

THE FRUIT OF FORGIVENESS

By: Phillip Hayes

Other than "I love you", I cannot think of a more powerful statement than "I forgive you"! True forgiveness will always come from a heart that may have been broken, but has been healed by love.

God is Love! The Scripture does not proclaim that God *has* love, but rather, GOD IS LOVE! Praise the Lord! He is Love, and I believe that we can all attain His Divine Love. Love will produce forgiveness, and forgiveness will produce power!

First, let me show you the Love of God. Because He loves, He is long suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all might have eternal life (See 2Peter 3:9). Although God hates sin, He loves the sinner and He delights not in the destruction of the wicked. His will is for all mankind to come to the Cross of Christ and experience His Grace.

Jesus revealed and manifested the Love of God stating firmly that the Son of God came not to destroy men but that through Him they might be saved. Our Lord suffered a cruel horrible death to

become the Supreme Sacrifice for all mankind. And it was all done because of Love!

Although our nation and the world seems determined to rebel against God's Commandments and live unclean, unholy, murderous lives, the Lord's mercy and forgiveness remains for any that will call upon Him. Oh what Love indeed!

Just look for a moment what God has done for multitudes in past generations, and will do for men and women in our generation if they will call upon Him.

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" [Psalms 103:10-13].

Do you know how far the east is from the west? Can it be measured? Of course it cannot! Neither can our God's great Love and Forgiveness be measured! Consider this wonderful statement of God's forgiveness found in Micah: *"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" [Micah 7:18-19].*

Can you imagine? A God that not only forgives, but delights in it! And look how powerful

the Prophet Micah says of God's forgiveness, *"he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"*. How deep is the sea? In the time of Micah, the people had no way of measuring the depth of the seas! To them it was bottomless! Oh my! When God forgives your sins, they are gone forever! Let's look at another scripture concerning what God wants us to know about His forgiveness: *"Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back"* [Isaiah 38:17].

Praise God! God says that He has cast ALL YOUR SINS (not just a few) behind His back. That is to say He will never bring them up to you again! They are behind Him, not before Him. Isn't it time dear one to put all your mistakes and sins behind you? If you have asked God to forgive you, He has done just that, He has put them behind Him.

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" [Isaiah 43:25].

Consider this! Not only will God forgive your sins, but He has the supernatural ability to FORGET your sins! Imagine for a moment that you could absolutely forget all your past sins, as if they had never been committed! Think about it! Not only forgiven, but forgotten! God has that ability and has promised you and I that He will forget our sins. Praise the Lord. Forgiven and forgotten!

Although people and the devil may bring up your past and try to accuse you with your past faults, mistakes and sins; God knows nothing about

them if you have truly asked the Lord to forgive you. Oh, what a Great God we serve! What compassion! What love! This is what Grace is all about. Uncommon favor with God! *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin"* [Romans 4:8]. Glory to God, what a blessing!

People, we have all failed God! We have all sinned and come short of the Glory of God; but thank God, He is a compassionate, forgiving God and all He asks is for you and I to come before Him, confess our sins, accept His forgiveness, and then, get up, and go on with God! Forgiven and Forgotten by God! What more could anyone possibly want from God?

Children of God, don't let anyone bring condemnation to you about your past. Accept the Love, Grace, and Forgiveness of our God. Yes, you may have stumbled and fell. You may have committed a horrible sin. You may have failed loved ones and brothers and sisters in Christ, but the past is in the past. Leave it there! God has! Why can't you?

"But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me" [Isaiah 49:14-16].

Again, we find the Holy Scriptures testifying of the great Love and Compassion of our God. God has said a woman can forget, and not have compassion on her own children which she bore, but

He will not forget us! As a matter of fact God wants each of us to realize that He loves us so much that He has engraved us on the palms of His hands. Think about it!

Today, tattoo's are very popular. Young and old alike sport their favorite art work on their skin. The tattoo is applied with a needle and ink and is usually not without pain. It hurts! Some have their girl friend or boy friend's names tattooed on their body. They want to somehow immortalize their love for their friend on their own skin. They want to remember them! Now, God is saying, "I love you so much, I will never forget you, and to prove it, I have tattooed you on the palms of my hands. You are forever before me, says God!"

Let me show you one more marvelous scripture from the Old Testament that has been a great blessing to me and I hope also to you: *"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" [Malachi 3:16].*

As we have seen, God not only has the uncanny ability to forget, He also has the ability to remember certain things He chooses. In this scripture we find our Lord hears those that fear Him when they speak often to one another about Him. I believe the Lord delights in His chosen as they speak about their God. Often times, we are guilty of talking about one another, when we should be talking about Him. There is probably a lot of negative and even derogatory things we could say

about each other, but I guarantee you that there is nothing but good that you can say about our God! Praise the Lord! Oh, the wonderful works of our God; Great is His Name and greatly is He to be praised!

He hears the preaching! He hears the testimonies! He hears us as we witness to one another! He hears as we witness to the loss of His great Grace! He hears! And, He remembers!

I have known folks that kept diaries. They faithfully wrote the most important things of their day in their diaries. They want to remember important events in their lives. Also, most of us will write down important things which we want to remember. Now, look at our God! He not only hears and remembers, but He has also written a book of remembrance for Himself! He has a diary! And His diary is all about you and I! God hasn't forgotten your sacrifices, No Sir! God hasn't forgotten the times you went the extra mile and gave until it hurt to see God's Kingdom Message preached in order for lost souls to be saved. He hasn't forgotten the times you worked overtime to help meet the needs of your church and ministry. He hasn't forgotten the years and miles you may have traveled to preach His Gospel. No Sir! God hasn't forgotten! Not only that, He has written down in His Great Book of remembrance all the time you talked to others about Him and even the times you simply *thought* upon His Name. I believe every prayer you ever prayed is in His Great Diary! Every word, every mention, every thought about Him; He has recorded. Why, because He loves you! Have

you ever *reminded* God of something? Moses did! Others have! Have you? Well, the next time you might call upon Him and feel to remind Him of something . . . just tell Him to look at His Great Book of Remembrance! Its there! Every thing is there!

Remember children of God, God hasn't written all your mistakes, failures, sins, and faults in His Book of Remembrance. No! No! God has forgotten all those things . . . I believe there is only good things about us in His Great Heavenly Diary. Don't you dear one?

Now the sum of our message is this: God has not only forgiven you of all your sins, He has also forgotten you ever committed a sin! That is the bottom line!

If you believe and have received what I have said thus far, then my friends there are two things you must do. First you must also forgive yourself and forget those things that are behind you!

The devil will influence some people who will never let you forget your past if you allow them. Some even delight in the destruction and fall of others! But, you must forgive yourself! There is where the power lies. When you are finally able to forgive yourself, I believe you have then accepted God's forgiveness! You see, you can never do a work for God when you are burdened down with guilt and condemnation. Never! But when you accept God's Grace and forgiveness, and realize that God has not only forgiven you, He now knows nothing about your past sins, you have become free from sin and the condemnation that comes with it.

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before” [Philippians 3:13].

The Apostle Paul said that He was going to forget those things which are behind, and reach forth for those things which are before. This is what we all must do! Forget the past, there is nothing you can do about it. It is history! It is over! Press ahead for the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Our greatest experience with God, and our greatest ministry is ahead of us.

And now dear ones for the second thing you must do. You have seen how forgiving our God is; even to forgetting every evil thing we have done in our past. It is a wonderful and marvelous thing! But, I warn you, as God has forgiven us all our trespasses, we must also forgive all that have trespassed against us! If we do not, then my friend, I must say that everything I have written thus far will never apply to you. Not only will your sins not be forgiven, they will also be remembered by God. The following verses from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter eighteen shows us why.

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him

ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" [Matthew 18:21-35].

Peter was interested in forgiveness. Perhaps someone had done him a great wrong, and was continuing to do so, and he wanted to know how many times should he forgive this person before he

could be justified in retaliating. Our Lord was quick to respond! *"I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, until seventy times seven."* Then, the Lord began to expound on forgiveness using a very weighty and powerful parable. He began the parable by saying, *"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants."* Now, when Jesus speaks of the *Kingdom of Heaven* and a *Certain King*, we know for sure that our Lord is speaking of you and I and our relationship with God. He spoke of two men seeking forgiveness. One from the King and one from the man which had sought forgiveness from the King. Please take close attention to the difference in the amount that was owed by each of these individuals in this parable.

The first man Jesus spoke of owed the King a price that he could not pay. Ten thousand talents! We do not know if the talents owed was Gold or silver, but probably gold. Just to get an idea of how much this man owed consider this: one talent equals seventy-five point six pounds. That's right, just one talent equals 75.6 pounds. This man owed the King 10,000 talents or 756,000 pounds of gold. The value of pure gold at this writing is almost \$1,800.00 per ounce. That is \$28,800.00 per pound. Now, one talent equals 75.6 pounds. $75.6\text{lbs} \times \$28,800.00$ is \$2,177,280.00 for one talent! The man owed 10,000 talents! $10,000 \text{ talents} \times \$2,177,280.00$ per talent equals \$21,772,800,000.00, that is:

**21 Billion, 772 Million, Eight Hundred
Thousand Dollars**

that this man owed the King, and the King forgave him the debt! Wow!

Now, this same man went out, *“And found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.”*

Do you know how much an hundred pence is? A hundred pence is a mere sliver of gold, or in today’s money would be just a few dollars. One source states that it would be about twenty dollars at the most.

Can you believe it? A man that had been forgiven billions of dollars would not forgive a debt of only a few dollars! The reality of this parable is we are all that man, when we will not forgive those that trespass against us!

The Heavenly Father has forgiven us a debt that we could not possibly pay. Christ paid that debt for us on the Cross. Yes, He did! Friends can you possibly place a value on eternal life? Of course not! The Father has freely forgiven us all our sins and trespasses that we have committed against Him. As we have stated before, He not only has forgiven us, He has forgotten that we ever trespassed against Him! Our debt to God has been cancelled!

Now God requires you to also forgive those that have trespassed against you; for their debt to you cannot and can never be compared to the debt

that He forgave us of.

If we should refuse to forgive, God has this warning: *"And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."*

Forgive my friends, and you shall be forgiven!
Be merciful, and you will obtain mercy!

Before I close this message, let me show you one more scripture how forgiveness will produce power: *"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" [Mark 11:22-26].*

Yes, we are all familiar with these scriptures. We have all desired the power of God to be manifested in our lives. To speak to the mountains; to pray and receive what we pray for . . . But, we will never receive unless we forgive.

You see my friends, God has forgiven us if we have sincerely come by way of the Cross and asked His forgiveness. Now, He expects no less from you!

You must forgive others! None of us have experienced being trespassed against as much as we have trespassed against our God! No matter what someone has done to you, you have done more to God. And, He has forgiven you!

This is where our power with God lies . . . in our ability to forgive! Power with God is the fruit of our forgiveness! Forgive, and you will be forgiven, forgive not, and God will not forgive you. This is why the enemy seeks to bring divisions and strife. Satan knows the best way to defeat a Christian is to create bitterness against someone in their hearts to the level that the person under attack cannot forgive. It is a sad thing, but if you cannot forgive others, God will not forgive you, you are still in your sins; and will be delivered to the tormentors to pay the supreme sacrifice which is your very soul.

I don't know about you dear ones, but I have made up my mind to forgive anyone and everyone that has ever done me a wrong. Holding grudges will send you to hell! I don't have any ought against anyone! I intend to make Heaven my home! My mind is made up, my heart is right with God, and I have forgiven all. I am walking in the Love, Grace, Power, and Forgiveness of a Living Savior. I am ready to speak to the mountains, prophesy to the winds, and declare the Word of the Living God to a lost a dying world. I am going to speak and watch it come to pass! Praise God!

Yes, I have made many, many mistakes in my life time; I have sinned and come short of the glory of God, But, glory to God, I am a blessed man; my sins have been forgiven! My sins have been

forgotten! *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" [Romans 4:8].*

I'm going to Heaven! I am saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost! I am called, chosen, ordained, elected and predestinated before the foundation of the world. Jesus Christ is my all and all. He is my Savior, my King, my God, my everything. No man can pluck me out of my Father's Hand! I am flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone. I am one spirit with my Lord. I am a child of the King, an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. I am anointed and sent from God to do a work for Him in these last days! Praise the Lord!

Accept God's Grace and forgiveness. Forgive all that have done you wrong. Sow this incredible seed of forgiveness and you will reap the fruit of what you have sown! I realize this can be very difficult in some cases, but rest assured, the Lord will give you Grace to perform what you must perform. Take the first step and God will help you my friend!

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