

The Word of Life Messenger

“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16

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FORGIVENESS OF SINS

“...your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.” (I John 2:12)

One cannot be a Christian unless his or her sins are forgiven. If one is in Christ, God’s judgment has already been passed on your sins. The proclamation of forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ is the good news of the gospel, for Jesus said “that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47). “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through, this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins” (Acts 13:38). Forgiveness of sin is needed by all and by God’s grace it is provided in Jesus Christ.

First, forgiveness is a primary blessing. Spurgeon in his famous sermon “The First Note of My Song” took as his text Psalm 103:3 where the first blessing enumerated is “who forgiveth all thine iniquities.” God does not heal the diseases of the soul until sin has been pardoned and covered. Every spiritual blessing is withheld until, first of all, the pardon of sin has been given. God does not deliver a person’s life from destruction, or crown that person with loving-kindness and tender mercies, or to satisfy his mouth with good things while he is still unforgiving and dead in sins (Psalms 103). Divine forgiveness opens the road to spiritual fruitfulness.

Second, forgiveness is a personal blessing. The text says “your sins are forgiven you for his name sake.”

Forgiveness is experienced by sinful persons because of the person and work of the sinless Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father is perfectly satisfied with the person (His sinless, spotless Son) and the work (propitiation, substitution, and redemption) of salvation which He provided for us. Every thing the Father does, He does for His Son’s name sake, His name includes all that He accomplished in his work. His Name is “Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). It is the Name “which is above every name” (Philippians 2:9), and the only Name the Father recognizes as the ground for forgiveness. The person who believes the gospel is forgiven for His Name’s sake. That He should forgive me makes forgiveness a personal blessing.

Third, forgiveness is a perfect blessing. The text says “your sins are forgiven you.” The verb is in the perfect tense, which speaks of a past, completed action having present, permanent and therefore perfect results. When our Lord cried “It is finished” (John 19:30), a full and perfect pardon was effected as the all-sufficient payment for sin. He put away sin permanently and perfectly, so that all who come unto God by him are for all time forgiven. It is not that we are forgiven at some future time, but that we are fully and finally forgiven the

moment we believe the gospel of Christ - how that He died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Here is perfect pardon - “God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32).

Fourth, forgiveness is a priceless blessing. Forgiveness is priceless because it is precious. It is a blessing which cannot be purchased by money or by works, or by emotional pleading. When a person has done all that he can do, he is as far from forgiveness as he or she can be. Though forgiveness is priceless it is purchased only through “the precious blood of Christ” (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19) as a lamb without blemish or spot. And it is offered to us without money or price. (Isaiah 55:1). Moreover, it is sufficient for the forgiveness of all our sin. It is an infinite, priceless forgiveness.

Fifth, forgiveness is a productive blessing. Forgiveness produces a happy heart. Jesus said to the man sick of the palsy, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matthew 9:2). Yes, because of Jesus we can sing “O Happy Day when Jesus washed my sins away.” This forgiveness is greater than the fact that this man was healed of his palsy. There can be no greater joy than the forgiveness of sins. This

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IN THE LIGHT

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Lost people are in darkness, but thank God they can be brought into the light by the Gospel. When a person learns that Jesus has died on the cross for our sins and was buried and raised from the grave, when he believes this truth he is brought out of darkness into the light.

We also walk in the light. 1 John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son

cleanseth us from all sin."

We worship in the light. 1 Peter 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

We war in the light. Romans 13:12 "The night is far spent; the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

We work in the light. John 3:21 "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God."

We watch in the light. John 11:19 "Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man

walk in the day, he stumbleth not because he seeth the light of this world."

We witness in the light. Philippians 2:15 "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

We wait for Christ in the light. Luke 12:35-36 "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately."

We are not in darkness because we are in the light of the Lord Jesus.

~ Charles Ellis

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

forgiveness also is a continual source of joy. When a person is fully pardoned and forgiven, he is changed from enmity and opposition toward God to a position of love and trust in God. This forgiveness is a comfort in times of sickness, sorrow, pain and poverty. It is a once and for all forgiveness. Our sins are separated from us as far as the east is from the west and blotted out as a thick cloud. We are made full sons of God and fully accepted because our sins are forgiven us for "his name's sake." This is the forgiveness that comes at regeneration.

While it is wonderfully true that our relationship with God can never be broken because of what Jesus did on the cross and continues to do for us in heaven, our sin can hinder our fellowship with Him. This fam-

ily forgiveness is described in 1 John 1:9 where John wrote "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. As we see our sin in the same light as God sees it and acknowledge it our sins are sent away and the harmony and happiness in the family is maintained. This is the forgiveness that comes from the cleansing of sanctification. If our confession is personal and particular from the heart to our God he will graciously and completely pardon and purify us. Otherwise, He must chasten and discipline us to teach us to love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Finally, this forgiveness is a professed forgiveness. If we do not have forgiveness the fault is ours. Our God delights in mercy and stands

ready to give it to all who come by way of the cross. The Apostle Paul wrote "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:7,8). He goes on to write "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:23-25). Have you accepted the forgiveness that God offers in Christ? There is no other way of forgiveness. If your sins are forgiven, it will be for Jesus' sake.

~ Larry Windham

A WORD OF EXHORTATION

Paul and certain others who were with him came into the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia. "And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them saying, ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on" (Acts 13:15). This invitation to preach gave Paul the opportunity to give "a word of exhortation." If you read this message of Paul in Acts 13:16-43, you will see a great message starting in the Old Testament and concluding in the New Testament, where he preached the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (see vs. 29-30).

The word "exhortation" means to call near, to invite, invoke or beseech. Exhortation is the work of the pastor. We are to preach the word and exhort the people. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you ..." (1 Peter 5:1,2a).

The word of God must be used to exhort. "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:13). The people are to "suffer (allow) the word of exhortation" (Heb. 13:22). We must preach the word in order to exhort the people. "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). We are to be faithful to preach sound doctrine. As we preach the word, preach "how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3,4).

After we are saved, there is a walk of exhortation. "Furthermore

then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more" 1 Thess. 4:1). See also Ephesians 4:1 and 1 Peter 2:9-11.

The Bible also teaches the urgency of exhortation (see Heb. 3:7-15). We "should earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3). Barnabas exhorted the church at Antioch "that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23). In Acts 14:22, the disciples were exhorted "to continue in the faith." Exhortation is urgent because "now is the day of salva-

tion" (1 Cor. 6:2b). We are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:22). Jesus is coming back so we must be urgent in His service.

Finally, there is a result of exhortation. When Paul preached in Acts thirteen, the Gentiles "besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath (Acts 13:42). When the resurrected Christ spoke of His sufferings the eyes of the Emmaus disciples were opened and their heart burned within them when He opened to them the scriptures (see Luke 24:32).

~ Gladwin Carpenter

GENESIS

This being the first book of Moses and has been termed "the seed plot of the Bible," for in it we have, almost all of the great doctrines which are afterwards fully developed in the books of Scripture which follow:

In Genesis we have the first hint of the Blessed Trinity, of a plurality of Persons in the Godhead - "Let Us make man in OUR image" (1:26).

"In the beginning God created." No argument is entered into to prove the existence of God: instead, His existence is affirmed as a fact to be believed. "In the beginning God created," tells us that He was Himself before the beginning, and hence, Eternal. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." and that argues He is infinite and omnipotent, for no finite being possesses the power to "create," and none but an Omnipotent Being could "create" the heaven and the earth.

"In the beginning God." This is the foundation truth of all real theology. God is the great Originator

and Initiator. False systems of theology and philosophy begin with man, and seek to work up to God. But this is a turning of things upside down. We must, in all our thinking, begin with God, and work down to man.

In the second day's work we learn that God made something. This was the formation of the atmospheric heaven, the "firmament," named by God "heaven." That which responds to this in the new creation, is the impartation of a new nature. The one who is "born of the Spirit" becomes a "partaker of the Divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Regeneration is not the improvement of the flesh, or the cultivation of the old nature. It is important to note that the "firmament" was produced by the Word, for, again we read. "And God said "So it is by the Written Word of God that the new birth is produced. "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth" (James 1:18). Keep reading.

~ D. C. Hartley

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Notice

The Northeast and North Central MS Baptist Bible Conferences will meet in conjunction with the Spring Bible Conference at Elliott Baptist Church, south of Grenada, MS.

The conference begins with supper at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 19, 2010. Singing and preaching begin at 7:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, April 20, the conference begins at 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon. Afternoon services begin at 1:30 p.m. Supper at 5:30 p.m., evening services at 7:00 p.m.

Bro. Cecil Fayard, pastor, and the church invite you.

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