

The Simple Truth Series #16

Forgiveness



What happened yesterday, stays in yesterday.

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'And expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.' Acts 18:26.

Contents

	Page
1. Forgiveness is forever	2
2. Forgiveness is complete	2
3. Why do we need forgiveness?	3
4. The Sinner's guilt	3
5. Forgive and forget	4
6. We have to give, to forgive	4
7. Forgiven and restored	5

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1.

Forgiveness is forever

During a Meeting held by William Branham in the 1950's, a Woman in her 20's stood before him for prayer. He turned to the audience, and spoke, "I've told you people to confess your sins, before you come to be prayed for." Turning back to the woman, he told her, "You've been unfaithful to your husband." The huge Congregation was so silent, you could have heard a pin drop, as a man near the back began yelling, and stamped his way toward the Platform, threatening to give Brother Branham a beating.

The Ushers moved to stop the man, but Brother Branham said, "That's her Husband, let him come." When the man got close to him, Brother Branham calmly asked, "And what about you, and your red-headed Secretary, in the Motel room on Friday night?" The man stopped immediately, knowing he was found out. "You two haven't sinned against God, you've sinned against your Marriage Vows," he stated, adding, "What you need to do is, go behind that curtain, and make things right between yourselves, then go home, and live as Husband and Wife."

After the Meeting, a friend who took Brother Branham back to his Motel room, asked how he knew the woman hadn't confessed her sins. He replied, "That's easy Brother Green, if she confessed it, the Lord would have forgiven it. And when He forgives it, He forgets it. And if He has forgotten it, He couldn't reveal it to me. But, if He does reveal it to me, then I know it isn't under the Blood."

2.

Forgiveness is complete

This is the forgiveness we receive for confessing our sins. They're gone forever. The Lord Himself, could never bring them back to haunt us, because, when they're forgiven, they're forgotten, and as far as He knows, they never happened.

If I do something wrong this morning, and confess it as sin, it's forgiven, and forgotten. And if I do the same thing this afternoon, and pray, "Lord, I'm sorry, I've done it again." He will ask, "Again?" As far as He knows this is the first time I've ever done it. Forgotten means, a clean slate, as though it never even happened the first time.

3.

Why do we need forgiveness?

The first sin in the Garden of Eden separated the whole Human Race from our Creator. It caused every death, every heartache, every pain, every crying baby, child, and adult, and every lost Soul. The Lord did not intend any of that to happen to us. He Created everything, and as He did so, He pronounced it, either *'good,'* or even *'very good.'* It was perfect, because it was all Created within the perfect Will of God.

But sin marred everything. Sin took us all out of the Presence of God. It condemned the man to toil for his bread against the foes of thorns and thistles claiming the ground, and it condemned the woman to the pain of childbirth. When sin is not atoned for, it wreaks havoc, and it mars the future forever, in a way that is never *'very good.'*

4.

The Sinners guilt

When the Lord came to have His usual time of fellowship with Adam and Eve, after they had sinned, what happened? *'And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the Presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.'* (Genesis 3:8). Why hide? Because sin causes guilt, and guilt is the greatest crisis we have on earth today.

Anything that begins without our Creator, will always take us in a wrong direction. Any question that is answered without the Lord being included, is always a wrong answer, because it only takes into account, a part of the necessary information needed to answer it. Sin has ravaged Humanity, and left in its wake a plague of guilt, because Mankind has rejected their Creator, and insists on going it alone.

The Creation without their Creator, has invented innumerable new ways for themselves to sin, without finding a remedy for the guilt, that their sin causes. No amount of therapy has alleviated it. No amount of anti-depressants has controlled it. No amount of *'turning over a new leaf'* puts it behind us. No amount of good works atones for it. And no amount of religion has salved it. The guilt is always there.

We live in a guilt ravaged society, that has turned from their Creator, and has thereby lost the privilege of confessing their sins to Him, and having them forgiven. Instead, we bare them through life as an ever-increasing burden, that will eventually condemn us for Eternity. Guilt is not the problem. Sin is the problem. Guilt is our Soul's way of

warning us that our sin has not been atoned for yet. Once our sin has been confessed, and forgiven, the guilt will go away by itself.

5.

Forgive, and Forget

Forgiveness isn't cheap, it comes at a cost. *"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."* (Matthew 6:14-15). The Lord also said, *"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."* (Matthew 18:35).

Forgiveness demands more than a dry-eyed confession, and lip service. When you consider the fact that one sin in Eden at the beginning, is still afflicting every person on earth today, it shows us how deadly sin is. Everything that any one of us do wrong today, is no better than that first sin in the Garden, and just as evil in the Lord's sight. There is no 'good' sin and 'bad' sin, it's all filthy rotten sin, and worthy of condemnation. The Lord only forgives *confessed* sin, not *excused* sin. "They made me do it," is for children.

We have to forgive, 'from the heart.' Forgive and forget. If you forgive someone, it can't be done grudgingly. Forgiveness is final. It's the end. It's over now. When you forgive, it's yesterday's news, and it stays in yesterday. It isn't 'Au revoir,' (Farewell, until we meet again). It's goodbye and good riddance, (I hope I never see you again).

If you forgive someone, then it's gone, But, if you bring it up again in the future, then it wasn't forgiven, "from the heart." The only way you can dig up something that's dead and buried, and give life to it, is if it wasn't dead in the first place. Meaning, you kept it alive in your heart. We have to forgive, so we can be forgiven.

6.

We have to give, to forgive

'To forgive is human, to forget is Divine.' We've all heard that, but to forgive is not human. To forgive is never easy, because it is *against* human nature. To forgive, you have to give up your right to justice, so there is no penalty for what was done to harm you. The sinner walks away scot-free, while the one sinned against gives up their right

to redress, revenge, or retribution. Is that easy? Never. To forgive can be extremely painful, but the Word is, *"Forgive and you shall be forgiven."* Dollar for dollar, what we have to give up is a bargain, compared with the forgiveness we receive from the Lord. Comparably, what we are owed is a dollar, and what we owe the Lord is a million dollars. So, it truly is a bargain for us.

7.

Forgiven and restored

What happens when your sins are forgiven? You are without sin. Therefore, you are sinless. You are as pure and holy in the Lord's sight, as Adam was on the day he was created. There is nothing to hinder Him hearing your voice, and nothing to hinder you hearing His Voice. You are in the place of Fellowship that Adam had with Him in Eden. Calvary, and the resultant forgiveness it bought, restored to us, as Sons and Daughters of God, all that Adam lost.

But sin interrupts our fellowship. So, we must keep short accounts with the Lord, and confess our sins quickly to Him, to have them forgiven, and forgotten, and restore that fellowship.

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Ed.D.