

The Healing Power of Forgiveness

By Tom Edwards

The ability to forgive others can serve as a healthy catharsis for the soul. Many an individual's physical well-being has been greatly impaired due to the lack of this gracious virtue; for hate and an unforgiving spirit can lead to numerous physical maladies. There seems to be more of a concern manifested these days about health in general, but often one overlooks the importance of possessing the proper attitude towards life which also plays a major role in one's physical condition. Poor mental health can lead to a wide variety of physical ailments that have been psychosomatically induced. Perhaps ulcers would be a classic example of this. The one who feels all "tied up in knots" over some grudge because of an injustice heartlessly inflicted is aware of the mind's influence over the body. How much better it is for one to be set free from all entanglements of a bitter or begrudging spirit. Jesus emphasized the need to forgive others in **Matthew 6:15** and shows it to be a prerequisite towards our own salvation. Here He states: "But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." We often speak about the necessary steps that lead to redemption, but how often do we include the need to forgive others as being one of the requirements? It was certainly a condition stipulated by God Himself.

How can we who are Christians not forgive others, especially in view of all which God has forgiven us? This, indeed, should be the basis for our own merciful disposition towards those who have treated us wrongfully. Paul conveyed this very thought in **Ephesians 4:32** by stating, "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you." The story has been told about a man whose health was good. He was sturdy and strong; his heart functioned well, and his blood pressure was at a good level. Then his father died, and he got into a long legal dispute with his sister about their father's will. The case went to court, and the sister won. From that time forward, the man became obsessed with the lawsuit and his sister. His animosity towards her continued to grow each day. Soon he began having trouble with his heart and his blood pressure. Next his kidneys started bothering him; and, within just a few short months, he died due to a multiplicity of complications. The doctor, in commenting on his case, said, "It seems obvious that he died from bodily injuries wrought by powerful emotion." It appears that this man killed himself with ill-will -- literally committed suicide.



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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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The Second Time Around

By Dee Bowman



Thoughts to Ponder

Old gossip may be a means of locking another person in the past, tying a person irrevocably to a past sin. Forgiveness means that the forgiven sin is no longer the subject of continued conversation.

Ah, the joy of something new! There's nothing quite like it. Some new product that works better. Some new way to get there faster. Some new fidelity to make it sound better. Some new wrench that works smoother. Some new machine that's stronger. Some new story that tickles your fancy. Some new drug that makes your health problems easier to bear. There's just something special about new stuff.

Forgiveness means that what was there before—sin with all its guilt—is no longer present, that sin—that which once blighted your character and distorted your view of things—is no longer present. It's gone. It's been sent away. Never to return.

thing. It's just great to be able to start over.

You'll usually do it better the second time around.

Forgiveness makes possible the most beautiful of all new beginnings. Forgiveness means a new start, a new page, a new chapter to write. Forgiveness means that what was there before—sin with all

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One of the best of all new things is new beginnings, the sheer joy of just being able to just start over. I used to work math problems until I just got totally frustrated. In desperation, I'd wad the paper up, throw it at (notice, I said at) the trash can, and just start over again. A clean sheet of paper is a beautiful

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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Sick

Richard Wood (Melanie Smith's Uncle)	Eli Williams (Friend of Sarah Norman)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jeffery Miller (Friend of Walker Davis)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphene Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Gaylord Huffman (Jennifer Daniel's Grandfather)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Betty Bradford	Arline Harkrider (Nichole Pender's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Carl Alexander (Hannah Alexander's Uncle)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Melissa Walker (Chuck Hahn's Cousin)	Judy Nichol's (Suzanne's Mother)	Caleb Dobbs (Melanie Smith's brother)

July Birthdays

- 3 – Nathan Rouse
- 6 – Katie McDaniel
- 6 – Nathan Bradshaw
- 11 – Chase Winslett
- 11 – Madi White
- 11 – Clay Morris
- 12 – Aurie Adams
- 14 – Laurel Jerkins
- 15 – Bradley Seymore
- 16 – Nathan Smith
- 23 – Drew Haley Smith
- 25 – Yvette Rouse

News and Notes

- ☒ - Our next Gospel Meeting will be Aug 26-30 with Lonnie Oldag.
- ☒ - Roy and Joy Liu's family will be moving to Chattanooga this week.
- ☒ - Riley Jones had successful surgery on Monday!
- ☒ - Tam, Kitty + Paul are in China until July 23.
- ☒ - Here is the new address for the Jeremiah Johnson family: 568 Bentmoor Drive, Hoover, AL 35080
- ☒ - CD's of all lessons will be available immediately after services.

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its guilt—is no longer present, that sin—that which once blighted your character and distorted your view of things—is no longer present. It's gone. It's been sent away. Never to return. It's like having a new sheet of paper.

When a person—one with faith and a penitent heart—is baptized into Christ (**1 Cor. 12:13**), he becomes a new creature, a new creation. His old person is taken away and he is made new (**Rom. 6:3-7**). Paul talks about our becoming "new creatures in Christ." Hear him. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (**2 Cor. 5:17**). In other words, when a man obeys the gospel of Christ, he becomes something entirely new, a new creation, one forgiven and clean, one totally devoid of his old sins. They've all been washed away. It's as if they never existed. What a joy to know that when God forgives, He forgets. It's the best of all new things, the first and most important of all new beginnings, forgiveness is.

But a new beginning is just that—a new beginning. Now you have to get on with this new life. There is learning to be done, corrections that need to be made in all your courses of life, new focuses to be engaged, new horizons to view, new determinations to be made, a new hope to embrace.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." We have to press on toward the mark, abound in the work of the Lord, make our calling and election sure, work out our own salvation (**Phil 3:12-14; 2 Pet. 1:10; Phil 2:12**). The new beginning is just the start of all we now have to do.

Paul puts this new beginning into the proper focus when he says, "For our conversation ('citizenship' NKJV) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." (**Philippians 3:20-4:1**). We're in a probationary period, and we still have lots to think about, lots to do, before we get where we're going.

And so, it behooves each of us to make our new beginning all that it was intended to be. Let's be workers for the Lord. It's the only life that makes any sense. And it's the only way the new beginning can have any real worth in our lives.

As one fellow I know quite well once said, "If you miss heaven, you've just missed all there is."



Three Men Rebel Against Hypocrisy

By Bill Hall

Three men rebel against hypocrisy, but they vary greatly in their reactions.

The first man turns to total moral abandonment. He throws off all restraint as he gives himself to the fulfillment of every fleshly desire. "Self" becomes his god. He hardens himself to the tears of his family as he goes out to do what he wants to do.

His "justification" for his shameful conduct: "At least I'm not a hypocrite!"

The second man goes to the opposite extreme. He is fed up with the weakness and hypocrisy that he sees in all the churches, and he is not going to be like such people. He will become a Christian and from the beginning "he's going to live with it." He will be an example of what a Christian really ought to be. To him, the cure for hypocrisy is perfection.

The third man wants to avoid hypocrisy in his life, but at the same time, he has a deep sense of his own imperfection. So he takes on no air in infallibility, but sets out to be genuine. His genuineness soon becomes apparent to others. He does not claim perfection, but he strives for perfection. As he worships God, he does not claim to be perfect as a worshipper, but when the singing begins he gives his heart to what he's doing; when the prayer is led, he listens and makes the prayer his prayer; during the supper he meditates on the suffering of the Lord; and throughout the sermon he participates in a study of God's word; if his mind wanders, he brings it back; and when the wor-

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ship period ends, he asks God to forgive him for his failure and to accept his worship in spite of his imperfection. When he goes to his job, he does not claim perfection among his fellow workers, but they know that he will try to give eight hours of work for eight hours of pay; that he is trustworthy; that he is pure in speech and life; and that if he is ever overcome by pressure around him to sin, he will humbly seek the forgiveness of those who have been wronged.

He is the same in the home. His family respects him because he is genuine and does not claim strength and goodness beyond reality. His family sees his faults, but his one redeeming quality that enables him to maintain their respect is his ability to say, "I'm sorry." In every area of his life, he walks humbly before his God and his fellow man.

Our third man has found the true cure for hypocrisy. The first man, if he does not repent, will someday be a miserable wretch, his life completely torn and shattered. The second man is headed for disillusionment. His goals are unreal; his outlook is totally wrong. But the man who "walks humbly with his God" and is wholly free from guile and is a blessed man indeed. His life and his attitude with God is what God wants it to be and he lives in hope of heaven.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (**Matthew 5:3**).

