 abstracts were retrieved, and 511 duplicates were removed. The remaining 1,027 titles and abstracts were screened simultaneously and independently by two reviewers, resulting in 483 relevant studies. Typically, the initial screening phase is based on the review of article abstracts. However, it is important to note that DF is not always explicitly listed among the primary variables studied, and is not consistently mentioned in article abstracts (for instance, in many studies it is included under broader constructs such as Forgiveness, Religious beliefs, or Grace) (see, for example, [48–52]). Thus, the criteria for inclusion based on abstracts were intentionally broad. Abstracts that explicitly mentioned DF were included, as well as those referring more generally to forgiveness, grace, mercy, the relationship with God, religion/spirituality, and related concepts. Therefore, the final screening was conducted based on the full-text review of the available publications. The full texts were assessed for eligibility according to the predefined inclusion criteria. A total of 47 studies met all criteria and their bibliographical citations were reviewed to identify additional potential sources not initially retrieved. This process allowed for the identification of an additional 13 publications. Interrater agreement was substantial (Cohen's k = 0.77). Discrepancies were discussed with a third rater, and the final decisions were taken to reach an agreement. Together, a total of 60 studies were then included in the systematic review.

Complementary search strategy

The main bibliographic search was complemented with additional search strategies. First, we created a list of "gold standard" articles, defined as highly cited publications consistently referenced in research on DF (see, for example, [1]). This list was used to verify whether our search strategy was reliable. Of the 34 eligible records, 31 (91.2%) were successfully retrieved through the bibliographic search. The list is available in the Supplemental Materials. Finally, the screening of the reference lists of the 60 included publications allowed us to recover the three missing publications from the initial golden list.

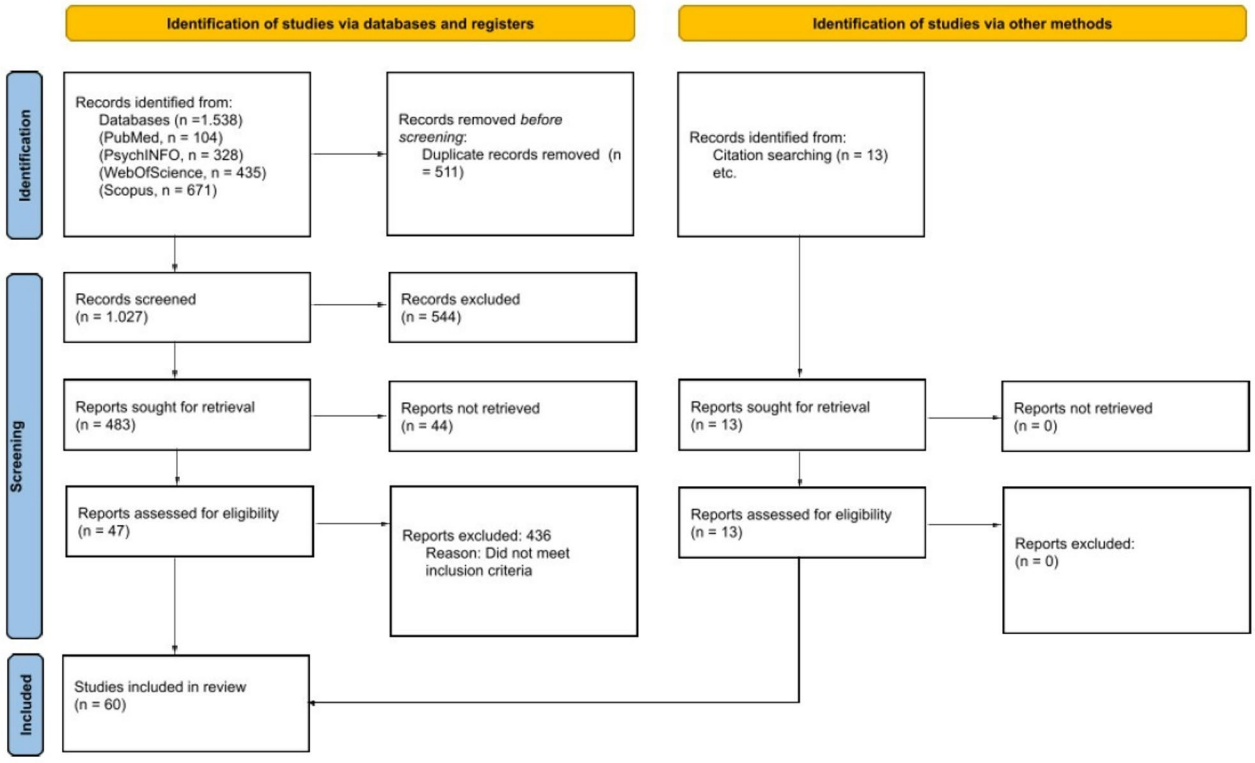


Fig. 1 PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for new systematic reviews

The searches and screening were run and managed on EndNote X8 [53] and Rayyan [54].

Coding of primary studies

To extract relevant information from the included studies, an Excel spreadsheet was prepared. Two evaluators worked simultaneously and their work was checked by the supervisors. With parallel data extraction, it was possible to have an immediate consensus meeting and, if necessary, a consultation with the supervisors. Discrepancies were discussed with the supervisors and solved among the evaluators.

First, the characteristics of each study were coded: authors, year of publication, title, type of publication (e.g., journal article, dissertation or book), and country. Second, information related to the measurement of DF was extracted. Specifically, we reported the name of the scale or subscale used, the number of items, the content of each item, the response format, the kind of DF (dispositional or transgression-related) measured, and the specific facets of DF that the publication explicitly stated the measure was intended to assess (e.g., "feeling forgiven by God", "the extent to which participants believe they have been forgiven by God", "participants' conceptualizations of divine forgiveness"). In addition, based on the distinction proposed by Bartholomaeus et al. [20]—and in line with Huber et al.'s [55] suggestion that efforts should be directed toward developing items capable of distinguishing between the cognitive and affective facets of DF experience—we included a second interpretation based on our own analysis of the items, categorizing different measured facets of DF. Third, the characteristics of the study samples were recorded, including sample size, sex composition (i.e., percentage of females), mean age, and any additional demographic details reported by the authors. Fourth, we coded psychometric properties of the instruments, such as internal consistency, factor structure and loadings, and evidence of measurement invariance (e.g., across sex, age, culture, or religion). When available, we also extracted information regarding content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity. Finally, we extracted the associations between DF and other variables (e.g., correlations, regressions) as reported in each publication.

Quality assessment

We employed the appraisal AXIS tool for observational and cross-sectional studies. The AXIS is a critical appraisal tool designed to assess the overall study quality, reporting, and risk of bias [56]. It is composed of a checklist of 20 items that evaluate different aspects of study quality, including study design, sample size justification, sample representativeness, measurement validity and reliability, description of statistical methods, and

reporting of funding and conflicts of interest. Items were scored as follows: Yes = 1, No or Don't know = 0. A total quality score from 0 to 20 was assigned to each study, with higher scores indicating a higher assessed quality. In assessing the quality scores using the AXIS tool, our approach aligns with the classification adopted in previous literature reviews (e.g., [57–59]). This classification involves three levels: low quality (0–7 points), moderate quality (8–14 points), and high quality (15–20 points).

To ensure coding reliability, two researchers independently assessed the quality of a randomly selected subsample of ten studies. Inter-rater agreement, estimated through Krippendorff's α for nominal data, was 0.87, indicating a high level of reliability. Based on this substantial agreement, the remaining studies ($N = 50$) were evaluated through a joint review process conducted collaboratively by the two researchers, allowing potential disagreements to be resolved immediately through discussion.

Results

Main characteristics of the selected studies

Overall, 60 studies were included in the systematic review (see Fig. 1). An Excel spreadsheet was prepared to summarize the relevant information from the selected studies (i.e., authors, year of publication, title, format of publication, country, scale/subscale name, number of items, etc.). Below, we summarize the main characteristics of the selected publications (see Table 1 for a complete breakdown of each characteristic for each study).

In terms of year of publication, the studies were published between 1985 and 2024, though most of them were published between 2008 and 2019 ($N = 37$). In terms of type of publication, most studies were journal articles ($N = 54$), 5 were dissertations, and there was 1 report. They were mostly conducted in the United States ($N = 49$), but also in Poland ($N = 7$), Australia ($N = 1$), France ($N = 1$), Germany ($N = 1$), and in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago ($N = 1$). Approximately two-thirds of the studies ($N = 39$) relied on a sample that was exclusively or predominantly Christian, whereas the remaining studies did not specify participants' religious affiliation. Instead, they focused on other characteristics, such as a general belief in a Supreme Being or in some form of religiosity or spirituality, or on the inclusion of individuals belonging to vulnerable population groups (e.g., those with an addiction or a medical or psychological illness). Among studies that reported information on participants' sex ($N = 47$), most samples ($N = 34$) were not sex-balanced, with a higher prevalence of female participants. Almost half of the publications ($N = 25$) were based on at least one study conducted with a sample of university students.

All 60 selected publications examined the concept or the role of DF, its correlates, and its outcomes. Specifically, 24 publications focused on the comparison or relationship between DF and other types of forgiveness, especially self-forgiveness, while as many as 38 publications investigated the link between DF and well-being (in terms of mental, psychological, physical, and social health and adjustment). Of particular interest, 12 of the studies concerning DF and well-being focused on vulnerable contexts and populations (e.g., individuals living with HIV or struggling with addictions).

Approximately one third of the selected publications ($N = 22$)[2] assessed DF using only 2 items, and most of them ($N = 15$) used at least one of the following 2 items (see, for example, [64]): (a) Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person [50, 51]; (b) I know that God forgives me [23]. The majority of the selected publications ($N = 34$) assessed DF using from 3 to 6 items and 12 of them used from 3 to 6 of the items proposed by Huber et al. [55][3] and Fincham & May [29, 76]: (a) How often have you felt that God forgives you?; (b) I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness; (c) When I do something wrong, God is quick to forgive me; (d) Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person[4]; (e) How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you?; (f) How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt? Finally, 5 studies assessed DF using more than 7 items.

While reading the full texts of the records and collecting the available quantitative items on DF, we found that almost all studies claimed to measure general aspects of DF (e.g., "Divine Forgiveness/Forgiveness by God" or "the extent to which/whether participants feel they have been forgiven by God"). However, the specific items revealed distinct nuances that allowed us to categorize different facets of DF, consistent with recent analyses (see, for example, [20]), as reported below.

General aspects versus facets of DF

Despite most of the selected publications stated that they assessed participants' experience or feeling of being forgiven by God, our analysis revealed an important limitation. Among the studies that explicitly reported their

[2] Several publications comprised multiple studies employing different numbers of items (e.g., 2 in one study and 5 in another), such that a single publication could be counted more than once in this categorization.

[3] Huber et al. [55] used only 3 items derived from the Structure of Religiosity Test [82]. However, this publication is in German, and is thus not part of the current report.

[4] This item was originally proposed by Watson et al. [50] and subsequently reused or adapted in multiple studies.

Table 1 Characteristics of the 60 publications

Authors Year Title	Format	Country	Scale/questionnaire/measure/subscale/factor/ dimension name	*n* of item
Abrams, S. 2024 Forgiving a good heart: the role of motives and mind perception in lay understandings of divine forgiveness [60]	Dissertation	U.S.A.	Feeling forgiven - Adapted version of the 7-item state forgiveness measure developed in Brown & Phillips [61]. Two items were dropped, inspired by McCullough et al.'s TRIM scale [62]	5
Akl, M., & Mullet, E. 2010 Forgivingness: Relationships With Conceptualizations of Divine Forgiveness and Childhood Memories [63]	Journal Article	France	Items created for the purpose of the study. Three types of items were considered: (a) Resentful God (b) Sensitive God (c) Unconditionally forgiving God + (a) Unpredictable God (b) Feeling forgiven by God	15 + 8
Bassett, R. L., Carrier, E., Charleson, K., Pak, N. R.,Schwingel, R., Majors, A., Pitre, M., Sundlof-Stoller, A., & Bloser, C. 2016 Is It Really More Blessed to Give Than to Receive? A Consideration of Forgiveness and Perceived Health [30]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Study 1: adapted items from Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God Study 2: items from the Divine Forgiveness Scale [35, 65]	Study 1: 2; Study 2: 5
Bufford, R. K., McMinn, M. R., Moody, J. A., & Geczy-Haskins, L. 2017 The effects of grace interventions in church communities [66]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Study 2: Experiencing God's forgiveness - items from the Divine Forgiveness Scale [35, 65]: punitive and positive divine forgiveness	Study 2: 5
Charzyńska, E. 2015 Sex Differences in Spiritual Coping, Forgiveness, and Gratitude Before and After a Basic Alcohol Addiction Treatment Program [67]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen-Celińska, I. 2019. The role of forgiveness and gratitude in the quality of life of alcohol-dependent persons [78]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2
Charzyńska, E. 2021 The Efect of Baseline Patterns of Spiritual Coping, Forgiveness, and Gratitude on the Completion of an Alcohol Addiction Treatment Program [70]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen, I. 2018 Forgiveness and gratitude trajectories among persons undergoing alcohol addiction therapy [71]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2
Exline, J. J. 2008 Beliefs about God and forgiveness in a Baptist Church sample [72]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Religious core beliefs about God and forgiveness	18
Exline, J. J., Yali, A. M., Sanderson, W. C. 2000 Guilt, Discord, and Alienation: The Role of Religious Strain in Depression and Suicidality [73]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Study 1 and 2: Religious comfort and strain scale	2
Fetzer Institute 1999 Multidimensional measurement of religiousness/spirituality for use in health research: a report of the Fetzer institute/national institute on aging working group [23]	Report/Book	U.S.A.	The Forgiveness Scale - Forgiveness by God	2 - long form scale; 1 - short form scale
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M. 2024a Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: seeking divine forgiveness [22]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness: 5-item scale used by Fincham and May [10, 29]	5

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Format	Country	Scale/questionnaire/measure/subscale/factor/ dimension name	*n* of item
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M. 2024b Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: 2. Does viewing God as intervening account for the association between God image and divine forgiveness? [75]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness: 5-item scale used by Fincham and May [10, 29]	5
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019a Divine forgiveness protects against psychological distress following a natural disaster attributed to God [34]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness	4
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019b Divine, interpersonal and self-forgiveness: Independently related to depressive symptoms? [4]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness by God	Study 1: 3; Study 2: 3
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019c Self-forgiveness and well-being: Does divine forgiveness matter? [76]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness	3
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2021 No type of forgiveness is an island: divine forgiveness, self-forgiveness and interpersonal forgiveness [29]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness - items built on the three item measure used by Fincham and May [76]	5
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2023 Divine Forgiveness and Interpersonal Forgiveness: Which Comes First? [10]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness - items used in previous studies - Fincham & May [34, 76]	5
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2024 Divine Forgiveness and Well-being Among Emerging Adults in the USA [5]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Study 1: Divine Forgiveness - measure developed by Fincham and May [76] Study 2: Divine Forgiveness - items adapted from Fincham and May [76]	Study 1: 3; Study 2: 5
Fincham, F. D., May, R. W., & Carlos Chavez, F. L. 2019 Does being religious lead to greater self-forgiveness? [77]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Religion - Forgiveness by God	Study 1: 3
Geczy-Haskins, L. 2017 The Effects of Grace on Self-Forgiveness with a Religious Community [78]	Dissertation	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness Scale/Experiencing God's Forgiveness Scale [35, 65]: punitive and positive forgiveness	5
Głaz, S. 2019 The Relationship of Forgiveness and Values with Meaning in Life of Polish Students [79]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Engdahl, B. E., Olson, R. H. A., Winskowski, A. M., & McMahill, J. 2008 Christian religious functioning and trauma outcomes [80]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Religious comfort and strain scale [73]	NR
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Winskowski, (A) M., Engdahl, (B) E., & Nguyen, X. V. 2014 Social support as a mediator in the relationship between religious comforts and strains and trauma symptoms. [81]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Religious comfort and strain scale [73]	NR
Hayward, R. D., & Krause, N. 2013 Trajectories of change in dimensions of forgiveness among older adults and their association with religious commitment [32]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Measures of Forgiveness: Perceived Forgiveness by God and Conditionality of God's Forgiveness	1 + 4

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Format	Country	Scale/questionnaire/measure/subscale/factor/ dimension name	*n* of item
Huber, S., Allemand, M., & Huber, O. W. 2011 Forgiveness by God and Human Forgivingness: The Centrality of the Religiosity Makes the Difference [55]	Journal Article	Germany	Forgiveness by God from the Structure of Religiosity Test [82]	5
Ironson, G., Stuetzle, R., Ironson, D., Balbin, E., Kremer, H., George, A., Schneiderman, N., & Fletcher, M. A. 2011 View of God as benevolent and forgiving or punishing and judgmental predicts HIV disease progression [83]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	View of God Inventory (Positive and Negative view of God)	12
Kaldjian, L. C., Jekel, J. F., & Friedland, G. 1998. End-of-life decisions in HIV-positive patients: the role of spiritual beliefs [48]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Religious belief, identification and practice: items about spiritual needs	6
Kent, B. V., Bradshaw, M., & Uecker, J. E. 2018 Forgiveness, Attachment to God, and Mental Health Outcomes in Older U.S. Adults: A Longitudinal Study [84]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Measures of forgiveness: whether respondents felt forgiven by God for wrongs committed + whether individuals must change their behavior to receive forgiveness from God.	1 + 3
Kim, J. J., & Enright, R. D. 2014 Differing Views on Forgiveness Within Christianity: Do Graduate-Level Theology Students Perceive Divine and Human Forgiveness Differently? [85]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Understanding of true divine forgiveness. Items adapted from Frise & McMinn [86]	4 + 1 + 1
Kim, J., Ragasajo, L. J. C., Kolacz, R. L., Painter, K. J., Pritchard, J. D., & Wrobleski, A. 2021 The interplay between divine, victim, and self-forgiveness: the relationship between three types of forgiveness and psychological outcomes [87]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness Scale (DFS)	Study 1 and 2:7
Krause, N. 2012 Studying Forgiveness Among Older Whites, Older Blacks, and Older Mexican Americans [88]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Sources of Forgiveness + Acts of contrition required by God	1 + 3
Krause, N. 2015 Trust in God, Forgiveness by God, and Death Anxiety [89]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness by God from Krause [93]	2
Krause, N., Pargament, K. I., Hill, P. C., & Ironson, G. 2019 Exploring religious and/or spiritual identities: part 2 – a descriptive analysis of those who are at risk for health problems [90]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Religious Beliefs: God is forgiving - three-item index that was devised by Ironson et al. [68]	3
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D. 2014a Acts of Contrition, Forgiveness by God, and Death Anxiety Among Older Mexican Americans [91]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Feeling God's Forgiveness + Acts of contrition required by God [92]	1 + 3
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D. 2014b Religious involvement and death anxiety [93]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness by God [92]	2
Krause, N., & Hill, P. C. 2018 Assessing the Relationships Among Forgiveness by God, God Images, and Death Anxiety [94]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness by God. The first indicator was taken from research by the Fetzer Institute/National Institute on Aging Working Group [23]. The second item was devised by Ironson et al. [83]	2

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Format	Country	Scale/questionnaire/measure/subscale/factor/ dimension name	*n* of item
Lyons, G. C. B., Deane, F. P., Caputi, P., & Kelly, P. J. 2011 Spirituality and the treatment of substance use disorders: An exploration of forgiveness, resentment and purpose in life [31]	Journal Article	Australia	The Receiving Forgiveness from God (RFG) subscale [33]	4
Maranges, H. M., & Fincham, F. 2024a Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: 4. Childhood unpredictability negatively and divine forgiveness positively predicts self-forgiveness through self-control [40]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Divine Forgiveness [5]	5
Martin, A. M. 2008 Exploring forgiveness: the relationship between feeling forgiven by God and self-forgiveness for an interpersonal offense [35]	Dissertation	U.S.A.	Experience of Divine Forgiveness Scale	5
McConnell, J. M., & Dixon, D. N. 2012 Perceived Forgiveness from God and Self-Forgiveness [36]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	items adapted from the Acceptance Subscale of the God Image Inventory (GII) [95]	14
Moroń, M. 2022 Basic dimensions of religiousness and dispositional forgiveness: the mediating role of religiously motivated forgiveness [96]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2
Prince-Paul, M., Zyzanski, S. J., Exline, J. J. 2013 The RelCom-S. A Screening Instrument to Assess Personal Relationships and Communication in Advanced Cancer [97]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	RelCom-S: God/Higher Power Category - items about Forgiveness	2
Sansone, R. A., Kelley, A. R., & Forbis, J. S. 2013 The relationship between forgiveness and history of suicide attempt [98]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	The Forgiveness Scale - Forgiveness by God (long form) [23]	2
Skalski-Bednarz, S. B., Webb, J. R., Wilson, C. M., Toussaint, L. L., Surzykiewicz, J., Reid, S. D., Williams, D. R., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. 2024 Pathways to Flourishing: The Roles of Self- and Divine Forgiveness in Mitigating the Adverse Effects of Stress and Substance Use among Adults in Trinidad and Tobago [99]	Journal Article	Republic of Trinidad and Tobago	The Divine Forgiveness Scale (DFS) developed by Fincham & May [34]	4
Standish, E. E. 2016 Forgiveness, Health, And Psychological Adjustment In Older Adults [100]	Dissertation	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - items about Unconditional forgiveness by God	6
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S.A. 2008a The association of forgiveness and 12-month prevalence of major depressive episode: Gender differences in a probability sample of U.S. adults [101]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - Feeling forgiven by God dimension Forgiveness measures used in the present investigation were originally used by Gorsuch and Hao [102], Mauger et al. [103], Watson, Hood, Morris, and Hall [50], and Watson, Morris, and Hood [51]	2
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S. A. 2008b Why forgiveness may protect against depression: Hopelessness as an explanatory mechanism [49]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - Feeling forgiven by God dimension Forgiveness measures used in the present investigation were originally used by Gorsuch and Hao [102], Mauger et al. [103], Watson, Hood, Morris, and Hall [50], and Watson, Morris, and Hood [51]	2

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Format	Country	Scale/questionnaire/measure/subscale/factor/ dimension name	*n* of item
Toussaint, L. L., Marschall, J. C., & Williams, D. R. 2012 Prospective Associations between Religiousness/Spirituality and Depression and Mediating Effects of Forgiveness in a Nationally Representative Sample of United States Adults [104]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - Feeling forgiven by God dimension Forgiveness measures used in the present investigation were originally used by Gorsuch and Hao [102], Mauger et al. [103], Watson, Hood, Morris, and Hall [50], and Watson, Morris, and Hood [51]	2
Toussaint, L. L., Owen, A. D., & Cheadle, A. 2012 Forgive to Live: Forgiveness, Health, and Longevity [105]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - God's conditional forgiveness and God's unconditional forgiveness	3+1
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R. 2008 National Survey Results for Protestant, Catholic, and Nonreligious Experiences of Seeking Forgiveness and of Forgiveness of Self, of Others, and by God [106]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - Feeling forgiven by God dimension Forgiveness measures used in the present investigation were originally used by Gorsuch and Hao [102], Mauger et al. [103], Watson, Hood, Morris, and Hall [50], and Watson, Morris, and Hood [51]	2
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson, S. A. 2001 Forgiveness and Health: Age Differences in a U.S. Probability Sample [64]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness - Feeling forgiven by God dimension Forgiveness measures used in the present investigation were originally used by Gorsuch and Hao [102], Mauger et al. [103], Watson, Hood, Morris, and Hall [50], and Watson, Morris, and Hood [51]	2
Trevino, K. M. 2007 Forgive me for I have sinned: the effects of religious and secular confession and forgiveness on psychological, emotional, and religious well-being in college students [107]	Dissertation	U.S.A.	Forgiveness items + Confession and Forgiveness Behaviors Questionnaire + Forgiveness Questionnaire - Forgiveness from God [33]	1 + 1 + 4
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. 2002 Forgiveness within the Big Five personality model [33]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Forgiveness items adapted from McCullough et al. [62, 108] - Receiving God's Forgiveness	4
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. 2004 Dimensions underlying sixteen models of forgiveness and reconciliation [109]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Receiving God's Forgiveness	5
Watson, P. J., Hood, R. W., Morris, R. J., & Hall, J. R. 1985 Religiosity, sin, and self-esteem [50]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Items from Sin/Grace Scale	Study 1: 3; Study 2: 6
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1987 Antireligious humanistic values, guilt, and self-esteem [51]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Items from Sin/Grace Scale	6
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1988a Sin and self-functioning: I. Grace, guilt, and self-consciousness [52]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Items from Sin/Grace Scale - Grace Items	4
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1988b Sin and self-functioning, Part 2: Grace, guilt, and psychological adjustment [110]	Journal Article	U.S.A.	Items from Sin/Grace Scale - Grace Items	NR
Wnuk, M., & Charzyńska, E. 2024 Does Forgiveness Underlie the Relationship Between Religiosity and Meaning in Life Among Members of Sexaholics Anonymous in Poland? [111]	Journal Article	Poland	Polish adaptation [68] of indices of forgiveness proposed by Toussaint et al. [64]: feeling forgiven by God	2

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Abrams, S. 2024 Forgiving a good heart: the role of motives and mind perception in lay understandings of divine forgiveness [60]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)	T	1. God has forgiven me for what I did. 2. God feels angry towards me for what I did 3. Despite my actions, God does not feel ill-will toward me. 4. God dislikes me because of what I did 5. God name feels warmly toward me in spite of what I did.	the extent to which participants perceive that they have been forgiven by the forgiver (i.e., God or another person in their life, depending on their condition).	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Final sample of 490 (Mage = 41.76, SDage = 13.06; 174 men, 314 women, 2 non-binary) U.S. Christian participants. 313 participants identified as broadly Christian, 104 as Catholic, 63 as Protestant, and 10 as "Other" Christian (e.g., Baptist, Mormon/LDS, Jehovah's Witness, etc.). via CloudResearch Connect
Akl, M., & Mullet, E. 2010 Forgivingness: Relationships With Conceptualizations of Divine Forgiveness and Childhood Memories [63]	Likert scale from 0 (disagree completely) to 10 (completely agree).	D	a) Resentful God: (1) God does not forgive, even if the offender has asked for God's forgiveness. (2) God does not forgive, even if the consequences of the harm are minimal. (3) God does not forgive, even if the offender has apologized to God. (4) God cannot forgive, even if the consequences of the harm have been cancelled. 5 God cannot forgive the offenses that have been committed against Him, even if they have been cancelled. b) Sensitive God: 6. God forgives more easily offenses committed against other humans if someone on earth intercedes for the offender. 7. God forgives more easily offenses committed against other humans if someone in Paradise intercedes for the offender. 8. God forgives more easily an offense that has been committed against Him if someone on earth intercedes for the offender. 9. God forgives more easily an offense that has been committed against Him if someone in Heaven intercedes for the offender. 10. God forgives more easily an offense if the offender has begged the victim for forgiveness.	15 items referring to participants' possible conceptualizations of divine forgiveness. (a) items referring to God's possible cultivation of lasting resentment, (b) items referring to God's possible sensitivity to the circumstances, and (c) items referring to the possibility of God's unconditional forgiveness + 4-item scales that assessed (a) the predictability of God's forgiveness and (b) the feeling of having been forgiven by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to facilitate DF 7. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to facilitate DF 8. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to facilitate DF 9. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to facilitate DF 10. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to facilitate DF 11. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God 12. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God 13. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God 14. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God 15. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God 16. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unpredictable God's forgiveness 17. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unpredictable God's forgiveness 18. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an	*N*=243 persons agreed to participate, and 182 of them declared they believe in God (117 female, 65 male). Their age ranged from 18 years to 84 years (M D 36.14, SD D 13.87). 122 of them declared they were Christians, 11 declared they were Muslims, 7 declared they were Buddhist, and 42 declared they were not affiliated with any confession.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
			c) Unconditionally Forgiving God: 11. God forgives the offenses that have been committed against a human being even if the offense was intentional. 12. God forgives the offenses committed against human beings even if the consequences of the offense have not been cancelled. 13. God forgives the offenses that have been committed against Him even if the offense was intentional. 14. God forgives the offenses committed against Him even if the consequences of the offense have not been cancelled. 15. God always forgive everything to everybody. d) Unpredictable God: 16. God's forgiveness is not granted to everybody. 17. One can never predict God's forgiveness. 18. God never forget what He views as an offense that has been committed against Him. 19. God never forgives what He considers severe offenses. e) Feeling Forgiven by God: 20. I am not sure God will be willing to forgive me. 21. Personally, I am sure that God has forgiven my faults. 22. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness. 23. I think that God is reluctant to forgive me.		Unpredictable God's forgiveness 19. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 20. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 21. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive/will forgive me 22. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/has forgiven/forgives/will forgive/will forgive me 23. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Bassett, R. L., Carrier, E., Charleson, K., Pak, N. R.,Schwingel, R., Majors, A., Pitre, M., Sundlof-Stoller, A., & Bloser, C. 2016 Is It Really More Blessed to Give Than to Receive? A Consideration of Forgiveness and Perceived Health [30]	Study 1 and 2: Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree)	D	Study 1: 1. Knowing that God has forgiven my sins gives me the strength to do better 2. I know that God forgives me. Study 2: 3. God will not forgive offenses such as mine 4. I have accepted God's forgiveness 5. NR [God is mad at me] 6. NR [God has offered forgiveness to me] 7. NR [I have received forgiveness from God]	Study 1: the extent to which participants believed they were forgiven by God Study 2: dispositional tendencies to perceive self as having been forgiven by God	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 4. Acceptance of God's forgiveness 5. NR [Beliefs/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me] 6. NR [Beliefs/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 7. NR [Beliefs/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	Study 1: Students in a Christian graduate research class distributed a questionnaire to family members, friends, coworkers, clients in an assisted care facility, and close acquaintances. In addition, undergraduate students were recruited from a psychology summer class and an email list of psychology majors at the same institution. In all, 36 surveys were completed and returned. The average age of participants was 40.6 (SD = 23.3, Mdn = 30.5) years of age with the range from 18 to 93 years of age. Also, 78.4% (29) of the participants indicated that they were female. Study 2: Students in another Christian graduate research class distributed a questionnaire to family members, friends, and close acquaintances. In addition, undergraduate students were recruited from a collection of undergraduate psychology classes. In all, 141 surveys were completed and returned. The average age of participants was 26.8 (SD = 14.5, Mdn = 20.0) years of age with the range from 17 to 76 years of age. Also, 70.9% (100) of the participants indicated that they were female.
Bufford, R. K., McMinn, M. R., Moody, J. A., & Geczy-Haskins, L. 2017 The effects of grace interventions in church communities [66]	Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree).	T	Study 2: 1. NR [God is mad at me] 2. NR [God has offered forgiveness to me] 3. NR [God will not forgive offenses such as mine] 4. NR [I have received forgiveness from God] 5. NR [I have accepted God's forgiveness]	Study 2: whether participants have experienced forgiveness from God for an offense.	1. NR [Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me] 2. NR [Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 3. NR [Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness] 4. NR [Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 5. NR [Acceptance of God's forgiveness]	Study 2: participants included volunteers from two Friends (Quaker) churches in the Pacific Northwest. Researchers attempted to recruit a subset of approximately 30 people per congregation to complete an extensive battery of questionnaires at three time periods. The initial sample included 54 participants, with 27 in each congregation. Of these, 16 were male (26%) and 38 female (61%). The majority (77%) identified as European American, with 3 (5%) as Hispanic/Latino, 2 (3%) as African-American, 1 (2%) as American Indian, and 8 (12%) not reporting ethnicity. The average age of the sample was 52.1 years (standard deviation of 18.8). There was attrition over time, with only 31 participants providing data at each of the three assessment periods (13 in Congregation C and 18 in Congregation D).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Charzyńska, E. 2015 Sex Differences in Spiritual Coping, Forgiveness, and Gratitude Before and After a Basic Alcohol Addiction Treatment Program [67]	Likert scale from 1 ("strongly agree" or "never") to 5 ("strongly disagree" or "very often"). In the Polish version, the response categories were modified by including the option "not applicable," for questions concerning one's religiousness.	D	1. NR [Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person] 2. NR [I know that God forgives me]	Feeling forgiven by God	1. NR [Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 2. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	The total of 343 persons addicted to alcohol (including 98 women and 245 men) undergoing a short-term (6–8 weeks depending on the treatment center) group addiction treatment program took part in the study. The basic treatment program was completed by 181 persons, including 125 men (51.02%) and 56 women (57.14%). Only data from persons who completed the therapy were used in the study: 56 men were coupled with 56 women.The men's mean age was M = 41.89 years, SD = 10.38, and the women's was M = 42.39 years, SD = 10.91 (t (110) = 0.25; p[69]
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen-Celińska, I. 2019. The role of forgiveness and gratitude in the quality of life of alcohol-dependent persons [78]	Likert scale from 1 ("strongly agree" or "never") to 5 ("strongly disagree" or "very often"). In the Polish version, the response categories were modified by including the option "not applicable"	D	1. I know that God forgives me. 2. NR [Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person]	Feeling forgiven by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. NR [Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	Two samples of alcohol-dependent individuals participated in the study: persons who have just started outpatient alcohol addiction treatment (*N*=166) and persons who have never attended alcohol addiction therapy (*N*=166). The inclusion criteria for both samples were as follows: (a) psychiatric diagnosis of alcohol dependence according to ICD-10 criteria, (b) at least 18 years old, (c) written informed consent. Gender: Male 294 (88.6%); Age (M ± SD): 42.10 ± 9.57; Religion: Roman Catholic 285 (85.8%), Greek Catholic 3 (0.9%), Evangelical 3 (0.9%), Without denomination 35 (10.5%)
Charzyńska, E. 2021 The Efect of Baseline Patterns of Spiritual Coping, Forgiveness, and Gratitude on the Completion of an Alcohol Addiction Treatment Program [70]	Likert scale from 1 ("strongly agree" or "never") to 5 ("strongly disagree" or "very often"). In the Polish version, the response categories were modified by including the option "not applicable"	D	1. I know that God forgives me. 2. NR [Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person]	Feeling forgiven by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. NR [Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	The sample included 358 Polish participants receiving short-term outpatient treatment in alcohol dependence treatment centers in southern Poland. Fifteen participants returned empty questionnaires (a participation rate of 96%); thus, they were excluded from the study. Moreover, because some of the variables of interest (namely positive and negative religious coping, and feeling forgiven by God) were directly related to religiousness, the data from 20 patients (5.8%) who declared that they did not believe in God/a higher being were also excluded from further analysis. The final sample consisted of 323 participants. Gender: Male 230 (71.2%); Age in years (M±SD) 42.94±10.39; Denomination: Roman Catholic 280 (86.7%), Evangelical 3 (0.9%), Greek Catholic 1 (0.3%), Not affiliated with any particular denomination 39 (12.1%).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen, I. 2018 Forgiveness and gratitude trajectories among persons undergoing alcohol addiction therapy [71]	Likert scale from 1 ("strongly agree" or "never") to 5 ("strongly disagree" or "very often"). In the Polish version, the response categories were modified by including the option "not applicable"	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. NR [I know that God forgives me]	Feeling forgiven by God	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	The sample included 358 Polish participants receiving outpatient treatment for alcohol addiction. Fifteen patients returned empty questionnaires, giving a participation rate of 96%. The inclusion criteria were (1) diagnosed with alcohol dependence by a psychiatrist in accordance with ICD-10 criteria, (2) over 18 years old, and (3) provided written consent. The final sample consists of 245 men (71.4%) and 98 women (28.6%). Age in years: 20–30 50 (14.6%), 31–41 114 (33.2%), 42–52 112 (32.7%), 53–63 62 (18.1%), 64–74 5 (1.4%); Denomination: Roman Catholic 280 (81.6%), Evangelical 3 (0.9%), Greek Catholic 1 (0.3%), Without denomination 41 (12.0%), N/A 18 (5.2%) Only patients who had completed the treatment took part in the posttest (*N*=181, including 125 men and 56 women; 52.8% of the baseline sample size), and 68 people (45 men and 23 women; 20% of the baseline sample size) participated in the follow-up, 49 of whom had maintained abstinence, while 19 had returned to drinking.
Exline, J. J. 2008 Beliefs about God and forgiveness in a Baptist Church sample [72]	Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree)	D	1. God is a God of mercy. 2. God commands us to forgive others. 3. God is a God of justice. 4. God has forgiven me for some pretty big things. 5. I believe that God has forgiven all of my sins. 6. God wants us to love our enemies. 7. I need God's forgiveness. 8. God punishes sin. 9. God says that we must 'turn the other cheek'. 10. Revenge belongs in God's hands.	Religious core beliefs about God and forgiveness: forgiveness as a Divine mandate, God as merciful and just, God's forgiveness of the self, conditions of God's forgiveness	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour 2. God's commandment 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 6. God's commandment 7. I need God's forgiveness 8. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour 9. God's commandment 10. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour	Participants were 44 attendees of a Baptist church in Florida. The average age was 42.9 years (SD=12.4). Gender: female 60%; Ethnic composition: 98% Caucasian. Reference group: convenience sample of college students. Participants were 65 psychology students (44 men, 21 women). The average age was 19.2 years (SD=1.3). Ethnic composition: Caucasian (77%), Asian (14%). Denomination: Catholic (31%), Protestant (24%), atheist or agnostic (13%), Muslim (5%), Hindu (5%), Jewish (3%), Buddhist (3%), Taoist (2%), Eastern Orthodox (2%), none (10%) and unsure (11%)

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
			11. If I do not forgive others, God will not forgive me. 12. God will not forgive people unless they ask for forgiveness. 13. God forgives everyone for everything that they do. 14. I sometimes doubt that God can forgive me for the things that I have done. 15. God says that we must take 'an eye for an eye'. 16. God will not forgive certain sins. 17. God will not forgive people unless they do something to make up for their sins. 18. God commands us to punish people for wrongdoing.		11. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 12. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 13. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God 14. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 15. God's commandment 16. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 17. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 18. God's commandment	
Exline, J. J., Yali, A. M., Sanderson, W. C. 2000 Guilt, Discord, and Alienation: The Role of Religious Strain in Depression and Suicidality [73]	Study 1 and 2: Likert scale from 0 not at all to 3 extremely	D	Study 1 and 2: "To what extent are you currently having each of these experiences?" 1. Feeling that God has forgiven you for sins 2. Belief that you have committed a sin too big to be forgiven	Study 1 and 2: Religious comfort and religious strain - the extent to which participants have experienced God's (un) forgiveness for their sins	1. Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness	Study 1: College Student Sample. Participants were 200 undergraduates (60 males, 140 females) taking psychology courses at a public university in the Northeastern United States. The average age was 20 years. The primary religious affiliations were Catholic (47%), Protestant and other Christian (23%), Jewish (6%), Buddhist (5%), Hindu (4%), Islamic (4%), atheist (4%), and none or unsure (10%). The primary ethnic/racial groups represented were White or Caucasian (51%), Asian or Pacific Islander (23%), African American or Black (16%) and Latino or Hispanic (7%). Study 2: Clinical Sample. Participants were 54 adults (11 males, 43 females) seeking treatment at a specialized anxiety and depression clinic in the Bronx, New York. Mean age: 40 years. Religious affiliations were primarily Catholic (72%), Protestant and other Christian (15%), and Jewish (7%). The primary ethnic/racial groups were Latino or Hispanic (48%), White or Caucasian (41%), and African American or Black (18%).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Fetzer Institute 1999 Multidimensional measurement of religiousness/spirituality for use in health research: a report of the Fetzer institute/national institute on aging working group [23]	Likert scale from 1 (Always or almost always) to 4 (Never)	D	Long-form: 1. I believe that God has forgiven me for things I have done wrong. 2. I believe that there are times when God has punished me. Short-form: 3. I know that God forgives me.	These items assess only current behavior and attitudes. Long and Short forms: Forgiveness by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	NR: authors cited Idler et al. [74] for further information [The Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality was embedded in the 1997-1998 General Social Survey (GSS), a random national survey of the National Data Program for the Social Sciences. The General Social Survey (GSS) of the University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center (NORC) was a nationally-representative household survey which sampled English-speaking persons in the U.S. over 18 years of age. The 1998 survey employed split-sample balloting; the number of respondents completing the NIA 1 Fetzer module was 1445, representing a response rate of 75.6%. 54% of the sample was Protestant, 26% Catholic, just under 2% was Jewish, and nearly 14% reported having no religion [74]
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M. 2024a Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: seeking divine forgiveness [22]	For the first 3 items: 4-point Likert scale For the remaining items: 5-point Likert scale	D	Study 1 and 2: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 3. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness 4. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt? 5. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you?	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Study 1: Undergraduate students (*N*=190) at a large Southeastern public university were participants. Registered in social studies and human science courses, most were women. Only those who indicated their belief in "supernatural agents(s) (e.g., God, Gods, a higher power)" were eligible for the study. Of the 190 participants, 173 (91%) were women, with 132 (69.5%) identifying as White, 18 (9.5%) as Black, 22 (11.6%) as Latina/o, 6 (3.2%) as Asian, 8 (4.2%) as mixed race, 1 as Native American, 2 as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 1 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The average age was 19.81 (SD=1.24) years. Study 2: Undergraduate students (*N*=390; 354 Women) at a large Southeastern public university were study participants. Again, they were mostly from social and human sciences, where most students are women. Students who indicated that they believed in "supernatural agents(s) (e.g., God, Gods, a higher power)" were included in the sample. Of the 390 participants, 263 (67.4%) identified as White, 39 (10%) as Black, 55 (14.1%) as Latino/a, 8 (2.1%) as Asian, 18 (4.6%) as mixed race, 2 as Native American, 1 as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2 chose not to respond to the question. The participants average age was 19.91 (SD=1.86) years.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M. 2024b Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: 2. Does viewing God as intervening account for the association between God image and divine forgiveness? [75]	For the first 3 items: 4-point Likert scale For the remaining items: 5-point Likert scale	D	Study 1 and 2: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 3. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness 4. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt? 5. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you?	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Study 1: Participants were undergraduate students (N = 255) at a large Southeastern public university. Enrolled in social studies and human science courses, most were women. All had indicated that they believed in "supernatural agents(s) (e.g., God, Gods, a higher Power)." Of the participants, 233 identified as women, two as nonbinary, and one preferred not to say, with 176 (69.0%) identifying as White, 23 (9.05%) as Black, 32 (12.5%) as Latina/o, six (2.4%) as Asian, 11 (4.3%) as mixed race, one as Native American, two as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, three (1.2%) as "other," and one declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The average age of the sample was 19.89 (SD = 1.29) years. Study 2: Participants were undergraduate students at a large Southeastern public university. All were taking human development and family science courses, and most were women. Participants had indicated that they believed in "supernatural agents(s) (e.g., God, Gods, a higher Power)." Of the 204 participants, 189 identified as women, with 145 (71.1%) identifying as White, 19 (9.3%) as Black, 27 (13.2%) as Latina/o, four (2.0%) as Asian, six (2.9%) as mixed race, one as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, one as "other," and one declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The average age of the sample was 19.83 (SD = 2.25) years.
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019a Divine forgiveness protects against psychological distress following a natural disaster attributed to God [34]	For the first item: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'many times'; For the second item: 4-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'; For the remaining items: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'very often'	D	1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness 3. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you? 4. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt?	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 4. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Participants were from a larger project that examined various aspects of college life, including romantic relationships and academic stress. Undergraduate students (n = 269, female = 254) enrolled in courses offered by the College of Human Sciences participated in the project. Participants averaged 20.09 (SD = 2.65) years of age and showed the following ethnic distribution: 69.9% European-American, 10.8% African-American, 14.5% Hispanic, 3.3% Asian 4.1%, other. One participant (0.4%) preferred not to disclose their racial/ethnic identification.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019b Divine, interpersonal and self-forgiveness: Independently related to depressive symptoms? [4]	Study 1 and 2: For the first item: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'many times' For the remaining items: 4-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'	D	Study 1: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. When I do something wrong, God is quick to forgive me 3. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness Study 2: 4. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 5. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 6. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 5. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Study 1: Participants (n= 574) were college students recruited from courses that met university liberal studies requirements. Most were from human and social sciences where the majority of the students in these departments and colleges are female. Of the participants, 540 (94.1%) were female, with 394 (68.6%) identifying as Caucasian, 64 (11.1%) as African-American, 80 (13.9%) as Latino, 21 (3.7%) as Asian, 3 (0.5%) as Native American, 6 (1.0%) as Middle Eastern and 6 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 20.02 (SD = 2.01) years. Study 2: Participants (n= 446) were college students recruited from courses that met university liberal studies requirements. Most were from human and social sciences where the majority of the students in these departments and colleges are female. Of the participants, 413 (92.6%) were female, with 290 (64.9%) identifying as Caucasian, 64 (14.3%) as African-American, 60 (13.4%) as Latino, 15 (3.7%) as Asian, 12 (2.7%) as 'other' and 5 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 20.28 (SD = 2.02) years.
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019c Self-forgiveness and well-being: Does divine forgiveness matter? [76]	For the first item: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'many times' For the remaining items: 4-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'	D	1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness 3. When I do something wrong, God is quick to forgive me	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants were 345 undergraduate students (325 female) in an introductory family relations course.Participants' mean age was 19.85 years (SD = 1.60). About 70% of students identified as Caucasian, 12% as African American, 13% as Latino, and the remainder indicated they were Asian, American Indian, or Middle Eastern. Four participants declined to offer their racial/ethnic identity.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2021 No type of forgiveness is an island: divine forgiveness, self-forgiveness and interpersonal forgiveness [29]	For the first 3 items: 4-point Likert scale For the remaining items: 5-point Likert scale	D	1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness 3. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 4. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you? 5. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt?	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Participants were college students in departments offering courses in human and social sciences. The vast majority of students in these departments were female. Two samples were collected, one in each of two consecutive semesters. Sample 1: Of the 348 participants in the first sample, 330 were female, with 236 (67.87%) identifying as Caucasian, 44 (12.6%) as African-American, 44 (12.6%) as Latino, 12 (3.4%) as Asian, 1 (0.3%) as Native American, 2 (0.6%) as Middle Eastern, 8 (2.3%) as 'other' and 1 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The average age of participants was 20.39 (SD = 2.45) years. Sample 2: This sample comprised 449 participants (416 females) with 291 (64.8%) identifying as Caucasian, 64 (14.3%) as African-American, 61 (13.6%) as Latino, 15 (3.3%) as Asian, 1 (0.2%) as Middle Eastern, 1 (0.2%) as Native American, 12 (2.7%) as 'other' and 4 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 20.29 (SD = 2.02) years.
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2023 Divine Forgiveness and Interpersonal Forgiveness: Which Comes First? [10]	For the first 3 items: 4-point Likert scale For the remaining items: 5-point Likert scale	D	Study 1 and 2: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness 3. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 4. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you? 5. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt?	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Study 1: College students (n = 447). They were primarily from human and social sciences where the majority of students are female. Only students who expressed belief in "supernatural agents(s) (e.g., God, Gods, a higher power)" were included in the sample. As regards religious affiliation, 83% of participants identified as Christian, 3.8% as Jewish, 0.7% as Muslim and, 12.5% saw themselves as "Spiritual (I believe supernatural things exist, but I do not follow a specific religion)." Of the 447 participants, 411 (92%) were female, with 301 (67.3%) identifying as Caucasian, 54 (12.1%) as African-American, 67 (14.9%) as Latino, 14 (3.1%) as Asian, 3 as Native American, 4 as Middle Eastern and 4 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 19.81 (SD = 1.08) years.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
						Study 2: In this study, authors again recruited college students (n = 256). As before, these students were primarily studying human and social sciences where the majority of students are female. Consistent with Study 1, only students who expressed belief in "supernatural agents(s) (e.g., God, Gods, a higher power)" were included in the sample. Participants identified as Christian (87.1%), Jewish (5.9%), Muslim (0.8%), Hindu (0.4%), and Spiritual (5.9%). Of the 256 participants, 236 (92%) were female, with 169 (66.0%) identifying as Caucasian, 39 (15.2%) as African-American, 34 (13.3%) as Latino, 9 (3.5%) as Asian, 3 as "other" and 2 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 20.52 (SD = 2.34) years.
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2024 Divine Forgiveness and Well-being Among Emerging Adults in the USA [5]	Study 1: For the first item: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'many times'; For the remaining items: 4-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' Study 2: For the first item: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'many times'; For the second and the third item: 4-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' For the remaining items: 5-point Likert scale (from 'never' to 'very often')	D	Study 1: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness 3. When I do something wrong, God is quick to forgive me Study 2: 4. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 5. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness 6. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 7. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you? 8. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt?	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 6. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 7. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 8. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Study 1: Participants (N=574) were recruited from undergraduate courses at a large southeastern university. Most were from human and social sciences where the majority of the students and colleges were female. The racial identifcation of the sample was 68.6% Caucasian, 13.9% Latino, 11.1% African-American, 3.7% Asian, 1% Middle Eastern, 0.5% Native American, with 1.0% of participants preferring not to provide a racial identity. The sample was primarily female (n=540) and had a mean age of 20.02 (SD=2.01) years. Study 2: A new sample of participants was recruited from college students at a large south-eastern university. Most were from human and social sciences where the majority of the students in these departments and colleges are female. Students who indicated that they did not believe in God (n=70, 13.9%) were not included in the study reported here. Of the 433 remaining participants, three did not complete the questions in this study leaving a sample of 430 participants (406 were female), with 278 (64.7%) identifying as Caucasian, 55 (12.8%) as African-American, 67 (15.6%) as Latino, 17 (3.9%) as Asian, 1 (0.2%) as Native American, 10 (2.3%) as 'other" and 2 (0.4%) declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 20.04 (SD=1.30) years.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Fincham, F. D., May, R. W., & Carlos Chavez, F. L. 2019 Does being religious lead to greater self-forgiveness? [77]	Study 1: For the first item: 4-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'many times' For the remaining items: 4-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'	D	Study 1: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. When I do something wrong, God is quick to forgive me 3. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness	Experiences of/Perceived Divine Forgiveness/God's Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Study 1: Participants (n = 393) were college students. Most were from human and social sciences where the majority of the students in these departments and colleges are female. Of the 393 participants, 367 (93%) were female, with 279 (71%) identifying as Caucasian, 44 (11.2%) as African-American, 50 (12.7%) as Latino, 7 (1.8%) as Asian, 2 (0.5%) as Native American, 5 (1.3%) as Middle Eastern and 6 declined to provide ethnic/racial information. The mean age of participants was 19.89 (SD = 1.61) years. Study 2: Participants were undergraduate students. The participants (n = 91) whose mean age was 19.49 (SD = 1.18 years, range 18–22) were predominantly female (86%). Sixty participants (65.9%) self-identified as Caucasian, 9 (9.9%), as African-American, 12 (13.2%) as Latino, 1 (1.1%), as Asian, 4 (4.4%) as 'other,' and 5 (5.5%) declined to provide information on racial/ethnic identity.
Geczy-Haskins, L. 2017 The Effects of Grace on Self-Forgiveness with a Religious Community [78]	Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree)	D	1. God is mad at me 2. God has offered forgiveness to me 3. God will not forgive offenses such as mine 4. I have received forgiveness from God 5. I have accepted God's forgiveness	Positive and Punitive experiences of Divine Forgiveness	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 5. Acceptance of God's forgiveness	Participants included parishioners from two church congregations from the Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends (NWYM). The initial sample included 54 participants, with 27 in each congregation. Of these, 16 were male (26%) and 38 female (61%). The majority (77%) identified as European American, with 3 (5%) as Hispanic/Latino, 2 (3%) as African-American, 1 (2%) as American Indian, and 8 (12%) not reporting ethnicity. The average age of the sample was 52.1 years (standard deviation of 18.8). Using a crossover design, author found attrition over time, with only 31 participants providing data at each of the three assessment periods (13 in Congregation 1 and 18 in Congregation 2).
Głaz, S. 2019 The Relationship of Forgiveness and Values with Meaning in Life of Polish Students [79]	Likert scale from 1 (almost always false of me) to 5 (almost always true of me)	D	1. NR [Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person] 2. NR [I know that God forgives me]	the believe or perception that one's transgressions are forgiven by the divine	1. NR [Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 2. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	The research was carried out in Krakow. It included students (full-time and part-time) of a private university (Jesuit University Ignatianum). All respondents were born in Poland and grew up in a Catholic family. All the students declared belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. The age of the participants ranged between 19 and 23 (M=20.16; SD=12.19). The result of 368 correctly completed sets of questionnaires were then analysed.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Engdahl, B. E., Olson, R. H. A., Winskowski, A. M., & McMahill, J. 2008 Christian religious functioning and trauma outcomes [80]	NR	D	1. NR [Feeling that God has forgiven you for sins] 2. NR [Belief that you have committed a sin too big to be forgiven]	religious beliefs as they relate to comforts and strains in relationship to the religious community and God	1. NR [Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 2. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness]	A sample of 327 participants, including 95 males, 228 females, and 1 transgendered participant (Three participants did not provide information on their gender) who self-reported having experienced at least one traumatic event and were attending church services. A total of 286 participants identified as Caucasian, 15 as African American, 16 as Native American, 6 as Hispanic, 1 as African, and 1 as Asian (Two participants did not provide information on ethnicity.) Denominational affiliations included Catholic (n = 96), generic "Protestant" (n = 55), Lutheran (n = 44), Presbyterian (n = 14), United Church of Christ (n = 12), Reformed Church of America (n = 16), Baptist (n = 17), Church of Christ Scientist (n = 11), Episcopal (n = 22), Independent Evangelical (n = 3), Metropolitan Community Church (n = 16), United Methodist (n = 13), Church of the Nazarene (n = 14), Unity Church (n = 1), and other affiliations (n = 9). Several participants reported multiple denominational affiliations. The average age was 55 years.
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Winskowski, (A) M., Engdahl, (B) E., & Nguyen, X. V. 2014 Social support as a mediator in the relationship between religious comforts and strains and trauma symptoms. [81]	One subscale for religious comfort (score range 0–49), and three subscales of religious strains, including alienation from God (score range 0–35), religious fear and guilt (score range 0–28), and religious rifts (score range 0–28)	D	1. Belief that you have committed a sin too big to be forgiven 2. NR [Feeling that God has forgiven you for sins]	Items on the religious comfort subscale tap spirituality/community of faith as sources of support; Items on the alienation from God subscale tap estrangement in relationship with the higher power; Items on the religious fear and guilt subscale measure fears about divine punishment or guilt; Items on the religious rifts subscale measure conflict with religious leadership, family, and community of faith	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 2. NR [Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	The study included 327 participants, including 228 women, 95 men, one transgendered participant, and three participants who did not provide information on their gender. All participants self-reported experiencing at least one traumatic event and were recruited at church services. The sample was primarily Caucasian (n 286), but also included African American (n 15), Native American (n 16), Hispanic (n 6), African (n 1), and Asian (n 1) participants. Religious groups represented were Catholic (n 96), unspecified Protestant (n 55), Lutheran (n 44), Presbyterian (n 14), United Church of Christ (n 12), Reformed Church of America (n 16), Baptist (n 17), Church of Christ Scientist (n 11), Episcopal (n 22), Independent Evangelical (n 3), Metropolitan Community Church (n 16), United Methodist (n 13), Church of the Nazarene (n 14), Unity Church (n 1) and other affiliations (n 9). Many participants reported multiple denominational affiliations. The average age was 55.44 years old (SD=15.91)

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Hayward, R. D., & Krause, N. 2013 Trajectories of change in dimensions of forgiveness among older adults and their association with religious commitment [32]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)	D	Perceived Forgiveness by God: 1. I believe God forgives me for the things I've done wrong. Conditionality of God's Forgiveness: 2. In order to be forgiven by God, I must ask God to forgive me. 3. In order to be forgiven by God, I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again. 4. In order to be forgiven by God, I must correct what I have done wrong. 5. God forgives me right away for things I have done; there is nothing I must do first.	extent of perceived forgiveness by God and conditionality of forgiveness by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me unconditionally	Data came from four waves of an ongoing longitudinal survey of religion, aging, and health. The sample was drawn from the Centres for Medicare and Medicaid Services beneficiary list, and was designed to be representative of the population of older adults (aged at least 66 in the year 2001) living in the coterminous 48 states of the United States. For reasons related to measurement and hypothesis testing in the survey as a whole, the sample was further screened by race and religious background, so that all participants were (a) either white or African American, and (b) either currently practicing Christians, previously Christian but no longer practicing any religion, or had never practiced any religion. Wave 1 was conducted in 2001, comprising 1500 completed interviews, including 748 white respondents and an oversample of 752 black respondents, with a response rate of 62%. Subsequent waves of the survey were conducted in 2004 ($N = 1024$; 80% re-interview rate excluding attrition due to mortality), 2007 ($N = 969$; 75% re-interviews), and 2008 ($N = 718$; 88% re-interviews).
Huber, S., Allemand, M., & Huber, O. W. 2011 Forgiveness by God and Human Forgivingness: The Centrality of the Religiosity Makes the Difference [55]	Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very often)	D	1. How often do you experience situations, in which you have the feeling… a)…of being forgiven by God? b)…that God delivers you from a debt? c)…that God is merciful to you? 2. NR/German 3. NR/German	frequency of the experience of being forgiven by God	1. Frequency of the feeling a)…that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me b)…about God's emotions/behaviour toward me c)…about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. NR 3. NR	The sample consisted of 472 participants (191 males and 281 females). The mean age of participants was 53.3 years (SD = 8.7). All participants were recruited at several Catholic and Protestant churches from the cities of Bad Kreuznach and Bad Sobernheim in the western part of Germany. Of the sample, 56.6% were Catholics and 43.4% were Protestants.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Ironson, G., Stuetzle, R., Ironson, D., Balbin, E., Kremer, H., George, A., Schneiderman, N., & Fletcher, M. A. 2011 View of God as benevolent and forgiving or punishing and judgmental predicts HIV disease progression [83]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).	D	1. I see God as merciful 2. I feel I will be forgiven for what I have done 3. I see God as a harsh judge 4. I am afraid God will judge me harshly for what I have done 5. I believe God is all forgiving 6. Despite my shortcomings, I feel I will be forgiven 7. Some people will go to hell when this life is over 8. I think God will punish me for what I have done 9. I believe God is all merciful 10. My beliefs help me believe God will forgive my shortcomings 11. God will condemn those who do wrong someday 12. God will judge me harshly one day	believing in a forgiving/unforgiving God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's general emotions/behaviour 2. Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's general emotions/behaviour 4. Emotions about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God forgives unconditionally 6. Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 7. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's general emotions/behaviour 8. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 9. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's general emotions/behaviour 10. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 11. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's general emotions/behaviour 12. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	In this study 101 HIV positive people were seen every 6 months for 4 years, completing interviews, questionnaires and undergoing phlebotomy to assess disease-progression makers. At entry, between 1997 and 2000, the participants (who volunteered for a study on stress and coping with HIV) were selected if they were in the mid- range of HIV disease (150–500 CD4-cells/mm3, CD4-nadir [48]
Kaldjian, L. C., Jekel, J. F., & Friedland, G. 1998. End-of-life decisions in HIV-positive patients: the role of spiritual beliefs [48]	open-ended	T	NR: authors contacted. 1. Do you believe God… a) forgives you? b) judges you? c) ever punishes you? 2. Have you had to be forgiven by someone since you were diagnosed with HIV? If yes, by whom? (e.g., family member/friend/sexual contact/God/other__) 3. If you believe in God, do you think He has forgiven you? 4. Do you think you still need to be forgiven by Him?	Believe in God's forgiveness	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion a) that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me b) about God's emotions/behaviour toward me c) about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that I have to be forgiven by God 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that I still need God's forgiveness	The study was a descriptive, cross-sectional survey of the spiritual beliefs and religious practices of hospitalized HIV-positive patients. The questionnaire included more than 100 structured questions on demography, purpose in life, hope, religious belief and practice, death, end-of-life decisions, suicide, spiritual counseling and the physician–patient relationship. (A copy of the questionnaire is available from the authors on request.). Of 130 potential study patients, 90 participated in the study. 26 patients were excluded from the study, and of the 104 eligible patients, 90 consented and 14 refused to be interviewed (an acceptance rate of 87%). Mean age (years) 37; Male sex (%) 60; Race (%): African American 62, Caucasian 24, Hispanic 13, American Indian 1. 90% of patients identified themselves as Christian, 3% as Muslim, and 7% denied any religious affiliation.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Kent, B. V., Bradshaw, M., & Uecker, J. E. 2018 Forgiveness, Attachment to God, and Mental Health Outcomes in Older U.S. Adults: A Longitudinal Study [84]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree)	D	1. I believe God forgives me for the things I've done wrong. + In order to be forgiven by God… 2. I must ask God to forgive me 3. I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again 4. I must correct what I have done wrong	Feelings of (transactional) forgiveness/being forgiven by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF	Data came from the Religion, Aging, and Health Survey. The survey included two waves of public data (2001 and 2004) that provided the opportunity to explore the interactive effects of forgiveness and attachment to God on changes in PWB over time. Survey participants were Black and non-Hispanic White individuals who lived in the continental United States and were noninstitutionalized, English-speaking adults 65 years of age or older. Participants were restricted to those who reported attending Christian churches on a regular basis or practicing the Christian faith at some point in their lives. A total of 1,500 interviews were obtained with an overall response rate of 62% for W1. When W2 was conducted, 75 participants refused, 81 were not eligible, 208 were deceased, and 112 could not be located. The final N for W2 was 1,024. Age (M=75.139; SD=6.670); Female (Ref = male; 62%); Black (Ref =White; 46%); Catholic 19%; Protestant 73%; Other Christian 5%; No affiliation 2%.
Kim, J. J., & Enright, R. D. 2014 Differing Views on Forgiveness Within Christianity: Do Graduate-Level Theology Students Perceive Divine and Human Forgiveness Differently? [85]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) + Yes/No + Yes/No	D	1. When God forgives… a) a person releases resentment toward others b) a person gives up a desire for revenge toward others c) a person develops positive feelings of goodwill toward others d) a person is restored to an ongoing relationship with others. + 2. When God forgives, is reconciliation necessary for forgiveness to occur? + 3. Is the way in which God forgives persons who sin different from the way in which persons forgive others?	Understanding of true divine forgiveness: Respondents' perception of divine forgiveness	1a) Outcomes associated to DF 1b) Outcomes associated to DF 1c) Outcomes associated to DF 1 d) Outcomes associated to DF + 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF + 3. Difference between Divine and Interpersonal forgiveness	Authors created a survey that would allow them to compare respondents' perception of divine and human forgiveness. An online survey link was sent to a total of 2,101 potential graduate-level theology students in nine theological institutes in the United States, a total of 356 people opened the survey (including administrators who reviewed our survey before distribution), and 276 completed the survey (response rate of 13% based on the actual number of surveys sent and, if the actual number was not available, the enrollment size of the student body in participating schools; about 78% of those who opened the survey completed it). There were 273 respondents from nine participating institutes that included two Roman Catholic (n 24), two United Methodist (n 70), two United Church of Christ (n 61; one of them was affiliated with both the United Church of Christ and American Baptist Churches), one Church of the Nazarene (n 53), and two inter/multidenominational institutes (n 65), and three respondents from three different institutes (Roman Catholic, Church of the Nazarene, and nondenominational). The ages of the respondents were as follows: 75 were between 20 and 25 years, 67 between 26 and 30, 28 between 31 and 35, 15 between 36 and 40, and 91 were 41 years or older. One respondent did not report his or her age range.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Kim, J., Ragasajo, L. J. C., Kolacz, R. L., Painter, K. J., Pritchard, J. D., & Wrobleski, A. 2021 The interplay between divine, victim, and self-forgiveness: the relationship between three types of forgiveness and psychological outcomes [87]	Study 1 and 2: Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)	T	Study 1 and 2: Authors asked participants to respond to each item in the specific context of their wrongdoing. 1. I feel that I am forgiven by God for what I have done 2. I have a sense of peace in the relationship between me and God 3. I believe God is compassionate even though I have done wrong 4. I do not feel that God still loves me after what I have done 5. I feel abandoned by God for what I have done 6. God is merciful to me despite my wrongdoing 7. I feel reconciled to God even after what I have done	perceived divine forgiveness that accounts for the specific offense committed by the participants.	1. Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Feeling peace in the relationship between me and God 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 4. Feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 7. Feeling reconciled to God	Study 1: Participants were 220 college students self-identified as Christians at a large private Christian university in Central Virginia, ranging in age from 18 to 48 (Mage = 20.40, SD = 2.55). About 82% of the participants were females (n = 181) and about 88% identified themselves as White or Caucasian (n = 194). Study 2: Non-traditional college students (N = 99) from the same university, taking a psychology course in the university's online program, provided data for Study 2. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 65 (Mage = 36.74, SD = 12.67), about 82% of the participants were females (n = 81), and about 82% of the participants identified themselves as White or Caucasian (n = 81). All participants were Christian.
Krause, N. 2012 Studying Forgiveness Among Older Whites, Older Blacks, and Older Mexican Americans [88]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) + Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree)	D	Sources of Forgiveness: 1. I believe that God has forgiven me for the things I have done wrong. + Acts of contrition required by God: In order to be forgiven by God… 2. I must ask God to forgive me 3. I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again 4. I must correct what I have done wrong	whether older study participants feel that God has forgiven them; + whether older people feel they must perform acts of contrition in order to be forgiven by God.	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF	The data for this study come from two nationwide surveys. Older blacks and older whites participated in the first survey, whereas the second survey focused only on older Mexican Americans. For convenience, the first survey is referred to below as the RAH Survey (i.e., Religion, Aging, and Health Survey) and the second is called the RAHMA (i.e., Religion, Aging, and Health : Mexican American Survey). The population for the RAH Survey was defined as all household residents who were either black or white, noninstitutionaized, English-speaking, and 66 years of age or older. The study population was restricted to individuals who were currently practicing Christians, people who were Christian in the past but no longer practice any religion, and individuals who were never affiliated with any faith tradition at any point in their lifetime. Only the data from the first wave of interviews in the RAH Survey were evaluated in this article. A total of 1,500 Wave1 interviews were completed face-to-face in the homes of the older study participants. Older blacks were over-sampled in order to obtain sufficient statistical power to examine race differences in religion. Consequently, the sample consisted of 748 older whites and 752 older blacks. The overall response rate for the study was 62%. The population for the

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
						RAHMA Survey was defined as all Mexican Americans aged 66 and over who were retired (i.e., not working for pay), not institutionalized, and who speak either English or Spanish. The interviews were administered face-to-face in the homes of the older study participants. The wide majority of interviews (84%) were conducted entirely in Spanish. Interviewing took place in 2009–2010. A total of 1,005 interviews were completed successfully. The response rate was 52%. Age: White* 75.4 (SD = 6.8); Black** 74.9 (SD = 6.5); Mexican American*** 74.0 (SD = 6.6) Percent male: White 41%; Black 36%; Mexican American 43%. Percent Catholic: White 33%; Black 7%; Mexican American 79%. *Due to item non-response, the number of cases varies from 726 to 754. **Due to item non-response, the number of cases varies from 712 to 734. ***Due to item non-response, the number of cases varies from 890 to 1005.
Krause, N. 2015 Trust in God, Forgiveness by God, and Death Anxiety [89]	For the first item: Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). For the second indicator: Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).	D	1. I have done some things that even God may not forgive 2. I believe God forgives me for the things I have done wrong.	whether study participants feel they have been forgiven by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	The data for this study come from an ongoing nationwide survey of Whites and African Americans. Altogether, five waves of interviews have been conducted. The study population for the baseline survey was defined as all household residents who self-identified as either Black or White, noninstitutionalized, English-speaking, and at least 66 years of age. The study population was restricted to currently practicing Christians, individuals who were Christian in the past but no longer practice any religion, and people who were not affiliated with any faith at any point in their lifetime. The baseline survey took place in 2001.A total of 1,500 interviews were completed, face-to-face, in the homes of the study participants. African Americans were oversampled so that sufficient statistical power would be available to assess racial cultural differences in religion. The overall response rate for the baseline survey was 62%. The Wave 2 survey was conducted in 2004. A total of 1,024 study participants were re-interviewed successfully. The reinterview rate was 80%. A third wave of interviews was completed in 2007. A total of 969 older study participants were reinterviewed successfully

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
						(reinterview rate was 75%). Wave 4 was completed in 2008. A total of 718 older study participants were reinterviewed successfully (reinterview rate = 88%). A fifth wave of interviews was completed in June, 2013. However, the sampling strategy for this round of interviews was complex. By the time the Wave 5 interviews were conducted, only 229 study participants were reinterviewed successfully. This group was supplemented with a new sample of individuals who had not participated in the study previously (*N* = 1,306). Altogether, a total of 1,535 individuals participated in the Wave 5 interviews. The analyses presented below are based on the Wave 5 data only because this was the first time that questions on trust in God were administered. 381 participants with low rates of church attenders were excluded from the analyses presented in this article, resulting in a sample size of 1,154. The average age of the participants in the pooled study sample was 63.4 years (SD = 11.7 years), 35.9% were men, and 61.1% self-identified as White.
Krause, N., Pargament, K. I., Hill, P. C., & Ironson, G. 2019 Exploring religious and/or spiritual identities: part 2 – a descriptive analysis of those who are at risk for health problems [90]	NR	D	1. I believe that God will forgive me for my shortcomings. 2. NR 3. NR	the extent to which people feel that God is forgiving	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 2. NR 3. NR	The data for the current study come from a nationwide, face-to-face, random probability survey of people age 18 and older who live in the coterminous United States. The interviews were conducted in 2014 by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The response rate was 50%. A total of 3,010 interviews were completed successfully. The analyses that are presented below involve a range of different outcome measures. As a result, these analyses are based on the data provided by between 1,546 and 2,825 study participants. Analysis of the data in the largest study sample (*N* = 2,825) reveals that the average age of the participants in our study was 46.5 years (SD = 17.8 years), approximately 44.1% were men, 44.9% were married at the time the interview took place, and the average level of educational attainment was 13.5 years (SD = 3.1 years).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D. 2014a Acts of Contrition, Forgiveness by God, and Death Anxiety Among Older Mexican Americans [91]	NR + Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree)	D	Feeling God's forgiveness: 1. I believe God forgives me for the things I have done wrong. + Acts of contrition required by God: In order to be forgiven by God… 2. I must ask God to forgive me 3. I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again 4. I must correct what I have done wrong	whether respondents felt forgiven by God + whether participants feel they - must ask God for forgiveness, - must promise not to commit the same transgression again, - must take steps to rectify their misdeeds.	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF	The population for this study was defined as all Mexican Americans age 66 and older who were retired (i.e., not working for pay), were not institutionalized, and speak either English or Spanish. The sampling strategy that was used for the widely cited Hispanic Established Population for Epidemiological Study was adopted for the current study. The interviews were administered face-to-face in the homes of the older study participants. All of the interviewers were bilingual, and all study participants could choose whether they preferred to be interviewed in either English or Spanish. The majority of interviews (84%) were conducted entirely in Spanish. A total of 1,005 interviews were completed successfully. The response rate was 52%. A total of 20 study participants reported that they felt they were not forgiven by God. As a result, the analyses presented next are based on the data that were provided by 985 older Mexican Americans. Preliminary analyses reveal that the average age of the older Mexican Americans in this sample was 74.0 years (SD D 6.6 years), approximately 44% were older men.
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D. 2014b Religious involvement and death anxiety [93]	For the first item: Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree) For the second item: Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)	D	1. I have done some things that even God may not forgive 2. I believe God has forgiven me for the things I have done wrong	whether study participants believe they have been forgiven by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	The population for the current study was defined as all Mexican Americans aged 66 and over who were retired (i.e., not working for pay), not institutionalized, and who speak either English or Spanish. The sampling strategy that was used for the widely-cited Hispanic Established Population for Epidemiological Study (HEPESE) was adopted for the current study. The interviews were administered face-to-face in the homes of the older study participants. Because all of the interviewers were bilingual, study participants were able to choose whether they wanted to be interviewed in either English or Spanish. The wide majority of interviews (84%) were conducted entirely in Spanish. Interviewing took place in 2009-2010. A total of 1,005 interviews were completed successfully. The response rate was 52%. Questions on belonging were not administered to study participants who indicated that they go to church services no more than once or twice a year. After deleting these study participants from the sample, the analyses presented below are based on the responses of 663 older Mexican Americans. Preliminary analyses reveal that the average age of the older Mexican Americans in this sample was 73.4 years (SD = 6.2 years), approximately 39% were older men.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Krause, N., & Hill, P. C. 2018 Assessing the Relationships Among Forgiveness by God, God Images, and Death Anxiety [94]	NR	D	1. I know that God forgives me. 2. I believe that God will forgive my shortcomings.	Forgiveness by God	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	The data for this study come from a nationwide, face-to-face, random probability survey of people of age 18 and older who live in the coterminous United States. The interviews, which were completed in 2014, were conducted by the National Opinion Research Center. The response rate for this study was 50%. A total of 3,010 interviews were completed successfully. The sample was stratified into the following age groups: age 18 to 40 (N = 1,000), age 41 to 64 (N = 1,002), and age 65 and older (N = 1,008). When the survey was conducted, the question on God images was not administered to self-identified atheists (N = 78). Consequently, they were excluded from the analyses provided later. After using listwise deletion to deal with item nonresponse, complete data were available for between 2,650 study participants.
Lyons, G. C. B., Deane, F. P., Caputi, P., & Kelly, P. J. 2011 Spirituality and the treatment of substance use disorders: An exploration of forgiveness, resentment and purpose in life [31]	NR	D	1. NR [God disapproves of me] 2. NR [God thinks favorably of me] 3. NR [God condemns me] 4. NR [God generally forgives me]	how much a person perceives God as having forgiven them for their previous offences.	1. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me] 2. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me] 3. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me] 4. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	Data for this study was obtained from eight Australian Salvation Army Recovery Service Centres located in New South Wales, Queensland, and the Australian Capital Territory. These Recovery Service Centres utilize Twelve Step and Christian teachings in the provision of an 8–10-month residential rehabilitation program for SUDs. Three hundred and eleven surveys were administered to clients participating in this treatment program and 303 were returned, resulting in a 97% participation rate. Of the 303 clients who participated in the study, data for 26 participants were illegible or incomplete and removed from the study, resulting in a final sample of 277 participants (91% of the original participant responses). Gender (%) Male 81.6; Age (M) 36.8 (SD) 9.9.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Maranges, H. M., & Fincham, F. 2024a Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: 4. Childhood unpredictability negatively and divine forgiveness positively predicts self-forgiveness through self-control [40]	Study 1 and 2: For item 1, 2, and 3: Likert scale from 1 (never) to 4 (always or almost always) For item 4 and 5: Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree)	D	Study 1 and 2: 1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you? 3. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt? 4. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek His forgiveness 5. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults	Study 1 and 2: Divine Forgiveness	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 3. Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 5. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Study 1: $N = 439$ undergraduate students at a large southeastern U.S. public university taking courses in social sciences participated in the study. Students who indicated a belief in a higher power or God were included in the study. Participants were adults (Mage = 19.91, SD = 1.81; ranging from 18 to 46; 396 women, 43 men) who identified as White ($n = 296$), Latina/o ($n = 60$), African American or Black ($n = 46$), mixed race ($n = 19$), Asian ($n = 10$), American Indian or Alaska Native ($n = 2$), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ($n = 1$), Middle Eastern ($n = 1$), or preferred not to say ($n = 4$). Participants identified primarily as Christian (Protestant, Catholic, etc.; $n = 353$); participants also identified as Jewish ($n = 19$), Jewish and Catholic ($n = 2$), Muslim ($n = 2$), Christian and Muslim ($n = 1$), Buddhist ($n = 2$), Traditional/Native African Spirituality ($n = 1$), Hindu ($n = 1$), Hindu and Christian ($n = 1$), and Latter Day Saint ($n = 1$). Many participants did not identify with any specific religion ($n = 56$). Study 2: $N = 441$ undergraduate students taking courses in social sciences at a large southeastern U.S. public university. Authors only included respondents who indicated a belief in a higher power or God. Participants (Mage = 19.88, SD = 1.67; ranging from 18 to 42; 403 women, 33 men, 2 non-binary, 1 genderfluid, 2 prefer not to say) identified as White ($n = 297$), Latina/o ($n = 47$), African American or Black ($n = 45$), mixed race ($n = 27$), Asian ($n = 16$), American Indian or Alaska Native ($n = 2$), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ($n = 1$), Middle Eastern/North African ($n = 1$), Black and Latino ($n = 1$), White and Latina ($n = 1$), or preferred not to say ($n = 3$). With respect to religious affiliations, participants were Christian (Protestant, Catholic, etc.; $n = 325$), Jewish ($n = 19$), Muslim ($n = 3$), Buddhist ($n = 3$), Jewish and Catholic ($n = 1$), and Hindu ($n = 1$), or did not identify with any specific religion ($n = 83$).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Martin, A. M. 2008 Exploring forgiveness: the relationship between feeling forgiven by God and self-forgiveness for an interpersonal offense [35]	Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree)	T	1. God is mad at me 2. God has offered forgiveness to me 3. God will not forgive offenses such as mine 4. I have received forgiveness from God 5. I have accepted God's forgiveness For each statement, participants provided two ratings, one indicating an emotional experience of divine forgiveness and the other indicating a cognitive experience of divine forgiveness ("At an emotional level, to what extent do you feel this way?" and "At an intellectual level, to what extent do you believe this to be true?").	participants' feelings and beliefs about God's forgiveness for a specific offense	1. Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 4. Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 5. Feelings and Beliefs/certainty/opinion about acceptance of God's forgiveness	Two samples of participants were recruited: a college student sample and a general online adult sample. Criteria for participation included some belief in God and being in the appropriate age range (between 18 and 35 for college sample and over 18 for the general sample). In total 260 participants were recruited for the study. Forty-four participants did not meet full criteria for participation and were dropped from the study. As such, the major analyses were conducted on 216 participants. The student sample consisted of 56 males and 52 females with the average age of 19 (SD = 1.17). The sample was 70% Caucasian, 7% African American, 19% Asian or Pacific Islander and 7% other race. In terms of religious affiliations for the student sample, most participants were Christian (28% Protestant, 31% Catholic, and 4% Eastern Orthodox). The remaining participants in the student sample were Hindu (7%), Jewish (6%), Islamic (4%), Buddhist (4%), atheist/agnostic (13%), no religion (5%), unsure of their religion (8%), and other religion (7%). The general sample consisted of 30 males and 78 females. The age range for the general sample was more expansive than in the student sample, with 49% being age 18–30, 17% in their 30 s, 10% in their 40 s, 16% in their 50 s, and 8% 60 and over (M = 35.3, SD =15.3). Like in the student sample, the general sample was predominantly Caucasian (83%). Other ethnic groups for the general sample included African American (11%), Asian or Pacific Islander (2%), and other race (5%). Again, most participants identified with being a Christian as their religious affiliation (46% Protestant and 27% Catholic), with other participants identifying as Jewish (9%), Buddhist (2%), atheist/agnostic (3%), no religion (5%), unsure (5%), and other religion (8%).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
McConnell, J. M., & Dixon, D. N. 2012 Perceived Forgiveness from God and Self-Forgiveness [36]	Likert scale from 1 (Almost Always False of Me) to 7 (Almost Always True of Me).	D	1. When I do wrong, God's back is turned to me 2. I am sometimes anxious about whether God forgives me 3. I am confident of God forgiving me 4. I know I am not perfect, but God loves me anyway. 5. I have sometimes felt that I have committed the unforgivable sin 6. God's love for me has no strings attached 7. Even when I do bad things, I know God still forgives me 8. God loves me only when I am perfect 9. God loves me regardless 10. Sometimes I feel that God doesn't forgive me anymore 11. I worry about whether God can forgive me 12. God's love for me is unconditional. 13. God forgives a lot of other people more than me 14. I am not good enough for God's forgiveness	Personalized views of how the participants conceptualize God (i.e., forgiving or punitive)	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Emotions about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 3. Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Feeling about God's unforgiveness 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 7. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 8. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 9. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 10. Feeling about God's unforgiveness 11. Emotions about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 12. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 13. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness 14. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's unforgiveness	Participants (male [27], female [63]) were 90 undergraduate students (freshman [15.6%], sophomore [16.7%], junior [37.8%], and senior [30%]) at a mid-western university. Ages ranged from 18–25 (M=20.73, SD= 1.36). The sample consisted of 82.2% Caucasian, 10% African-American, 4.4% Hispanic/Mexican-American, and 3.3% mixed race. Religious affiliation was determined by checking one of the following categories: Protestant (31.1%), Catholic (23.3%), Buddhist (2.2.%), Hindu (1.1%), Agnostic (7.8%), and Other (34.5%). Those who checked the Other category indicated non-denominational Christian (14.4%), various denominational affiliations (17.7%, i.e., Apostolic, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Mormon, Pentecostal, or Presbyterian), and undecided (2.2%).
Moroń, M. 2022 Basic dimensions of religiousness and dispositional forgiveness: the mediating role of religiously motivated forgiveness [96]	Likert scale from 1 ("strongly agree" or "never") to 5 ("strongly disagree" or "very often"). In the Polish version, the response categories were modified by including the option "not applicable"	D	1. NR [Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person] 2. I know that God forgives me.	Divine Forgiveness	1. NR [Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	427 individuals (71% women) participated in the study. The inclusion criteria in the present study consisted of being 18 years old or older and self-identification as a believing person. The age of the respondents ranged from 15 to 66 years (M = 26.7, SD = 10.47). In the final sample, 9 participants younger than 18 or not reporting their age were excluded, which resulted in *N* = 418 (70.8% women). The participants' age ranged from 18 to 66 (M = 26.8, SD = 10.5). The predominant reported religion was Roman Catholicism with only a few exceptions (Protestant or Buddhism was reported by fewer than 1% of the participants). All participants were Polish.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Prince-Paul, M., Zyzanski, S. J., Exline, J. J. 2013 The RelCom-S. A Screening Instrument to Assess Personal Relationships and Communication in Advanced Cancer [97]	For the first item: important - not important For the second item: quite a bit/completely - a little bit/not at all	D	Right now, 1. How important is it for you to have God/higher power forgive you? 2. I know that God/higher power forgives me	instrument that assesses which relationships are considered important (self, others, God/higher power); whether one has communicated expressions of love, gratitude, and forgiveness; and the importance assigned to each.	1. Importance of God's forgiveness 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	This study used a convenience sample of 125 adult patients with solid tumor, advanced cancer (stage III-IV) who were cognitively intact. Although the parent study was longitudinal in design, only baseline data for the RelCom-S psychometric evaluation are reported here. Data were collected in a large, tertiary, National Cancer Institute - designated, comprehensive cancer center and 2 associated satellite outpatient centers representing different demographic areas. Age (mean, 61 [SD, 12]); Gender: Female 51%; Race: White 84%.
Sansone, R. A., Kelley, A. R., & Forbis, J. S. 2013 The relationship between forgiveness and history of suicide attempt [98]	Likert scale from 1 (Always or almost always) to 7 (Never)	D	1. I believe that God has forgiven me for things I have done wrong. 2. I believe that there are times when God has punished me.	current attitudes and behaviours regarding forgiveness	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me	Participants were males and females, ages 18 years or older, who were being seen at an outpatient internal medicine clinic for non-emergent medical care. At the outset, 381 individuals were approached and 345 agreed to participate, for a participation rate of 90%. Of these, 304 completed the study measures relevant to analyses. Of the 304 respondents included in our analyses, 74.0% were female and 26.0% male, ranging in age from 18 to 92 years (M = 43.0, SD = 12.4). Most participants were White/Caucasian (86.8%); however, 6.9% of participants were African-American, 2.6% Asian, 2.3% Hispanic, and 0.6% Native American.
Skalski-Bednarz, S. B., Webb, J. R., Wilson, C. M., Toussaint, L. L., Surzykiewicz, J., Reid, S. D., Williams, D. R., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. 2024 Pathways to Flourishing: The Roles of Self- and Divine Forgiveness in Mitigating the Adverse Effects of Stress and Substance Use among Adults in Trinidad and Tobago [99]	Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (many times) NR	D	1. How often have you felt that God forgives you? 2. I am certain that God forgives me when I seek his forgiveness 3. NR [How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God is merciful to you?] 4. NR [How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt?]	the extent to which individuals experience a sense of being forgiven by God.	1. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. NR [Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me] 4. NR [Frequency of the feeling about God's emotions/behaviour toward me]	The present study was conducted using the online platform Qualtrics in 2023. Participation was restricted to English-speaking individuals living in Trinidad and Tobago who identified with a religious group, but had no other specific requirements. Participants were recruited via social media channels (including Facebook and X), resulting in a diverse sample of 869 individuals ranging in age from eighteen to eighty-two (M = 29.25, SD = 11.49). Gender: Men 36%, Women 62%, Other 2%; Race: Afro-Trinidadian 46%, Chinese-Trinidadian 1%, Mixed 34%, Indian-Trinidadian 6%, Caucasian-Trinidadian 8%, Other 5%

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Standish, E. E. 2016 Forgiveness, Health, And Psychological Adjustment In Older Adults [100]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree)	D	1. I have done some things that even God may not forgive 2. I believe that God forgives me for the things I have done wrong 3. In order to be forgiven by God, I must ask God to forgive me 4. In order to be forgiven by God, I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again 5. In order to be forgiven by God, I must correct what I have done wrong 6. God forgives me right away for the things I have done, there is nothing I must do first	Forgiveness items	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God	In this study, author used data from the Religion, Aging and Health Survey (RAHS), a nationally representative longitudinal survey (Krause, 2008). The study population was selected from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) beneficiary list and included all household residents who were either Black or White, non-institutionalized, English-speaking, and at least 66 years of age. Of note, the RAHS was initially designed to explore a range of issues related to religion; members of the research team reasoned that developing a comprehensive set of religious measures suitable for all faiths would be exceedingly difficult. Therefore, individuals who identified with a faith other than Christianity were excluded and participants in the final sample fell into one of three categories: practicing Christians, former Christians no longer practicing religion, and those who were never allied with any religious faith. The data collection for the RAHS included face-to-face interviews, which were performed in the homes of study participants. Two waves of data collection were analyzed for this study. The original wave (wave 1) of the Survey was conducted in 2001, where a total 1,500 interviews were completed. Older Black Americans were over-sampled so that sufficient statistical power would be available to assess race differences in religion. The wave 1 sample consisted of 748 older Whites and 752 older Blacks. The overall response rate for wave 1 was 62%. Wave 2 of the Survey was conducted in 2004, where a total of 1,024 of the original 1,500 interviewees were re-interviewed.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S.A. 2008a The association of forgiveness and 12-month prevalence of major depressive episode: Gender differences in a probability sample of U.S. adults [101]	Likert scale: 4-point agree–disagree scale	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. I know that God forgives me	the degree to which respondents felt forgiven by God	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants responded to the Survey of Consumers, a telephone survey of adults age 18 and older conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The sample was nationally representative and was randomly selected using a two-stage random-digit-dialing (RDD). The survey employs a rotating panel design to gather data from approximately 500 respondents on a monthly basis. Each monthly sample consists of about 300 new respondents and 200 respondents being re-interviewed 6 months after their initial interview. For five consecutive months in 1998, this study added questions to the monthly survey administered to the new national sample of about 300 respondents. The total sample for the 5-month period was 1,423 respondents, and the response rate for the survey ranged from 0.69 to 0.71 during the 5-month period.
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S. A. 2008b Why forgiveness may protect against depression: Hopelessness as an explanatory mechanism [49]	Likert scale: 4-point agree–disagree scale	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. I know that God forgives me	the degree to which respondents felt forgiven by God	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants responded to the Survey of Consumers, a telephone survey of adults age 18 and older conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The sample was nationally representative and was randomly selected using a two-stage random-digit-dialing (RDD). The survey employs a rotating panel design to gather data from approximately 500 respondents on a monthly basis. Each monthly sample consists of about 300 new respondents and 200 respondents being re-interviewed 6 months after their initial interview. For five consecutive months in 1998, this study added questions to the monthly survey administered to the new national sample of about 300 respondents. The total sample for the 5-month period was 1,423 respondents, and the response rate for the survey ranged from 0.69 to 0.71 during the 5-month period.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Toussaint, L. L., Marschall, J. C., & Williams, D. R. 2012 Prospective Associations between Religiousness/Spirituality and Depression and Mediating Effects of Forgiveness in a Nationally Representative Sample of United States Adults [104]	Likert scale: 4-point agree–disagree scale	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. I know that God forgives me	Forgiven by God	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants responded to the Survey of Consumers, a telephone survey of adults age 18 and older conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The sample was nationally representative and was randomly selected using a two-stage random-digit-dialing (RDD). The survey employs a rotating panel design to gather data from approximately 500 respondents on a monthly basis. Each monthly sample consists of about 300 new respondents and 200 respondents being re-interviewed 6 months after their initial interview. The initial sample for this study consisted of the new national sample selected each month for five months for a total of 1,423 respondents. The reinterview target sample consisted of approximately three-fourths of the original respondents who were randomly selected for a total of 1,055 respondents. Both the initial and reinterview samples are nationally representative. The response rate for the survey ranged from 0.69 to 0.71. After listwise deletion of missing data, the final sample consisted of 966 respondents who participated at both times 1 and 2.
Toussaint, L. L., Owen, A. D., & Cheadle, A. 2012 Forgive to Live: Forgiveness, Health, and Longevity [105]	All forgiveness items used 1–4 Likert-type response scales.	D	1. In order to be forgiven by God, I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again 2. In order to be forgiven by God, I must correct what I have done wrong 3. In order to be forgiven by God, I must ask God to forgive me 4. God forgives me right away for things I have done; there is nothing I must do first	Conditional and unconditional forgiveness from God scales assessed beliefs that seeking forgiveness, offering assurances, and making amends are required for God's forgiveness to be granted.	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about an Unconditionally forgiving God	Data for this study are from the "Religion, Aging, and Health Survey" conducted by Krause (2006) at the University of Michigan. The sample for this survey was English-speaking non-institutionalized United States (U.S.) adults age 66 and older, living in the contiguous 48 states. Names were randomly selected from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Beneficiary Eligibility List, which includes virtually every U.S. citizen regardless of whether they receive benefits. The sample was weighted to reflect age, sex, education, and region of residence of the U.S. population as estimated by the Current Population Survey. Only current and former Christians and nonreligious individuals were included in the survey. Respondents were 59% female, an average of 75 years of age. Whites made up 49% of the sample, African-Americans consisted of 47, and 5% identified as another race or ethnicity or as multiracial.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R. 2008 National Survey Results for Protestant, Catholic, and Nonreligious Experiences of Seeking Forgiveness and of Forgiveness of Self, of Others, and by God [106]	Item responses were made on 5-point Likert-type agreement or frequency scales	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. I know that God forgives me	Forgiven by God	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants responded to the Survey of Consumers, a telephone survey of adults age 18 and older conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The sample was nationally representative and was randomly selected using a two-stage random-digit-dialing (RDD). The survey employs a rotating panel design to gather data from approximately 500 respondents on a monthly basis. Each monthly sample consists of about 300 new respondents and 200 respondents being re-interviewed 6 months after their initial interview. For five consecutive months in 1998, this study added questions to the monthly survey administered to the new national sample of about 300 respondents. The total sample for the 5-month period was 1,423 respondents, and the response rate for the survey ranged from 0.69 to 0.71 during the 5-month period. Respondents meeting religious affiliation inclusion criteria with complete data totaled 1,087 in this study. The median age of this sample was 44 years (minimum = 18, maximum = 96); 55% were female; 11% were non-Hispanic Black, 9% were Hispanic, 77% were non-Hispanic white, 3% were another race/ethnicity. Of the 1,423 participants in this survey, 588 reported Protestant, 350 reported Catholic, and 149 reported no religion. The remaining 336 respondents reported either no religious preference that could be categorized or a preference that was too few in number for meaningful analyses.
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson, S. A. 2001 Forgiveness and Health: Age Differences in a U.S. Probability Sample [64]	Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree)	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. I know that God forgives me	the degree to which respondents felt forgiven by God.	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants responded to the Survey of Consumers, a telephone survey of adults age 18 and older conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The sample was nationally representative and was randomly selected using an extended form of the two-stage random-digit-dialing (RDD). The survey employs a rotating panel design to gather data from approximately 500 respondents on a monthly basis. Each monthly sample consists of about 300 new respondents and 200 respondents being reinterviewed 6 months after their initial interview. For five consecutive months in 1998, our study added questions to the monthly survey administered to the new national sample of about 300 respondents. The total sample for the 5-month period was 1,423 respondents, and the response rate for the survey ranged from 0.69 to 0.71 during the 5-month period.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Trevino, K. M. 2007 Forgive me for I have sinned: the effects of religious and secular confession and forgiveness on psychological, emotional, and religious well-being in college students [107]	Likert scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (Completely) + Not Applicable + open-ended + Likert scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (Completely) + Not Applicable	T	1. As a result of participating in this writing exercise, to what degree do you feel forgiven by God for the event you described in your letter? + Please complete each item with a number that describes your experience 2. In the past week, how many times have you felt forgiven by God for something you did wrong? + Please circle the number that best describes how you think God feels toward you for your role in the event you described in your essay: 3. God disapproves of me 4. God thinks favorably of me 5. God condemns me 6. God generally forgives me	experience of forgiveness from god + experience of forgiveness from god + experience of forgiveness from god	1. Feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Frequency of the feeling that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	The sample for this project was comprised of 115 undergraduate college students. Eighty-nine of these participants submitted data at all time points. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 37 years with 95.7% of the sample falling between the ages of 19 and 22 years. The mean age was 20.14 years (SD=1.93). The sample consisted of primarily freshmen (60.9%) and sophomores (28.7%). In addition, 22.6% of the sample was male and 77.4% was female. Consistent with the demographic characteristics of the university from which the sample was collected, 78.3% of participants were Caucasian with small proportions of African Americans (9.6%), Hispanics (5.2%), bi-racial individuals (4.3%), and Asian Americans, Native Americans, or other (2.7%). The sample was predominantly Christian (88.7%), with 35.7% of participants identifying as Catholic, 25.2% as Protestant, and 27.8% as non-denominational Christian. Muslims (0.9%) and participants endorsing none (3.5%) and other (7.0%) comprised the remainder of the sample.
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. 2002 Forgiveness within the Big Five personality model [33]	Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)	D	1. God disapproves of me 2. God thinks favorably of me 3. God condemns me 4. God generally forgives me	Receiving God's forgiveness	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants (*N*=180) were taken from religious and non-religious universities in southern California. The sample consisted of 137 females and 43 males ranging in age from 18 to 55 (M=23.20, DS=7.56). Religion: 113 Protestant, 27 Catholic, 9 Christian Scientist, 2 Mormon, 5 Buddhist, 2 Eastern Orthodox, 2 Jenovah's Witness, 3 Jewish, 9 None, 2 Agnostic, 1 Atheist, 1 Bahai. Four participants did not state their religious denomination. Race: 117 White, 29 Asian, 16 Hispanic, 1 African-American, 13 Multi-racial.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. 2004 Dimensions underlying sixteen models of forgiveness and reconciliation [109]	Likert scale from 0 (Not very true of me) to 5 (Very true of me).	D	Now please answer the following questions about your current attitude toward the person. We do not want your rating of past attitudes, we want your attitudes right now. 1. Accepting that God forgives me. 2. Recognizing that we have been totally forgiven by God. 3. Becoming aware of our commonality under God. 4. Feeling loved by Christ and wanting Him to be the center of my life. 5. Viewing them as tools in our understanding of the grace of God.	Receiving God's forgiveness	1. Acceptance of God's forgiveness 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive 3. Awarness of our commonality under God 4. Feeling Christ's love and importance 5. Understanding God's grace	The participants in the current study consisted of one hundred eighty students (137 females, 43 males) taken from Christian (N = 109), and secular (N = 71) universities in Southern California. The ages ranged from 18 to 55, (M = 23.20, SD = 7.56). The following religious denominations were represented: 113 Protestant, 27 Catholic, 9 Christian Scientist, 2 Mormon, 5 Buddhist, 2 Eastern Orthodox, 2 Jehovah's Witness, 3 Jewish, 9 None, 2 Agnostic, 1 Atheist, 1 Bahai, and four participants who did not state their religious denomination. The sample consisted of 117 White, 29 Asian, 16 Hispanic, 1 African-American, and 13 Multi-Racial participants.
Watson, P. J., Hood, R. W., Morris, R. J., & Hall, J. R. 1985 Religiosity, sin, and self-esteem [50]	Five point Likert Scale	D	1. I, like everyone else, am sinful 2. My sins are forgiven 3. Grace entered my life when I was forgiven for my sins 1. I am a helpless sinner, but I am worthy in the sight of God 2. Knowing that I am sinful and that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 3. I, like everyone else, am sinful 4. Grace entered my life when I was forgiven for my sins 5. Forgiveness will follow if we confess our sins 6. My sins are forgiven	Attitudes toward sins Sin/Grace dimension	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about my sinful nature 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Outcome associated to DF 1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about my sinful nature 4. Outcome associated with DF 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Study 1: N=97 male and 130 female students from the University of Tennessee. Religious affiliation varied widely with some students claiming no religious preference but with the vast majority identifying themselves as Protestant. The Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations were most strongly represented. Study 2: N=98 male and 96 female students similar to those of the first study.
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1987 Antireligious humanistic values, guilt, and self-esteem [51]	NR	D	1. I am a helpless sinner, but I am worthy in the sight of God 2. Knowing that I am sinful and that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 3. I, like everyone else, am sinful 4. Grace entered my life when I was forgiven for my sins 5. Forgiveness will follow if we confess our sins 6. My sins are forgiven	acceptance of sinful nature	1. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about God's emotions/behaviour toward me 2. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about my sinful nature 4. Outcome associated with DF 5. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 6. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Participants were undergraduates (75 males and 87 females). Ages ranged from 17 to 42, with an average of 21.2 years. Religion: Baptist (50.7%), Catholic (16%), Methodist (8.7%), other Protestant denominations (14.7%), Other (9.9%)

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Response scale	Dispositional (D) - Transgression-related (T)	Items	Measured facets of DF stated in the publication	Measured facets of DF according to the authors of this Systematic Review	Main sample information provided by the publication
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1988a Sin and self-functioning: I. Grace, guilt, and self-consciousness [52]	NR	D	1. Knowing that I am sinful and that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. Grace entered my life when I was forgiven for my sins 3. Forgiveness will follow if we confess our sins 4. My sins are forgiven	God's grace	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Outcome associated with DF 3. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF 4. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	Study 1: Participants were undergraduates (95 males and 103 females from a public state university, 57 males and 59 females from a Pentecostal college). The mean age for the public university students was 20.3 years (SD=4.97) while the Pentecostals averaged 21.1 (SD=4.11). Public university students-Religion: Baptist (35.9%), Methodist (15.6%), Presbyterian (9.6%), Other Protestant groups (17.7%), Catholic (9.6%), Other (11.6%). Pentecostal college students-Religion: Pentecostal denomination (83.6%), Other Protestant groups (11.2%), Other (4.3%), Catholic (0.9%) Study 2: Participants were undergraduates (71 males and 110 females) from a state university averaged 19.0 years of age (SD=3.85). Religion: Baptist (48%), Methodist (16%), Church of Christ (9.9%), Presbyterian (5.5%), Other Protestant (6.8%), Catholic (4.4%), Other (8.8%)
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1988b Sin and self-functioning, Part 2: Grace, guilt, and psychological adjustment [110]	NR	D	1. NR [Knowing that I am sinful and that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person] 2. NR [Grace entered my life when I was forgiven for my sins] 3. NR [Forgiveness will follow if we confess our sins] 4. NR [My sins are forgiven]	God's grace	1. NR [Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me] 2. NR [Outcome associated with DF] 3. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion about the conditions to receive DF] 4. NR [Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me]	Study 1: The sample consisted of 97 male and 124 female undergraduates from Introductory Psychology classes at a southeastern state university. The age of subjects averaged 19.3 years (SD=3.6). Religion: Baptist (51.1%), Methodist (10%), Presbyterian (9%), Church of Christ (5.9%), Catholic (9%), Other Protestant (8.6%), or simply Other (6.4%). Study 2: The sample consisted of 58 males and 67 females undergraduates from the same university. Ages averaged 19.8 years (SD=4.0). Religious affiliation was 48% Baptist, 12% Methodist, 6.4% Presbyterian, 4.6% Church of Christ, 8% Other Protestant, 9.6% Catholic, and 10.4% simply Other.
Wnuk, M., & Charzyńska, E. 2024 Does Forgiveness Underlie the Relationship Between Religiosity and Meaning in Life Among Members of Sexaholics Anonymous in Poland? [111]	Likert scale from 1 ("strongly agree" or "never") to 5 ("strongly disagree" or "very often"). +"not applicable"	D	1. Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person 2. I know that God forgives me.	the level of feeling forgiven by God/higher power	1. Outcome associated with the Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me 2. Belief/knowledge/certainty/opinion that God has forgiven/forgives/will forgive me	The study was conducted among 80 individuals (90% of men and 10% of women) attending SA meetings in Poland. The average age of the participants was 38.96 years (SD=10.56). Religion: Roman Catholicism (82.5%), Jehovah's Witnesses (2.5%), Slavic religion (2.5%), Without denomination (11.2%), Agnostic (1.3%). Number of months in SA (M±SD): 47.48 (32.86)

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Abrams, S. 2024 Forgiving a good heart: the role of motives and mind perception in lay understandings of divine forgiveness [60]	Ratings for each item were averaged together into one composite measure of perceived forgiveness for an offense ($\alpha = 0.87$).	NR	NR	NR	NR
Akl, M., & Mullet, E. 2010 Forgivingness: Relationships With Conceptualizations of Divine Forgiveness and Childhood Memories [63]	Resentful God: $\alpha = 0.90$; Sensitive God: $\alpha = 0.81$; Unconditionally Forgiving God: $\alpha = 0.80$; Unpredictable God: $\alpha = 0.67$; Feeling Forgiven by God: $\alpha = 0.82$	Three factors; Resentful God: $64 \leq \lambda \leq 0.92$ Sensitive God: $0.39 \leq \lambda \leq 0.81$ Unconditionally Forgiving God: $0.32 \leq \lambda \leq 0.87$ Two additional factors: Unpredictable God: $0.46 \leq \lambda \leq 0.73$ Feeling Forgiven by God: $-0.56 \leq \lambda \leq 0.85$	NR	NR	Resentful God: r =.23* with Lasting Resentment; r = -.01 with Sensitivity to Circumstances; r = -.32* with Unconditional Forgiveness Sensitive God: r =.15 with Lasting Resentment; r =.15 with Sensitivity to Circumstances; r =.00 with Unconditional Forgiveness Unconditionally Forgiving God: r =-.13 with Lasting Resentment; r = -.09 with Sensitivity to Circumstances; r =.35* with Unconditional Forgiveness Unpredictable God: r =-.39* with Lasting Resentment; r =.16 with Sensitivity to Circumstances; r = -.34* with Unconditional Forgiveness Feeling Forgiven by God: r =-.31* with Lasting Resentment; r = -.21* with Sensitivity to Circumstances; r =.28* with Unconditional Forgiveness
Bassett, R. L., Carrier, E., Charleson, K., Pak, N. R.,Schwingel, R., Majors, A., Pitre, M., Sundlof-Stoller, A., & Bloser, C. 2016 Is It Really More Blessed to Give Than to Receive? A Consideration of Forgiveness and Perceived Health [30]	Study one: Forgiven by God: = α 0.95 Study two: God Forgiven = α 0.76	NR	NR	NR	Study one: Self-Forgiveness: r =.41* Seeking Forgiveness: r =.33* Life Satisfaction: r =.36* Study two: Decisional Forgiveness: r =.36** Emotional Forgiveness: r =.32** Unforgiveness: r =-.19* Seeking Forgiveness: r =.35** Self-Forgiveness: r =.49** Life Satisfaction: r =.23** Overall Health: r =.18*
Bufford, R. K., McMinn, M. R., Moody, J. A., & Geczy-Haskins, L. 2017 The effects of grace interventions in church communities [66]	Two punitive divine forgiveness items = α 0.29 Three positive divine forgiveness items = α 0.81	NR	NR	NR	NR

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Charzyńska, E. 2015 Sex Differences in Spiritual Coping, Forgiveness, and Gratitude Before and After a Basic Alcohol Addiction Treatment Program [67]	α =.91	NR	NR	NR	NR
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen-Celińska, I. 2019. The role of forgiveness and gratitude in the quality of life of alcohol-dependent persons [78]	α = 0.91	NR	NR	NR	Forgiveness of others: r =.14* Gratitude: r =.20** Mental HRQoL: r =.17** Gender: r = −.12* Age: r =.15** Religiosity: r =.43*** *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.
Charzyńska, E. 2021 The Efect of Baseline Patterns of Spiritual Coping, Forgiveness, and Gratitude on the Completion of an Alcohol Addiction Treatment Program [70]	α = 0.90	NR	NR	NR	Positive personal coping: r =.23*** Positive social coping: r =.24*** Positive environmental coping: r =.22*** Positive religious coping: r =.53*** Negative personal coping: r = −.19** Negative social coping: r = −.07 Negative religious coping: r = −.05 Self-forgiveness: r =.12* Forgiveness of others: r =.18* Gratitude: r =.23*** *p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen, I. 2018 Forgiveness and gratitude trajectories among persons undergoing alcohol addiction therapy [71]	T1 α = 0.90 T2 α = 0.86 T3 α = 0.91	NR	NR	NR	NR

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Exline, J. J. 2008 Beliefs about God and forgiveness in a Baptist Church sample [72]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Baptist church sample differed on college student on the items: 1. God is a God of mercy. t = 5.30*** 2. God commands us to forgive others. t = 6.07*** 3. God is a God of justice. t = 5.65*** 4. God has forgiven me for some pretty big things. t = 4.00*** 5. I believe that God has forgiven all of my sins. t = 5.13*** 7. I need God's forgiveness. t = 4.27** 8. God punishes sin. t = 5.97*** 9. God says that we must "turn the other cheek". t = 5.55*** 11. If I do not forgive others, God will not forgive me. t = 4.24*** ***$p < .05$
Exline, J. J., Yali, A. M., Sanderson, W. C. 2000 Guilt, Discord, and Alienation: The Role of Religious Strain in Depression and Suicidality [73]	NR	2 item belonging to a 20-item measure assessing religious comfort, alienation from God, fear/guilt, religious rifts. One item belonging to religious comfort subscale: λ = 0.80 One item belonging to fear/guilt-subscale: λ = 0.73	NR	NR	Study 1 Religious comfort: r =.08 with Depression; r = NR with Suicidality; r =.52*** with Religiosity; r =–.28*** with Religious Strain; r = –.55*** with Alienation from God; r = –.25*** with Religious Rifts; r =.37*** with Fear and Guilt; r =.16 with Helpfulness of Addressing Religious Issues in Therapy Fear and Guilt: r =.11 with Depression; r = NR with Suicidality; r =.26* with Religiosity; r =.37*** with Religious comfort; r =.42*** with Religious Strain; r = –.05 with Alienation from God; r =.00 with Religious Rifts; r =.29* with Helpfulness of Addressing Religious Issues in Therapy Study 2 Religious comfort: r = –.03 with Depression; r = –.14 with Suicidality; r =.57*** with Religiosity; r =.57*** with Religious Comfort; r = –.08 with Religious Strain; r = –.26 with Alienation from God; r =.08 with Religious Rifts; r =.14 with Fear and Guilt; r =.16 with Helpfulness of Addressing Religious Issues in Therapy Fear and Guilt: r = –.08 with Depression; r = –.31* with Suicidality; r =.00 with Religiosity; r =.14 with Religious comfort; r =.57*** with Religious Strain; r =.06 with Alienation from God; r =.24 with Religious Rifts; r =.29* with Helpfulness of Addressing Religious Issues in Therapy *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Fetzer Institute 1999 Multidimensional measurement of religiousness/spirituality for use in health research: a report of the Fetzer institute/national institute on aging working group [23]	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M. 2024a Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: seeking divine forgiveness [22]	Study 1 Seeking divine forgiveness: α = 0.94 Divine forgiveness: T1 α = 0.86; T2 α = 0.90	Study 1 Convergent validity: Seeking divine forgivenevss related to reports of divine forgiveness, and religiosity Discriminant validity: Seeking divine forgiveness unrelated to resilience, and emotion regulation.	NR	Study 1. Convergent validity: Seeking divine forgiveness related to reports of divine forgiveness both concurrently and six weeks later, and religiosity. Discriminant validity: Seeking divine forgiveness unrelated to resilience, and emotion regulation.	Study 1 Seeking divine forgiveness T1 with: reported divine forgiveness T1, *r* =.46*** reported divine forgiveness T2, *r* =.50*** religiosity T1, *r* =.56*** resilience T1, *r* =.04 emotion regulation T1, *r* =.00 Reported divine forgiveness T1 with: reported divine forgiveness T2, *r* =.77*** religiosity T1, *r* =.63*** resilience T1, *r* =.21** emotion regulation T1, *r* =.20** Reported divine forgiveness T2 with: religiosity T1, *r* =.58*** resilience T1, *r* =.12 emotion regulation T1, *r* =.08 Study 2 Seeking divine forgiveness with: reported divine forgiveness, *r* =.50*** Authoritarian image, *r* = −.10* Benevolent image, *r* =.58*** Anxious attachment, *r* = −.21** Avoidant attachment, *r* = −.71*** Closeness, *r* =.61*** Religiosity, *r* =.60*** Impression manage, *r* =.07 Reported divine forgiveness with: Authoritarian image, *r* = −.08* Benevolent image, *r* =.40*** Anxious attachment, *r* = −.19** Avoidant attachment, *r* = −.51*** Closeness, *r* =.49*** Religiosity, *r* =.54*** Impression manage, *r* =.07 * *p* <.05, ** *p* <.01, *** *p* <.001.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M. 2024b Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: 2. Does viewing God as intervening account for the association between God image and divine forgiveness? [75]	Study 1. α = 0.90 Study 2. α = 0.88 at Time 1; α = 0.91 at Time 3	NR	NR	NR	Study 1 Divine forgiveness with: Authoritarian God image, *r* = -.02 Benevolent God image, *r* =.71** Religiosity, *r* =.57** Study 2 Divine forgiveness T1 with: Divine forgiveness T3, *r* =.57** Divine intervention T2, *r* =.48** Authoritarian God image T1, *r* = -.02 Benevolent God image (T1), *r* =.58** Religiosity T1, *r* =.58** Divine forgiveness T3 with: Divine intervention T2, *r* =.60** Authoritarian God image T1, *r* =.01 Benevolent God image T1, *r* =.48** Religiosity T1, *r* =.49** * *p* <.01. ** *p* <.001.
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019a Divine forgiveness protects against psychological distress following a natural disaster attributed to God [34]	α = 0.86.	Unidimensional The single factor accounted for 71.86% of the variance with all items loading above 0.70	NR	NR	Divine forgiveness with: God attribution, *r* =.48* Religiosity, *r* =.66* Hurricane impact, *r* =.01 Time 1 distress, *r* = -.05 Time 3 distress, *r* = -.02 * = *p* <.01
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019b Divine, interpersonal and self-forgiveness: Independently related to depressive symptoms? [4]	Study 1. α = 0.74 Study 2. α = 0.89	NR	NR	NR	Study 1 Self-forgiveness, *r* =.06 Interpesonal forgiveness, *r* =.08* Religiosity, *r* =.52* Depressive symptoms, *r* = -.13* Study 2 Self-forgiveness, *r* =.10* Interpesonal forgiveness, *r* =.19* Religiosity, *r* =.65* Depressive symptoms T1, *r* = -.21* Depressive symptoms T2, *r* = -.13* * = *p* <.05.
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2019c Self-forgiveness and well-being: Does divine forgiveness matter? [76]	α =0.75	Unidimensional A single factor accounted for 76.20% of the variance with all items loading above 0.70	NR	Test-retest reliability over7 weeks was 0.58.	Self-forgiveness, *r* =.21* Satisfaction with Life Scale, *r* =-.20* Depressive symptoms, *r* =-.20* Religiosity, *r* =.53*

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2021 No type of forgiveness is an island: divine forgiveness, self-forgiveness and interpersonal forgiveness [29]	Sample 1. α =0.88 Sample 2. α =0.96	Unidimensional A single factor accounted for 73.57% of the variance in sample 1, and 75.51% of the variance in Sample 2	NR	NR	Sample 1 Forgiveness, *r* =.28* Self-forgiveness, *r* =.24* Religiosity, *r* =.67* Impression management, *r* =.08 * *p* <.01 Sample 2 Forgiveness, *r* =.17** Self-forgiveness, *r* =.21** Religiosity, *r* =.70** Impression management, *r* =.09 * *p* <.05, **p* <.01
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2023 Divine Forgiveness and Interpersonal Forgiveness: Which Comes First? [10]	Study 1: T1 α =0.93; T2 α =0.90 Study 2: T1 α =0.92; T2 α =0.94	Study 1 and 2 T1 Unidimensional scale A single factor accounted for 82.21% of the variance with all items loading above 0.70 T2 Unidimensional scale A single factor accounted for 74.40% of the variance with all items loading above 0.70	NR	NR	Study 1 Divine forgiveness T1 with: Forgiveness T1, *r* = -.02 Forgiveness T2, *r* =.08 Divine-forgiveness T2, *r* =.81** Religiosity, *r* =.67** Divine forgiveness T2 with: Forgiveness T1, *r* =.03 Forgiveness T2, *r* =.13** Religiosity, *r* =.66** * *p* <.05. ** *p* <.01. Study 2 Divine forgiveness T1 with: Forgiveness T1, *r* =.01 Forgiveness T2, *r* =.12 Divine-forgiveness T2, *r* =.83** Impression management, *r* =.10 Divine forgiveness T2 with: Forgiveness T1, *r* =.02 Forgiveness T2, *r* =.04 Impression management, *r* =.11 ** *p* <.01.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. 2024 Divine Forgiveness and Well-being Among Emerging Adults in the USA [5]	Study 1. α =0.74 Study 2. α =0.89	Study 1 Unidimensional scale A single factor accounted for 67.4% of the variance with all items loading above 0.60 Study 2 Unidimensional scale A single factor accounted for 71% of the variance with all items loading above 0.75	NR	Test retest reliability over 6 weeks was 0.69.	Study 1 Anxiety, *r* = -.09* God evaluation, *r* =.48** *p <.05; ** p <.01 Study 2 Anxiety, *r* = -.08* Satisfaction with Life Scale, *r* =.22** Positive God relationship, *r* =.73** Negative God relationship, *r* = -.31** Religiosity, *r* =.61** *p <.05; **p <.01
Fincham, F. D., May, R. W., & Carlos Chavez, F. L. 2019 Does being religious lead to greater self-forgiveness? [77]	Study 1 T1 α = 0.81 T2 α = 0.92	NR	NR	NR	Study 1 God's Forgiveness T1 with: God's Forgiveness T2, *r* =.58** Self forgiveness T1, *r* =.14** Self forgiveness T2, *r* =.18** Religiosity T1, *r* =.61** Religiosity T2, *r* =.62** **p <.01. God's Forgiveness T2 with: Self forgiveness T1, *r* =.10 Self forgiveness T2, *r* =.24** Religiosity T1, *r* =.64** Religiosity T2, *r* =.66**
Geczy-Haskins, L. 2017 The Effects of Grace on Self-Forgiveness with a Religious Community [78]	Positive forgiveness (3 item). α = 0.81 Negative forgiveness (2 item). α = 0.29	NR	NR	NR	Heartland, *r* =.03 Punitiveness, *r* = -.16 Pseudo self forgiveness, *r* = -.29* Genuine self-forgiveness, *r* = -.05 Self-forgiveness Feel & Actions, *r* =.25 Self-forgiveness beliefs, *r* =.18 Benevolent God Concept, *r* =.05 Authoritarian God Concept, *r* = -.13 Daily Spiritual Experiences Scale, *r* =.39* Existential Wellbeing, *r* =.48* Religious Wellbeing, *r* =.63* Spiritual Wellbeing, *r* =.60* * p <.05

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Głaz, S. 2019 The Relationship of Forgiveness and Values with Meaning in Life of Polish Students [79]	Not specifically reported for this subscale. Subscales realiability ranged from 0.65 to 0.91	NR	NR	NR	Forgiveness of self, r = -.01 Forgiveness of others, r =.07 Meaning in life, r =.17* *p <.05
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Engdahl, B. E., Olson, R. H. A., Winskowski, A. M., & McMahill, J. 2008 Christian religious functioning and trauma outcomes [80]	Not specifically reported for these subscales. Subscales realiability ranged from 0.67 to 0.87	A principal components factor analysis revealed that the Fear/Guilt dimension loaded on Factor 2 (Religious Strain): λ = 0.67	NR	NR	Social support, r = -.15* PTSD Checklist, r =.32** Traumatic Events Reported, r =.25** Religious Alienation, r =.33** Religious Rifts, r =.21** Positive Religious Coping, r =.14* Negative Religious Coping, r =.36** Prayer Functions Defer/Avoid, r =.21** *p< 05; **p <.01.
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Winskowski, (A) M., Engdahl, (B) E., & Nguyen, X. V. 2014 Social support as a mediator in the relationship between religious comforts and strains and trauma symptoms. [81]	Not specifically reported for these subscales. Subscales realiability ranged from 0.67 to 0.87	NR	NR	NR	Forgivingness, r =.28*** Centrality of Religiosity, r =.66*** Age, r =.20*** ***p <.001.
Hayward, R. D., & Krause, N. 2013 Trajectories of change in dimensions of forgiveness among older adults and their association with religious commitment [32]	Conditionality of God's Forgiveness α = 0.67	NR	NR	NR	Conditional forgiveness is predicted by: age, b = 0.05** sex, b = −0.23** education, b = −0.10*** Religious Commitment, b = −0.31*** **p<.01; ***p<.001. Results are from growth curve model
Huber, S., Allemand, M., & Huber, O. W. 2011 Forgiveness by God and Human Forgivingness: The Centrality of the Religiosity Makes the Difference [55]	α = 0.90	NR	NR	NR	Forgivingness, r =.28*** Centrality of Religiosity, r =.66*** Age, r =.20*** ***p <.001.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Ironson, G., Stuetzle, R., Ironson, D., Balbin, E., Kremer, H., George, A., Schneiderman, N., & Fletcher, M. A. 2011 View of God as benevolent and forgiving or punishing and judgmental predicts HIV disease progression [83]	α =.90	NR	NR	NR	Forgivingness, r =.28*** Centrality of Religiosity, r =.66*** Age, r =.20*** ***p <.001.
Kaldjian, L. C., Jekel, J. F., & Friedland, G. 1998. End-of-life decisions in HIV-positive patients: the role of spiritual beliefs [48]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Belief in God's forgiveness was positively associated with prior discussions about resuscitation status (OR = 6.7, *p* =.043). *Association was identified through bivariate analysis (chi-square test).
Kent, B. V., Bradshaw, M., & Uecker, J. E. 2018 Forgiveness, Attachment to God, and Mental Health Outcomes in Older U.S. Adults: A Longitudinal Study [84]	Three item measure. α = 0.78	NR	NR	NR	No significant main effects on optimism (β = 0.067, ns), self-esteem (β = 0.064, *p* <.10), or life satisfaction (β = 0.017, ns). Significant interaction effects with secure attachment to God predicting: – Optimism (β = 0.219, *p* <.05) – Self-esteem (β = 0.147, *p* <.05) – Life satisfaction (β = 0.230, *p* <.05). *Results from longitudinal OLS regression models controlling for baseline well-being.
Kim, J. J., & Enright, R. D. 2014 Differing Views on Forgiveness Within Christianity: Do Graduate-Level Theology Students Perceive Divine and Human Forgiveness Differently? [85]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Paired-sample t-tests showed significant differences between divine and human forgiveness on all four aspects of forgiveness: Releasing resentment: t(275) = −6.05, *p* <.001 Giving up revenge: t(275) = −10.92, *p* <.001 Developing goodwill: t(275) = −2.60, *p* =.023 Restoring relationship: t(275) = 8.27, *p* <.001
Kim, J., Ragasajo, L. J. C., Kolacz, R. L., Painter, K. J., Pritchard, J. D., & Wrobleski, A. 2021 The interplay between divine, victim, and self-forgiveness: the relationship between three types of forgiveness and psychological outcomes [87]	Study 1. α =0.92 Study 2. α =0.79	Study 1 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with Maximum Likelihood method and Direct Oblimin rotation revealed one factor.	NR	NR	Study 1 Self forgiveness, *r* =.33** Victim forgivenvess, *r* =.34** **p <.01 Study 2 Self forgiveness, *r* =.43** Victim forgivenvess, *r* =.22** Anger, *r* = −.20 Anxiety, *r* = −.35** Depression, *r* = −.41** **p <.01

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Krause, N. 2012 Studying Forgiveness Among Older Whites, Older Blacks, and Older Mexican Americans [88]	NR	NR	NR	NR	MANCOVA analyses showed significant ethnic differences: Feeling forgiven by God Pillai's Trace = 0.058, F(8, 4532) = 17.02, p <.001 Significant differences: Black > White (p <.001) Black > Mexican American (p <.001) White = Mexican American (n.s.) Acts of contrition required by God Pillai's Trace = 0.078, F(6, 4444) = 30.19, p <.001 1. Must ask God for forgiveness Black > White (p <.001) Mexican American > White (p <.001) Black = Mexican American (n.s.) 2. Must promise not to repeat the mistake All pairwise differences significant at p <.001 3. Must correct the wrong All pairwise differences significant at p <.001
Krause, N. 2015 Trust in God, Forgiveness by God, and Death Anxiety [89]	NR	Unidimensional measure Done things God would not forgive: λ = 0.430 Feel forgiven by God : λ = 0.703	NR	NR	Forgiveness by God predicts: Death anxiety, b = 0.325*** Forgiveness by God is prediced by: Education, b = 0.104*** Race, b = 0.075*** Marital status, b = 0.100*** Church Attendance, b = 0.084* Trust in God, b = 0.519*** *p<.05. *** p<.001. *Results from regression model.
Krause, N., Pargament, K. I., Hill, P. C., & Ironson, G. 2019 Exploring religious and/or spiritual identities: part 2 – a descriptive analysis of those who are at risk for health problems [90]	α = 0.87	NR	NR	NR	MANCOVA analysis showed no significant group difference (Religious Only vs. Others): Pillai's Trace = 0.001, F(1, 2446) = ns
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D. 2014a Acts of Contrition, Forgiveness by God, and Death Anxiety Among Older Mexican Americans [91]	NR	Unidimensional measure Must ask God to forgive: λ = 0.791 Must promise not to make same: λ = 0.657 Must correct what I have done: λ = 0.802	NR	NR	Acts of contrition required by God predicts: Self-esteem, b = 0.368*** ***p <.001. *Results from regression model.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D. 2014b Religious involvement and death anxiety [93]	NR	Unidimensional measure Done things God does not forgive: λ = 0.553 God has forgiven me: λ = 0.606	NR	NR	Forgiven by God is predicted by: Religious Commitment, b = 0.441*** Forgiven Others, b = 0.137* *p <.05, ***p <.001. *Results from regression model.
Krause, N., & Hill, P. C. 2018 Assessing the Relationships Among Forgiveness by God, God Images, and Death Anxiety [94]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Forgiven by God predicts: Death anxiety, b = −0.058* Interaction between forgiveness by God and Theistic view of God predicts lower death anxiety (b = −0.868***) nteraction between forgiveness by God and Pantheistic view of God predicts lower death anxiety (b = −0.424***) *p <.05, ***p <.001. *Results from regression model.
Lyons, G. C. B., Deane, F. P., Caputi, P., & Kelly, P. J. 2011 Spirituality and the treatment of substance use disorders: An exploration of forgiveness, resentment and purpose in life [31]	NR	One single factor accounted for 55% of the variance among items. Factor loadings ranged from 0.52 to 0.061.	NR	NR	Purpose and Engagement in Life, r =.38** Resentment, r = -.33** Daily spiritual experiences, r =.54** Spiritual belief, r =.51** Private spiritual practices, r =39** Forgiveness of self, r =39** Forgiveness of others, r =36** Receiving forgiveness from others, r =39** **p <.01.
Maranges, H. M., & Fincham, F. 2024a Psychological perspectives on divine forgiveness: 4. Childhood unpredictability negatively and divine forgiveness positively predicts self-forgiveness through self-control [40]	Study 1. α = 0.88 Study 2. α = 0.92	NR	NR	NR	Study 1 Childhood Unpredictability, r = −.12* Childhood Harshness, r =.01 Self-Forgiveness, r =.20*** Religiosity, r =.59*** ***p <.001, *p <.05. Study 2 Childhood Unpredictability, r = −.08 Childhood Harshness, r = −.07 Self-control, r =.21*** Self-Forgiveness, r =.13** Religiosity, r =.60*** ***p <.001, **p <.01, *p <.05.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Martin, A. M. 2008 Exploring forgiveness: the relationship between feeling forgiven by God and self-forgiveness for an interpersonal offense [35]	Student sample. Positive Factor: α = 0.96; Punitive Factor: α = 0.76 Adult sample. Positive Factor: α = 0.95; Punitive Factor: α = 0.75	Student sample: A maximum likelihood factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted and two factors emerged: 1. Having a positive experience of being forgiven by God (Positive Factor; 51.63% of variance) 2. Perceiving God's response to the offense as punitive (Punitive Factor; 23.24% of variance) General sample: A maximum likelihood factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted and two factors emerged: 1. Having a positive experience of being forgiven by God (Positive Factor; 48.91% of variance) 2. Perceiving God's response to the offense as punitive (Punitive Factor; 23.10% of variance)	NR	NR	Student sample Positive divine forgiveness Self-forgiveness, *r* =.15 Punitive divine forgiveness, *r* =.17 Forgiving others, *r* =.04 Seeking forgiveness, *r* =.16 Intrapersonal well-being, *r* =.08 Punitive divine forgiveness Self-forgiveness, *r* = -.22* Forgiving others, *r* = -.28** Seeking forgiveness, *r* = -.08 Intrapersonal well-being, *r* = -.19* Genral sample Positive divine forgiveness Self-forgiveness, *r* =.16 Punitive divine forgiveness, *r* = -.06 Forgiving others, *r* =.24* Seeking forgiveness, *r* = -.10 Intrapersonal well-being, *r* = -.04 Punitive divine forgiveness Self-forgiveness, *r* = -.29** Forgiving others, *r* = -.12 Seeking forgiveness, *r* = -.09 Intrapersonal well-being, *r* = -.33** *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$
McConnell, J. M., & Dixon, D. N. 2012 Perceived Forgiveness from God and Self-Forgiveness [36]	α = 0.84 Female: α =0.85 Male: α =0.82	NR	NR	NR	Adjective Ratings of God (ARG): Wrathfulness Subscale, *r* =.44* HFS Self-Forgiveness, *r* =.38* Male HFS Self-Forgiveness, *r* =.57* Female HSF Self-Forgiveness, *r* =.26* *p <.01.
Moroń, M. 2022 Basic dimensions of religiousness and dispositional forgiveness: the mediating role of religiously motivated forgiveness [96]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Believing (Meaning), *r* =.663** Bonding (Emotions/Ritual), *r* =.648** Behaving (Morality), *r* =.701** Belonging (Community), *r* =.620** Religiously motivated forgiveness of self, *r* =.521** Religiously motivated forgiveness of others, *r* =.557** Religiously motivated divine forgiveness, *r* =.788** Dispositional forgiveness of self, *r* =.129* Dispositional forgiveness of others, *r* =.321* **p <.001, *p <.01.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Prince-Paul, M., Zyzanski, S. J., Exline, J. J. 2013 The RelCom-S. A Screening Instrument to Assess Personal Relationships and Communication in Advanced Cancer [97]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Angry, r =.28* Anxious, r =.33** Conflict, r =.20* Life completion, r = -.37** Memorial Symptom Assessment Scale-Psych, r =.28* Positive attitudes toward God, r = -.10 Negative attitudes toward God, r =.30** *p <.05., **p >.001
Sansone, R. A., Kelley, A. R., & Forbis, J. S. 2013 The relationship between forgiveness and history of suicide attempt [98]	NR	NR	NR	NR	I believe that God has forgiven me for the things that I have done wrong: r =.18 with past suicide attempt I believe that there are times when God has punished me: r =.17 with past suicide attempt
Skalski-Bednarz, S. B., Webb, J. R., Wilson, C. M., Toussaint, L. L., Surzykiewicz, J., Reid, S. D., Williams, D. R., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. 2024 Pathways to Flourishing: The Roles of Self- and Divine Forgiveness in Mitigating the Adverse Effects of Stress and Substance Use among Adults in Trinidad and Tobago [99]	α =0.85 ω =0.85	NR	NR	NR	Perceived Stress, r = −.02 Self-Forgiveness, r =.2 *** Substance Use Cravings, r = −.12 *** Religiousness, r =.31 *** Spirituality, r =.24 *** ***p <.001.
Standish, E. E. 2016 Forgiveness, Health, And Psychological Adjustment In Older Adults [100]	α =0.81	Unidimensional scale Factor loadings 66 < λ < 83	NR	NR	Wave I Depression, r = −.10 Life satisfaction, r = −.08 Self-esteem, r = −.09 Control, r = −.18*** Optimism, r = −.06 *p <.05 Wave II Depression, r = −.02 Life satisfaction, r = −.13* Self-esteem, r = −.04 Control, r = −.15* Optimism, r = −.11* Rumination, r = −.10 ***p <.001

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S.A. 2008a The association of forgiveness and 12-month prevalence of major depressive episode: Gender differences in a probability sample of U.S. adults [101]	α = 0.64	NR	NR	NR	Forgiveness by God high vs. low (ref.) on depression at 12 months Woman: 0.603 (Odd Ratio) Men: 1.47 (Odd Ratio) *Results from a logistic regression. Results are not significant
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S. A. 2008b Why forgiveness may protect against depression: Hopelessness as an explanatory mechanism [49]	α = 0.64	NR	NR	NR	Major depressive diagnosis, r = -.018 Hopelessnes, r = -.051** Forgiven self, r = -.052** Forgiven others, r =.253*** Seeking forgiveness, r =.410*** **p <.01, ***p <.001
Toussaint, L. L., Marschall, J. C., & Williams, D. R. 2012 Prospective Associations between Religiousness/Spirituality and Depression and Mediating Effects of Forgiveness in a Nationally Representative Sample of United States Adults [104]	α = 0.64	NR	NR	NR	Religiousness/spirituality, r =.39*** Forgiven oneself, r =.10** Forgiven others, r =.26*** Seek forgiveness, r =.38*** **p <.01, ***p <.001
Toussaint, L. L., Owen, A. D., & Cheadle, A. 2012 Forgive to Live: Forgiveness, Health, and Longevity [105]	α = 0.78	Two unidimensional subscales of a measure assessing different types of forgiveness Factor loadings for God's conditional forgiveness: 59 < λ < 81 Factor loadings for God's uncondional forgiveness: NR	NR	NR	God's conditional forgiveness predicts: Mortality, b = −0.005 (ns) God's unconditional forgiveness predicts: Mortality, b = 0.266* *p <.05 *Results from a logistic regression.
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R. 2008 National Survey Results for Protestant, Catholic, and Nonreligious Experiences of Seeking Forgiveness and of Forgiveness of Self, of Others, and by God [106]	α = 0.64	NR	NR	NR	Feel forgiven by God is predicted by: being protestant, b = 0.27*** and being catholic, b = 0.26*** frequency of prayer, b = 0.18*** self-rated religiosity, b = 0.15*** ***p <.001 *Results from a hierarchical regression.

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson, S. A. 2001 Forgiveness and Health: Age Differences in a U.S. Probability Sample [64]	α = 0.64	NR	NR	NR	Forgiven by God does not predict psychological distress (all ps > 0.05) Forgiven by God predicts life satisfaction, b = −0.12* only for people aged 45–64 Forgiven by God doe not predicts self-rated health (all ps > 0.05) *p <.05 *Results from a hierarchical regression.
Trevino, K. M. 2007 Forgive me for I have sinned: the effects of religious and secular confession and forgiveness on psychological, emotional, and religious well-being in college students [107]	α = 0.69	NR	NR	NR	Forgiven by God did not show a significant association with confession type (control condition, religious confession, secular confession, interpersonal confession, disclosure): p >.05
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. 2002 Forgiveness within the Big Five personality model [33]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Religion, r =.48** Neuroticism, r = -.31** Emotional stability, r =.22** Anxiety, r = -.23** Emotionality, r = -.30** Distrust, r = -.32** Agreableness, r =.28** Warmth, r =.31** Sensitivity, r =.16* Reserve, r = -.18* Dutifulness, r =.24** *p <.05, ** p <.01
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L. 2004 Dimensions underlying sixteen models of forgiveness and reconciliation [109]	α = 0.93	Unidimensional scale Factor loadings 87 < λ < 89	NR	NR	Reconciliation, r =.32** Emotional Forgiveness, r =.54** Empathy, r =.40** Hurt and Anger, r = -.12 *Correlation of 0.15 or greater is significant in a two-tailed test (p <.05).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Watson, P. J., Hood, R. W., Morris, R. J., & Hall, J. R. 1985 Religiosity, sin, and self-esteem [50]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Study 1: Rosenberg (self-esteem), r =.10 Coopersmith (self-esteem), r =.07 Intrinsic religiosity, r =.41*** Extrinsic religiosity, r = -.12 Internal religiosity, r =.39*** External religiosity, r =.43*** Interactional religiosity, r =.00 Social desirability, r = -.02 Study 2: Rosenberg (sefl-esteem), r =.13* Coopersmith (self-esteem), r =.25*** Intrinsic religiosity, r =.35*** Extrinsic religiosity, r = -.20** Guilt, r =.54*** Self-Love, r =.49*** Other-Love, r =.28*** Conventional religiosity, r=.36*** Social desirability, r = -.06 *p <.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1987 Antireligious humanistic values, guilt, and self-esteem [51]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Personal Orientation Inventory-inner support, r = -.15 Personal Orientation Inventory-time competence, r = -.03 Rosenberg (sefl-esteem), r =.05 Coopersmith (self-esteem), r =.07 Berger (stigma), r =.03 Phillips (self-efficacy), r = -.06 All p are >0.05
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1988a Sin and self-functioning: I. Grace, guilt, and self-consciousness [52]	α = 0.65	NR	NR	NR	Study 1 Internal state of awareness, r =.46*** Self-reflectiveness, r =.17 Style consciousness, r =.41*** Appearence consciousness, r =.33*** Social anxiety, r =.20** Depression scale, r = -.39*** *p <.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001 Study 2 Empathic concern, r =.16* Perspective taking, r = -.05 Fantasy scale, r = -.01 Personal distress, r =.18* Internal state of awareness, r =.14* Self-reflectiveness, r =.05 Style consciousness, r =.34*** Appearence consciousness, r =.22*** Social anxiety, r =.26*** Depression scale, r = -.34*** Anxiety scale, r = -.03 *p <.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001

Table 1 (continued)

Authors Year Title	Internal Consistency or other measures of reliability	Factor structure and loadings (lower and higher)	Invariance	Psychometric properties evaluated	Associations between variables (i.e., correlations)
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr. 1988b Sin and self-functioning, Part 2: Grace, guilt, and psychological adjustment [110]	NR	NR	NR	NR	Study 1 Emotionality, *r* =.08 Neuroticism, *r* =.04 Anxiety, *r* =.03 Depression, *r* = -.25* Internal state of awareness, *r* =.18** Self-reflectiveness, *r* =.01 Style consciousness, *r* =.13* Appearance consciuosness, *r* =.14* Social anxiety, *r* = -.01 *p <.05, **p<.01 Study 2 Locus of control, *r* =.10 Hopelessness, *r* = -.16* Generla self-efficacy, *r* =.05 Social self-efficacy, *r* =.08 Neuroticism, *r* =.01 Anxiety, *r* =.15 Depression, *r* = -.18 Irrational beliefs, *r* =.05 p <.05
Wnuk, M., & Charzyńska, E. 2024 Does Forgiveness Underlie the Relationship Between Religiosity and Meaning in Life Among Members of Sexaholics Anonymous in Poland? [111]	α = 0.93	NR	NR	NR	Subjective religiosity, *r* =.32** Interpersonal forgiveness, *r* =.46*** Presence of meaning in life, *r* =.54*** Current use of psychological or therapeutic services, *r* = -.27* *p <.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001

items (notably, 14 publications provided only a few example items or references to previous works), the majority used items that assessed the simple belief, knowledge, or conviction that they personally have been forgiven by God, rather than the experiential or emotional dimension of feeling forgiven ($N = 48$; e.g., "I believe God forgives me for the things I've done wrong," "I know that God forgives me," "I believe that God has forgiven all of my sins"). Only a few studies actually relied on items that asked about participants' own feelings and experiences (e.g., "I feel that I am forgiven by God for what I have done"). Also, we found items that assessed the belief, knowledge or opinion about an unconditionally forgiving God ($N = 6$; e.g., "God always forgives everything to everybody," "I believe God is all-forgiving"), the conditions to receive or facilitate DF ($N = 13$; e.g., "In order to be forgiven by God, I must promise God I will not make the same mistake again", "God forgives more easily an offense if the offender has begged the victim for forgiveness"), God's unforgiveness ($N = 10$; e.g., "God will not forgive certain sins," "God cannot forgive the offenses that have been committed against Him, even if they have been cancelled"), and emotions, belief/knowledge or opinion about God's emotions/behaviors indicating the presence or absence of DF ($N = 18$; e.g., "I am afraid God will judge me harshly for what I have done," "When I do wrong, God's back is turned to me," "God condemns me," "God is mad at me").

It is worth noting that 4 publications made use, either entirely or to a substantial extent, of items assessing DF in general terms, without referring to respondents' personal experience of such forgiveness (e.g., "God forgives more easily an offense that has been committed against Him if someone in Heaven intercedes for the offender", "God forgives everyone for everything that they do"). Furthermore, our analyses highlighted that many studies used items assessing outcomes associated with the belief/knowledge or opinion of being forgiven by God ($N = 25$; e.g., "Knowing that I am forgiven for my sins gives me the strength to face my faults and be a better person", "Grace entered my life when I was forgiven for my sins"), the frequency of the feeling of being forgiven by God ($N = 13$; e.g., "How often have you felt that God forgives you?") and the frequency of the feelings about God's emotions/behavior indicating DF ($N = 13$; e.g., "How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God delivers you from a debt?"). The items listed above are the most frequently observed in our dataset. However, we also occasionally identified items focusing on the unpredictability of God's forgiveness, acceptance of DF, beliefs about one's sinful nature, feelings of reconciliation and peace in one's relationship with God, and items highlighting the importance of DF.

Psychometrics properties

Internal consistency was the most frequently reported indicator: 42 publications provided Cronbach's α and 1 reported McDonald's ω. Coefficients typically ranged from acceptable to excellent ($\alpha = 0.70 - 0.95$; $\omega = 0.85$), with some subscales ($N = 26$) showing very high reliability ($\alpha \geq 0.90$). However, some concerning cases were also observed; for instance, Bufford et al.'s [66] two negative items reached $\alpha = 0.29$, indicating poor reliability. Moreover, a non-negligible number of studies assessed DF with only two items, making the use of α questionable and severely limiting its interpretability.

Eighteen studies reported factor analytic results. These were mostly exploratory analyses, rarely complemented by confirmatory factor analysis. Fifteen studies reported factor loadings, which generally suggested a unidimensional solution ($N = 12$); 3 studies, which all employed the same instrument proposed by Martin [35, 65], reported two dimensions of DF (a "positive" and a "punitive" factor); one study [63] identified five factors— namely "resentful God", "sensitive God", "unconditionally forgiving God", "unpredictable God", and "feeling forgiven by God"—and another [105] distinguished two unidimensional subscales, namely God's conditional forgiveness and God's unconditional forgiveness. However, the majority of these findings were inconsistent and based on a small subset of the literature, reflecting an underdeveloped evidence base and precluding firm conclusions.

None of the reviewed studies examined measurement invariance across groups considering sex, age, culture, or religion, and evidence for validity was almost absent. Only 3 studies reported analyses addressing construct validity or test-retest reliability. Although many studies presented correlations between DF and other psychological or physical health variables, these were generally not framed as evidence of construct or criterion validity. Criterion-related validity (e.g., predictive associations with health outcomes) was thus often reported in practice but rarely conceptualized or systematically tested as such. Across studies, DF was most frequently associated with higher levels of religiosity and religious commitment (e.g., religious involvement, centrality of religiosity, subjective religiosity), more positive images of and attachment to God, greater reliance on religious or spiritual coping strategies, and higher levels of self- and interpersonal forgiveness. DF also tended to correlate positively with indicators of psychological well-being (e.g., life satisfaction, meaning or purpose in life, optimism, self-esteem, resilience, quality of life) and negatively with indices of psychological distress and maladjustment (e.g., depressive and anxiety symptoms, hopelessness, PTSD symptoms, substance use, death anxiety).

Quality assessment

The average quality score of the included studies was 14.28 (SD = 2.43) out of a total of 20 points (min = 2, max = 18). In accordance with the AXIS tool [56], this suggests that the studies were of moderate quality. Although the overall quality was moderate, notable differences emerged across studies. Lower scores were primarily related to sampling procedures and representativeness (e.g., sample size justification, population definition, and handling of non-responders), suggesting weaknesses in terms of external validity. In contrast, higher scores were observed for clarity of aims, appropriateness of study design, and coherence between results and conclusions, indicating strengths in internal consistency and reporting transparency. The checklist with full item-level scores for each study is presented in Table 2.

Discussion and conclusions

This comprehensive systematic review contributes to the theoretical refinement and empirical advancement of DF research by examining the range and quality of the currently available self-report measures of DF. Our in-depth analysis of 60 studies revealed that, although some items captured several different nuances of DF (e.g., belief about an unconditionally forgiving God, God's emotions/behaviors, divine unforgiveness, etc.), most original studies did not make these distinctions explicit. Instead, they generally treated DF as a unitary construct, often referring simply to "divine forgiveness" or "feeling forgiven by God." This suggests that the available measures were not systematically developed to capture the complexity of the construct, but rather developed around a general idea of DF without a clear theoretical and interreligious framework. Developing such a framework of DF could be particularly relevant because the process of seeking and receiving forgiveness from God is embedded within religious meaning systems that differ across religious traditions [1, 2, 28, 42], which are themselves cultural constructs. Regarding Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, for example, as the literature shows, doctrines, practices, and rituals related to DF share some common elements, yet they also diverge in important ways (for further information, see [16]). These nuances are consequential: they shape how believers conceptualize wrongdoing or sins, what they perceive as necessary for DF, and how they approach the act of seeking it. Without accounting for such theological and interreligious variability, measures risk capturing a generalized notion of God's forgiveness that does not reflect how individuals from different faith backgrounds actually experience and interpret it. A theoretically grounded framework would therefore improve construct clarity, guiding the development of more precise and culturally informed measures, enhancing our ability to explain when, how, and for whom DF is linked to psychological and spiritual outcomes [1, 2, 16, 20]. Developing theoretically and theologically grounded measurement frameworks will therefore be important for advancing the empirical study of DF, while remaining attentive to the plurality of religious traditions and theological perspectives in which the experience of being forgiven is embedded. Rather than assuming that a single measure can adequately capture DF across all religious traditions, future research may benefit from developing instruments that are theoretically grounded in specific religious contexts while also exploring the use of more general items assessing individuals' perceived experience of being forgiven.

Across the 60 publications reviewed, the majority of research has investigated DF either in relation to other types of forgiveness and in connection with indicators of well-being across multiple domains (mental, psychological, physical, and social health and adjustment), highlighting the potential relevance of DF in vulnerable contexts as well. Notably, when restricting the synthesis to the 29 studies rated as "high quality", DF showed a consistent pattern of associations with both religious/spiritual variables, other types of forgiveness, and psychosocial functioning. Specifically, DF was positively correlated with religiosity and gratitude, as well as with positive religious, social, and personal coping (see, for example, [69, 70]). It was also positively associated with the centrality of religiosity and forgivingness of others, and it correlated positively with emotional forgiveness, empathy, and reconciliation [83, 109]. Moreover, DF was positively related to presence of meaning in life, interpersonal and self-forgiveness, daily spiritual experiences, spiritual beliefs, private spiritual practices, purpose and engagement in life, and self-control (see, for example, [31, 40, 111]). In addition, DF was negatively correlated with depression, anxiety, and substance use cravings [83, 87, 99]. Importantly, punitive conceptualizations of DF were negatively associated with intrapersonal well-being and self-forgiveness [35]. Furthermore, in the high-quality studies employing multivariable models, forgiveness by God significantly predicted death anxiety, and significant interaction effects involving secure attachment to God were reported in the prediction of optimism, self-esteem, and life satisfaction [84, 91]. Overall, 14 high-quality publications focused on the comparison or relationship between DF and other types of forgiveness, while as many as 21 publications investigated the link between DF and well-being. Of particular interest, 9 of the high-quality studies concerning DF and well-being focused on vulnerable contexts and populations, which is consistent with the view that DF may be particularly salient under conditions of heightened stress or adversity.

Importantly, many of the conceptual and measurement issues identified in this review are inherent to the

Table 2 Quality assessment

Authors	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Total Quality Score/20
Abrams, S.	2024	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	16
Akl, M., & Mullet, E.	2010	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	14
Bassett, R. L., Carrier, E., Charleson, K., Pak, N. R., Schwingel, R., Majors, A., Pitre, M., Sundlof-Stoller, A., & Bloser, C.	2016	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	10
Bufford, R. K., McMinn, M. R., Moody, J. A., & Geczy-Haskins, L.	2017	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Charzyńska, E.	2015	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	14
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen-Celińska, I.	2019	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	16
Charzyńska, E.	2021	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	16
Charzyńska, E., Gruszczyńska, E., & Heszen, I.	2018	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18
Exline, J. J.	2008	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	12
Exline, J. J., Yali, A. M., Sanderson, W. C.	2000	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	13
Fetzer Institute	1999	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M.	2024a	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., & Maranges, H. M.	2024b	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W.	2019a	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W.	2019b	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	12
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W.	2019c	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W.	2021	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W.	2023	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W.	2024	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Fincham, F. D., May, R. W., & Carlos Chavez, F. L.	2019	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	12
Geczy-Haskins, L.	2017	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Głaz, S.	2019	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	13
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Engdahl, B. E., Olson, R. H. A., Winskowski, A. M., & McMahill, J.	2008	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	12
Harris, J. I., Erbes, C. R., Winskowski, (A) M., Engdahl, (B) E., & Nguyen, X. V.	2014	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	13
Hayward, R. D., & Krause, N.	2013	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	14
Huber, S., Allemand, M., & Huber, O. W.	2011	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	13
Ironson, G., Stuetzle, R., Ironson, D., Balbin, E., Kremer, H., George, A., Schneiderman, N., & Fletcher, M. A.	2011	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	15
Kaldjian, L. C., Jekel, J. F., & Friedland, G.	1998	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	16
Kent, B. V., Bradshaw, M., & Uecker, J. E.	2018	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	17
Kim, J. J., & Enright, R. D.	2014	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	12
Kim, J., Ragasajo, L. J. C., Kolacz, R. L., Painter, K. J., Pritchard, J. D., & Wrobleski, A.	2021	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	15
Krause, N.	2012	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	15

Table 2 (continued)

Authors	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Total Quality Score/20
Krause, N.	2015	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	15
Krause, N., Pargament, K. I., Hill, P. C., & Ironson, G.	2019	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	15
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D.	2015	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	14
Krause, N., & Hayward, R. D.	2014	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	14
Krause, N., & Hill, P. C.	2018	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	14
Lyons, G. C. B., Deane, F. P., Caputi, P., & Kelly, P. J.	2011	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	17
Maranges, H. M., & Fincham, F.	2024	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	15
Martin, A. M.	2008	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	18
McConnell, J. M., & Dixon, D. N.	2012	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	15
Moroń, M.	2022	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	15
Prince-Paul, M., Zyzanski, S. J., Exline, J. J.	2013	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	16
Sansone, R. A., Kelley, A. R., & Forbis, J. S.	2013	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	16
Skalski-Bednarz, S. B., Webb, J. R., Wilson, C. M., Toussaint, L. L., Surzykiewicz, J., Reid, S. D., Williams, D. R., & Worthington, E. L., Jr.	2024	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	16
Standish, E. E.	2016	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	16
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S. A.	2008a	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	16
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson-Rose, S. A.	2008b	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	16
Toussaint, L. L., Marschall, J. C., & Williams, D. R.	2012	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	16
Toussaint, L. L., Owen, A. D., & Cheadle, A.	2012	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	17
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R.	2008	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	17
Toussaint, L. L., Williams, D. R., Musick, M. A., & Everson, S. A.	2001	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	17
Trevino, K. M.	2007	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	18
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L.	2002	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	14
Walker, D. F., & Gorsuch, R. L.	2004	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	16
Watson, P. J., Hood, R. W., Morris, R. J., & Hall, J. R.	1985	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	12
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr.	1987	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	13
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr.	1988a	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	13
Watson, P. J., Morris, R. J., & Hood, R. W., Jr.	1988b	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	13
Wnuk, M., & Charzyńska, E.	2024	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	16
Mean																						14,28
Standard Deviation																						2,43

instruments themselves and therefore emerge across studies regardless of their quality assessment. Indeed, across the 60 publications, DF was predominantly measured at a dispositional level—that is, as individuals' general tendency to perceive themselves as forgiven by God—whereas only a minority of studies assessed DF in relation to a specific sin or transgression (specifically, only five among those rated as high quality). This predominance likely reflects the practical and methodological difficulties associated with offence-specific assessment, including challenges in eliciting recall of a salient wrongdoing and variability in offence relevance. Although dispositional measures are easier to implement, their widespread use may obscure important situational variations in how people seek and experience DF.

Another limitation in the literature concerns the cognition versus emotion distinction in DF. A few relatively recent studies attempted to assess both components by also including a few items that address the experiential or affective dimension of DF (see, e.g., [4, 34, 36, 87, 107]), or by asking participants to provide both an emotional and a cognitive rating for each item [35]. Among these, only 4 studies met our quality assessment criteria and were classified as high-quality studies. However, the majority of publications have primarily assessed the cognitive aspects of DF (e.g., the belief, knowledge, or opinion of being forgiven by God; beliefs or opinions about God's emotions or behaviors, etc.) rather than the experience/feeling of being forgiven by God.

Furthermore, we also found that sometimes scales designed to measure constructs other than DF (e.g., Grace or Image of God) that nonetheless include items assessing this construct. For example, four of the six items in the Positive View of God dimension [83] explicitly ask about God's forgiveness (e.g., "Despite my shortcomings, I feel I will be forgiven", "I believe God is all forgiving"). In accordance with Fincham [1], these statements more accurately pertain to DF, and therefore we included these items in our systematic review. The same applies to the Sin/Grace Scale [50–52, 110], the Acts of Contrition items proposed by Krause [88], and the items adapted from the Acceptance Subscale of the God Image Inventory proposed by McConnell and Dixon [36]. Although these scales were framed within broader constructs such as Grace or Image of God, their content suggests that they in fact capture core dimensions of DF. This pattern points to a lack of conceptual and terminological consensus in the literature, in which DF-related processes are frequently assessed without being explicitly theorized as a distinct construct.

Also, a noteworthy aspect that has emerged from our analysis is the distinction between the use of items assessing DF in a general sense and those that focus on respondents' own personal experiences or beliefs. This difference is not trivial, as an individual may believe that God forgives in general without necessarily feeling forgiven personally. Thus, it is possible that these more general items may not fully capture participants' lived experiences, but rather reflect doctrinal beliefs or ideas they have learned within their religious traditions, and more research is needed to examine this distinction. A related distinction emerging from the reviewed literature concerns the difference between seeking DF and experiencing forgiveness from God. These aspects, although sometimes conflated within existing measures, represent conceptually distinct components of the broader process of DF. Seeking forgiveness reflects an orientation toward reconciliation with God following a perceived wrongdoing, whereas experiencing forgiveness refers to the subjective perception that forgiveness has been granted.

More broadly, the findings of this review suggest that DF may encompass multiple, partially overlapping aspects, including the process of seeking forgiveness, the perceived experience of being forgiven, as well as cognitive and emotional components related to beliefs about and feelings of forgiveness. This is also consistent with previous research (see, for example, [16]) showing that religions exhibit both similarities and differences and that religious psychological experiences—including the perception of God's forgiveness—may vary across religions in part because doctrinal differences do not map directly onto lay perceptions and lived experiences, which may themselves diverge from formal teachings. However, these aspects are not consistently represented across existing instruments, and the current literature does not yet support a definitive specification of the exact number or structure of dimensions. These recurring components should therefore be interpreted as empirically emerging aspects that future research should further refine and validate. This lack of conceptual and dimensional clarity is closely reflected in the psychometric limitations of existing measures. Despite the few attempts to capture the multidimensional nature of the construct (see, for example, [35, 63, 65], the psychometric foundations of DF measures remain weak. Most instruments relied solely on internal consistency, while factorial validity, invariance, and validity evidence remain largely unexplored. In addition, many scales consisted of very few items, often adapted from previous works without systematic theoretical or methodological development. Therefore, existing DF measures should be considered preliminary tools rather than fully validated instruments. All in all, regardless of our quality assessment of the selected studies, most data on DF have been collected using simple,

psychometrically questionable, predominantly unidimensional measures [34, 87], which fail to intentionally and systematically capture the complex and multidimensional nature of the construct. Finally, DF measures have been administered primarily to US-based, Christian samples and have not been developed in a way that accounts for cultural, religious, and linguistic differences across faith traditions and nations. Indeed, none of the reviewed studies examined measurement invariance across groups in relation to sex, age, culture, or religion. This represents a critical gap, given that DF is inherently embedded in cultural and religious frameworks. So, without invariance testing, cross-group comparisons remain potentially biased and difficult to interpret. Taken together, a major impediment to scientific research on DF is the lack of well-validated measures to assess this construct within and across different languages, sociocultural contexts, and religions.

Limitations

The results of this systematic review should be considered in light of some limitations.

First, several potentially relevant texts ($N = 44$) could not be retrieved, either due to non-response after contact attempts ($N = 13$) or due to the impossibility of establishing contact with the authors ($N = 31$) because no valid contact information was available. Second, despite the use of predefined selection criteria, decisions regarding the inclusion of publications in the systematic review and the subsequent categorization of items inevitably involve subjective judgments and may therefore be prone to bias. Nevertheless, several procedures were implemented to reduce this risk, such as employing two independent raters and, where applicable, calculating inter-rater agreement (see Materials and Methods).

Third, our eligibility criteria excluded instruments with only one item referring to DF. While this decision increased psychometric rigor, it also reduced the number of included studies; however, even measures with two items raise concerns regarding reliability and validity. Despite this, we decided to include two-item measures as well, since excluding them would have led to the omission of a substantial portion of the available research on DF. Fourth, issues of conceptual overlap emerged in relation to items referring to constructs such as mercy, grace, punishment, or abandonment. For example, in Exline et al. [73] we included only the two items explicitly addressing DF, while excluding those related to divine abandonment or punishment, since we could not assume that these items referred to DF, given that the scale was designed to measure dimensions of religious comfort and strain. One such excluded item was "Feeling that God is far away," which reflects perceived divine abandonment rather than DF. However, other scales explicitly developed to assess DF contain similar items (e.g., I feel abandoned by God for what I have done) [87]. This raises the theoretical question of whether, in participants' experience, feeling that God has abandoned them also implies feeling unforgiven—or, conversely, whether perceiving God as merciful is equivalent to feeling forgiven.

Another limitation concerns the fact that some "gold standard" studies were ultimately excluded because they used only a single item, and many of the included publications did not provide the full list of items, reporting only a few illustrative examples. An additional limitation concerns the language restriction applied in this review. Specifically, this review was limited to studies published in English, Italian, and Spanish due to the linguistic competencies of the research team. As a result, relevant studies published in other languages may not have been included, potentially introducing language bias. A further limitation of the present review is its exclusive focus on quantitative approaches to the study of DF. Consequently, this work did not capture the indispensable insights derived from qualitative research.

A final limitation concerns the search strategy. We intentionally adopted a generic keyword string to ensure transparency and replicability across different databases (PubMed, Scopus, PsycINFO, and Web of Science), despite their varying indexing systems and controlled vocabularies (e.g., MeSH terms in PubMed and the APA Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms in PsycINFO). While this approach increases accessibility and reduces the risk of overfitting the search to a single database, it also raises the possibility that some relevant studies using alternative terminology may not have been retrieved. Nevertheless, the combination of multiple databases, backward reference searching, and manual screening of high-impact journals reduces the likelihood that substantial portions of the literature were missed.

Future research directions

Despite some limitations, this is the first such systematic review of DF—a growing and important area of research with relevance to each of the overlapping domains of religion, spirituality, and forgiveness. It highlights the need for future research to prioritize the development of more conceptually and psychometrically rigorous measures of DF. On the basis of our findings, we propose several methodological refinements that are needed to achieve this.

First, the present review primarily focused on quantitative approaches to the study of DF; future work would benefit from a deeper examination of qualitative methodologies and the nuanced insights they provide, which could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this construct and its experiential, contextual and meaning-related dimensions. Second, regarding

quantitative studies, item instructions may explicitly encourage participants to reflect on their personal experience of being forgiven by God. Third, response formats based solely on frequency scales (e.g., from "never" to "always") may provide only limited information, as they do not adequately assess the intensity of feeling forgiven. Fourth, future items should be contextualized in specific situations that may elicit DF (e.g., following or in relation to a sin), rather than phrased only in general terms. Furthermore, researchers should privilege items that tap into emotional experience—how and when individuals feel forgiven by God—rather than exclusively cognitive dimensions of belief or knowledge, given that these aspects do not always coincide.

Moreover, it is essential to ensure that newly developed measures are linguistically and religiously sensitive across cultures. Importantly, the validity of DF measures should be interpreted in relation to the religious and cultural context in which they are developed and administered. We further highlight the importance of developing and validating instruments across a diverse range of religious contexts, in order to more accurately capture cross-religious variability in the perception and experience of DF. Instruments designed for a specific population may be highly appropriate within that context, even if their applicability to other religious traditions requires careful adaptation. For example, certain items currently in use (e.g., "God delivers you from a debt") may lack relevance or cultural equivalence in different religious contexts. Moreover, the diversity of believers' experiences of DF should not necessarily be interpreted as evidence that DF is conceptually non-unitary. Rather, it may reflect challenges in its psychological operationalization and measurement across different religious contexts. One possible direction for future scale development may involve combining general items assessing individuals' perceived experience of being forgiven with additional items tailored to specific religious traditions. Such an approach could allow both cross-religious comparability and contextual sensitivity.

Additionally, when scholars develop new DF measures—or administer existing ones in novel cultural or religious contexts—they should report comprehensive psychometric evidence beyond internal consistency alone. This should include evidence of factorial validity, measurement invariance across groups, test-retest reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity. Developing scales that are both cross-religiously meaningful and psychometrically grounded will be essential for advancing the empirical study of DF, ensuring cross-cultural comparisons, and going beyond individual psychological variables to include the interpersonal and group-relational dynamics of DF.

Given the rapid growth of research in this area, particularly in 2025, updating the present review would be valuable for incorporating newly developed instruments and monitoring ongoing theoretical and methodological developments. Developing and maintaining a clear and rigorous measurement framework remains crucial for advancing the empirical study of DF.

Abbreviations

DF Divine Forgiveness

Supplementary Information

The online version contains supplementary material available at https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-05298-4.

Supplementary Material 1.

Supplementary Material 2.

Supplementary Material 3.

Acknowledgements

None.

Authors' contributions

FP: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Project administration, Data curation, Methodology. VV: Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Methodology, review & editing. LC: Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Methodology, review & editing. DB: Conceptualization, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Funding acquisition. FD: Writing – review & editing, Supervision. SE: Writing – review & editing. YG: Writing – review & editing. CR: Funding acquisition, Writing – review & editing, Supervision.

Funding

The author(s) declare that financial support was received for the research and/or publication of this article. This study was supported by the Grant 61927 provided by the Florida State University Research Foundation and the John Templeton Foundation.

Data availability

The pre-registration of this systematic review can be found in online repositories. The names of the repository/repositories and accession number(s) can be found at: osf.io/c7r8y. All data extracted and analyzed for this review are reported within the article and its supplementary materials.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study was not applicable because it was a systematic review.

Consent for publication

This study was not applicable because it was a systematic review.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

Received: 18 December 2025 / Accepted: 3 August 2026
Published online: 18 August 2026

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