



THE GOOD NEWS MESSENGER

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If Ye Forgive

Excerpt from *The Secret of Being Strong* By: C. W. Naylor

One of the most striking things that Jesus taught was that we should forgive our enemies, and not only forgive them but also adopt an attitude toward them that indicates a complete change of feeling toward them. He came to break down the middle wall of partition, not merely between the Jews and Gentiles in the national sense or in the religious sense, but also in the personal sense he breaks down all walls that have been built up to separate the hearts of people. The mercy that God shows in forgiving us puts us under the most solemn obligation to forgive others. Many people find this the hardest of all things to do. But God tells us plainly that if we will not forgive others we cannot be forgiven. If we will not forgive men, he will not forgive us. Forgiveness, therefore is a part of true repentance, and repentance is not complete until the heart adopts the forgiving attitude toward every enemy; and not only forgives because it feels it must, but also because it is disposed to forgive when it has once been forgiven and the love of God has come into the heart.

God is disposed to forgive his enemies. He is so much disposed to do it that he sought a means whereby he could safely do so. He was so disposed to forgive a trespass against himself that he gave his Son so that he might forgive transgressors. He was disposed to forgive so that he would make any sacrifice in order to be able to forgive, and not have his forgiveness turn out badly. He sent his Son into the world to make forgiveness possible with safety by changing the heart of the individual forgiven. But we cannot take any such precaution. That is quite beyond our power. More than that, there is no need of such action on our part for God has already, through his Son, done all that is necessary. So he teaches us to forgive, and to leave all consequences in his hand.

Many persons say, "I just cannot forgive." This is true even to professors of religion. And many of them, though they do say so, do not really forgive, for the thing still rankles in their hearts. How different is their attitude from God's! He *wants* to forgive. They will hardly forgive even under strong pressure, then many times their forgiveness is only from the lips. We find many professors of religion who are prejudiced against people. This prejudice is manifested in a disposition to believe evil of them, or to put an unfavorable construction upon what they do or say. A lack of fairness is

shown, and not unfrequently a disposition to be rather elated when anything unpleasant happens to them. Back of such a prejudice lies a wrong attitude of heart, an unchristian attitude.

It matters not what an individual has done or said about us, nor what his attitude is toward us, if we hold the Christian attitude toward him we shall feel a disposition to be perfectly fair with him. Perhaps we have a cause of complaint against him. Perhaps his conduct has not been and is not what it should be toward us. But if we have a forgiving spirit clear down to the depths of our hearts we will hold that same attitude of kindness and pity that Jesus held toward those who did wrong toward him, and that he holds towards sinners now. While we hate his evil-doing, we nevertheless feel no animosity toward him. But if we are prejudiced against him, if we will not give him a fair show, then we have reason to question the genuineness of our disposition to forgive.

Sometimes this lack of forgiving disposition is manifested in the home. There is ill feeling, unpleasantness, a disposition toward criticism and faultfinding. The members of the same family, who ought to love and feel a real tenderness toward each other, are often alienated. Sometimes that alienation grows until it rankles in the heart. But notwithstanding this, the individuals may consider themselves very good Christians. Perhaps they throw all the blame upon the other one, but the old saying is, "It takes two to make a quarrel." In the same way it takes two to make ill feeling between two persons. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind." That divine charity or love that is shed abroad in our hearts issues invariably in a disposition to be forgiving. What is needed in many families is forgiveness. Feelings will be hurt, supposed rights will be trampled upon, consciously or unconsciously, offense will be given sometimes. The question is, will we forgive these things, or will we let them start a canker in our hearts? We need to take antiseptic precautions for our heart as well as for our body, to protect ourselves against germs of evil as we try to protect ourselves against the germs of disease. But the question comes up square to face us: do we forgive in our home circle?

If there is a reconciliation between parties who have been at enmity, that reconciliation is based on forgiveness; and when the forgiveness is genuine there is a complete restoration of friendship and unity between the parties. Where such restoration does not come as the result of the attempt to right matters, there is only one reason why it does not. That reason is, there has been no forgiveness. Where people really forgive each other, there is nothing that remains to be taken out of the way. There is nothing rankling in the heart; there is nothing to push the other off; there is none of that "keep your distance" air; there is no feeling of coldness. An unforgiving disposition is at the bottom of almost all church troubles, and it is of no use to attempt to talk such things out of the way. People cannot be talked together; they cannot be argued together; there is only one thing that will bring them together, and that is for all to show a genuinely forgiving spirit. This leaves nothing to be a source of disturbance.

Why is it that people will not forgive? Is it because others have treated

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Walking in Darkness

Excerpt from *Things to Consider Vol 4*— By: A. K. Chancellor

I believe the expression “experience is the best teacher” has some merit in it. What we learn by experience makes a lasting impression, be it a spiritual or material lesson. But I am more interested in discussing the spiritual aspect than the physical. Either way, for the physical often relays to us a spiritual lesson.

Walking in darkness does not necessarily pre-suppose the absence of light, for there are blind people who are nonetheless unable to see though it be ever so illuminated around them. The darkness of which I speak is not the absence of the sun, moon and stars, but rather the evil deeds of men, deeds they do though they should know better.

When the heart is infested with evil desires and the soul is following after practices of that nature, though exposed to truth, it can be said that that person is walking in darkness. This does not mean the person is void of any understanding, but that they have chosen rather to go after evil than light.

The amount of knowledge one possess has no bearing on whether or not they are walking in the Light of God’s word. Jesus made this clear when he said “light is come,” and men loved darkness rather than light because of their evil deeds they practice. If a man or woman hates their brother or sister, they do walk in darkness, even though they know to do better.

Souls void of the gospel are not necessarily void of conscience, for the Gentiles who had not the law, because of their conscience did the things contained in the law, and were justified in God’s sight—but the Jews which had the law, did not those things, and were not therefore justified. This takes away all claims of innocence that a person just didn’t know any better. I take little stock in any defense of ignorance, because if we do not know, but could know, we are accounted of doing wrong as if we did know.

The soul committing sinful acts, and showing a sign of guilt, proves by their efforts to justify themselves that they know better. And that is known as self-deception, but the real problem they run into is that others do not accept their flimsy excuses for doing what they have done.

Though Eve was deceived by the serpent, yet she knew what God had said, else the conversation would not have made any sense. The devil poses no problem to you on things you do not know or have some awareness about; he has to use your knowledge of things to cause them to become a trial to you. Otherwise the grace of God will help you to cast off his accusations.

Now it may be a little rash to some minds, but Eve had to choose between accounting the devil as a liar, or God as a liar. Her choice had to do with her desire. It was not that she did not know, it was that she wanted to do otherwise than what God had said—that is the basis of all sinful deeds. After she had eaten of the fruit her eyes were opened, that is, her understanding of what took place. Her physical eyes were already opened or she wouldn’t have seen the tree and fruit; it was her willingness to let her spiritual eyes close to truth that brought her into sin—it is no different today.

From the writings of John, Peter, Paul, Jude, the teachings of Jesus, and the accounts of the Old Testament, man is not so void of knowing as he is of doing the right. This truth we consider in light of John 3:17-21.

Light, when it comes, does not compel obedience, but it makes duty known, and illuminates the soul to what God expects and requires for holy living. When Christ Jesus came souls were walking in darkness—sinful practices. I will allow the Jews did not

know many things, but they did have the oracles of God and could have known more than they did. Hypocrites are not in total darkness—they could not profess and cover up if they didn’t know what and how to cover up.

The problem with those Jews and with all sinners is that they love their sins and don’t want to give them up, thus they fight holiness and the holiness people. Even when the light was presented to them, they would not come to it, and had they not known there would have been no conviction; neither would they have persisted in killing the Lord.

Those Jews hated the light, and so do many who are termed Gentiles, which includes any and all who are not Jews. As a nation, they rejected Christ, but among their number were those who by faith looked for the Lord’s coming and accepted him and the gospel. Because of their faith they were born of God’s Spirit. Let me assure you that there are unnumbered millions on earth today who still hate the light, neither will they come to it, and for the same reason—their deeds are evil.

Paul, in Rom. 1:19, said, “God hath shewed it unto them” - the truth, therefore “they are without excuse!” Jude says they “turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness.” Peter says of them, they are “sporting themselves with their own deceivings.” They have “forsaken the right way, and are gone astray.”

Preaching is not meant alone to enlighten men, but to show them the

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If Ye Forgive

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them wrongfully? Is it because their attitude toward them is not proper? No, it is nothing like this, though all this may have occurred. It is not what the other fellow has done; it is what is in our hearts that prevents forgiveness. If we will not forgive, it is because we are proud, stubborn, and self-willed. It is never hard to forgive when our own hearts adopt a proper attitude. Like God, then we *desire* to forgive. But do not overlook this one thing: forgiveness issues in peace, at least in a peaceful heart of the one who forgives, and in a Christlike attitude toward the wrongdoer. Where this Christlike attitude does not exist there is no forgiveness. In the church where things are settled and then come up again to trouble, or where coldness, indifference, and lack of love are manifested, forgiveness is the one thing needed in the hearts of those who hold such an attitude.

A good lesson was impressed upon my mind when I looked in my concordance to see what was said in the Bible on this subject. I found the word “forgave,” then after it the word “forget,” and on a little way the word “forgive.” As “forget” stood right in the midst of “forgiveness” in my concordance, so it stands in the human heart. Forget is right in the heart of forgive; and if it is not that way in our hearts and minds, it is because the right attitude is not in our hearts.

If it is so hard for some to forgive once, how do they expect to carry out Christ’s injunction to forgive seventy times seven? Let us examine our hearts. Let us inquire whether we have a forgiving spirit, remembering the while that a forgiving spirit does not abide in the same heart with hatred, bitterness, hardness and prejudice against people. When we forgive people it softens our hearts toward them. When we are reconciled to God, what blessedness it brings! When we are reconciled to our enemies, we partake of that same blessedness in our own hearts that we have when we are reconciled to Christ. But if we forgive not we shall not be forgiven, and our hearts will be fertile soil to receive all the seeds of evil that Satan would sow therein.

Forgiveness

By. Misti Chancellor

I was thinking about forgiveness and how amazing it is that God has forgiven our sins. As I sat and thought about that, I also thought about a conversation I had had about prayer recently – and these verses came to mind. If you have a couple of minutes, read through them and think about it:

Mark 11:22-26 ~ 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.

Matthew 5:21-26 ~ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Did you notice that these two sets of verses cover **both** sides of the problem?

In the first set of verses, Jesus told them that if they had anything against anyone, to forgive as they stood praying. He indicated that if a person refused to forgive those that had caused them harm that God would also refuse to forgive them. I wonder though... as I sit here looking at the verse, why he put that together with the other part... you know, that part that everyone likes to look to and find encouragement... about asking for what you will and receiving it? Sometimes the hurt that has been done to us will rise up like a mountain. I'm not talking about a little hurt, but one of those hurts that cuts so deep that you wonder if it will ever heal, or if you'll ever be able to forgive it. Did Jesus put these parts together so that people could see that by having faith in God, by wanting to forgive and asking God to help them to forgive, that that mountain of hurt could be moved out of the way and cast into the sea of forgetfulness?

But then, look at the other set of verses. It deals with the one who caused the problem, and tells him to go and work things out before he offers his gift to God.

Think about it... the one Jesus tells to forgive while he stands praying. The other, Jesus tells to go and ask for forgiveness before offering his gift to God. If the one forgives while he prays, then when the other comes to ask forgiveness he will be ready to forgive... but even if the other doesn't come, he's already moved the mountain and the hurt is gone. On the other hand, if the one comes and tries to be reconciled and the other won't forgive, the one who

tries to be reconciled has done all he can do. He can't force the other one to forgive him. This is really sad because while the one who tried to be reconciled will be clear before God for doing all he could do to fix the situation, the other will be standing in a state where his forgiveness from God is imperiled. Why? Because he won't forgive.

There's another verse that talks to husbands about their interactions with their wives and how they should treat them... and says, "... that your prayers be not hindered." I got to thinking, though, and wondered, if it matters how husbands and wives interact so that their prayers aren't hindered... would a lack of forgiveness toward others hinder our prayers? Looking back at the first set of verses, it would seem that it does.

As I think about all this, I look at myself... if there is anyone that I may have offended in my life, I want to make that right. I have found that when you go to someone you have offended and ask for forgiveness and receive it, that you both get good from it.

If someone offends or hurts me, I don't want to hang onto that hurt, either. I want to forgive that person whether or not that person ever asks me to forgive. I don't want a mountain of hurt and un-forgiveness standing between me and God, and hindering my prayers.

What about you? Is there a mountain of hurt standing in your way? The scripture says that by faith if you tell that mountain to move, that it will be cast into the sea. Wouldn't it be great to have that mountain of hurt cast into the sea of forgetfulness today? Keep a forgiving spirit and faith in God and you'll find that your life is richly blessed.

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 "Mountain moving faith, Lord, give me mountain moving faith. Plant in me a mustard seed of mountain moving faith. I will trust and never doubt, soon you'll hear the victory shout, Nothing is impossible with mountain moving faith." (From the song *Mountain Moving Faith*, by Ron Hamilton, Majesty Music)



## Walking in Darkness

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consequences of making a wrong decision, of sinning when they know better. Conviction is revelation of one's condition and standing with God. Along with conviction is mercy, and faith to believe. How can man hope to excuse himself of his awful obligation to get right with God?

There is a vast difference between conviction and condemnation, for in the presence of condemnation there is no faith. Without doubt a lot of the preaching done under inspiration of the Holy Ghost only confirms the truth men are already aware of; the moral law becomes instilled in the heart at the age of responsibility, and there is no conviction without a knowledge of that moral law.

Walking in darkness means one is pursuing that which they know to be contrary to the truth. It is a choice to do evil when good is known. This is what men will have to give an account to God for at the judgment. All mouths will become silent in that day, all arguments will die, and rewards will be given according as men deserve.

## Jesus Teaches Peter a Lesson

From *Picture Story—Life of Christ—Story 22—Matt 18:21-35*

One day Simon Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother if he sins against me and then asks my pardon? Shall I forgive him seven times?”

Perhaps Peter did not have much patience with a man who would sin against him often and always ask to be forgiven. Perhaps he thought no person could be truly sorry for his wrongdoing if he should have to ask so many times to be forgiven.

Jesus replied, “I do not say that you shall forgive him seven times only, but seventy times seven.”

How surprised Peter must have been when he heard this answer! He may have wondered whether he could ever truly forgive a man so many times as that.

Jesus told Peter a story about a king whose servant owed him a great amount of money. The king called this servant and asked him to pay the debt. But the servant had nothing with which to pay, for he had spent all the money. Then the king said, “Because you cannot pay me the money you borrowed, I will command that you and your wife and your children be sold, and that all of your property be taken away from you. In this way I can regain some of the money you borrowed and have lost.

The servant felt very sad when he heard these words, and he fell on his face before the king, crying, “O King, have patience with me and I will pay every penny I owe!”

Because the king had a kind heart he felt sorry for the man. He told him to rise up and go away to his own house. He said, “I will forgive all the debt, and you need not try to pay it back.”

After this servant went out from the king’s presence he met a very poor man who had borrowed only a few dollars from him. He asked the man to pay it back, but the man could not. Then the servant became very angry, and seizing the poor man by the throat, he cried, “Pay back what you borrowed or I will throw you into the prison house and keep you there until you do!”

Then the poor man fell down at his feet and cried out, “Have patience with me and I will pay every penny I owe.”

The king’s servant would not listen and, because the poor man had no money, he threw him into the prison.

Other servants of the king were standing by and they saw how unkindly this poor man had been treated. They know how the king had just forgiven the unkind man a very great debt, and they felt sad because he had been unwilling to forgive the small debt of his poor neighbor. They went to the king and told him how unmercifully the servant had treated his poor neighbor after having been forgiven this great debt.

The king was surprised to hear that his servant whom he had treated so kindly should dare to be so unkind to another. He quickly sent for him. The king was angry, and when the unkind servant came in he said, “O wicked man, I forgave all your debt because you could not pay, and should you not have been willing to forgive the small debt your poor neighbor owed? Because you have dared to be so wicked after I had pity on you, now I will cast you into the prison house until you pay all you owed me in the first place.”

When Jesus finished the story, he said to Peter, “If you refuse from your heart to forgive the wrongdoings of those who sin against you, neither will my heavenly Father forgive your great sins against him.”

## Bible Study—Excuses

By: Ora Teasley—Luke 14:15-18

Note—In the following will be found a few of the many excuses, offered by those who neglect their soul’s salvation.

### I. “Not Now”

1. God’s time is now 2 Cor. 6:2, Rom 6:22
2. Procrastination is dangerous Acts 24:24, 25

### II. “Tomorrow”

Tomorrow may be too late. Prov. 27:1, Jas. 4:14

### III. “Too Young”

1. Youth is the time to seek the Lord Eccl. 12:1
2. In after years he may not be found Isa. 55:6; Prov. 8:17

### IV. “A little more of the pleasures of this world.”

1. Affliction with the people of God was esteemed by Moses greater riches than the pleasure of sin (Heb. 11:24-26)
2. In Christ is peace and pleasure evermore John 16:33, Psa. 16:11

### V. “A little more of this world’s goods.”

1. If the kingdom of God is first sought, all necessary things will be added (Matt. 6:33)
2. Could the whole world be gained, it would be no profit should the soul be lost (Matt 16:26)
3. True riches consist not in the possession of earthly goods (Luke 12:15-21)
4. Riches profit not in the day of wrath (Prov. 11:4)

### VI. “I am in trouble.”

The Lord will save from trouble. Psa. 34:6, 17, Psa 107:6

### VII. “I could not keep salvation”

1. God has promised to keep his children (Psa. 121:5, Isa. 26:3)
2. He is faithful. (2 Thess. 3:3)
3. They are kept through faith by his power. (1 Pet. 1:5)

### VIII. “I am too sinful.”

“Whosoever will may come.” (Rev. 22:17, John 6:37, Isa. 1:18)

### IX. “My parents would disinherit me.”

1. God will care for his own. (Psa. 27:10, 1 Pet. 5:7)
2. He will provide. (Phil. 4:19, 1 Cor. 10:26)

### X. “I can get saved when I please.”

It is possible to wait too long. (Prov. 1:22-28, Luke 13: 24, 25)

### X. Conclusion

To those who have heard the gospel call, there is no excuse for sin. (John 15:22)



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Spanish interpretation is available in the services.

### Service Times:

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Wednesday Prayer Meeting        | 7:00 p.m.  |
| Sunday School                   | 9:30 a.m.  |
| Sunday Morning Worship          | 10:30 a.m. |
| Young People’s Service (Sunday) | 4:45 p.m.  |
| Children’s Service (Sunday)     | 5:00 p.m.  |
| Sunday Evening Service          | 6:00 p.m.  |

We have literature available for those who would like to study the Word of God in the confines of their home. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at the above telephone number, address, or website.