

## FORGIVENESS #8

**2 Samuel 12:1–15.** In this portion of Scripture David has committed the twin sins of adultery and murder by proxy and the additional sin of hypocrisy, allowing about a year to pass in which there was no confession of that sin. There was obviously turmoil of soul and disruption of spirit as we learn from Psalm 32 and Psalm 51, but no evangelical repentance and confession of the sin. Because he was a true child of God, and God is committed to keep His own in the way of holiness, God takes more focused means to bring His servant and His child to repentance and we read about those means in the 12th chapter of second Samuel.

**2 Samuel 12:1** *“And Jehovah sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; 3 but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As Jehovah lives, the man that has done this is worthy to die: 6 and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. 7 And Nathan said to David, you are the man. Thus says Jehovah, the God of Israel, I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul; 8 and I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto you such and such things. 9 Wherefore have you despised the Word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in His sight? You have smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. 11 Thus says Jehovah, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of your own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and*

*before the sun. 13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also has put away your sin; you shall not die. 14 Howbeit, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto you shall surely die. 15 And Nathan departed unto his house.”*

The Psalmist asks a very sobering question when he wrote those words found in **Psalm 130:3**, *“If you Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who, could stand.”* Have you ever made those words very personal words to the theater of your own heart? Have you ever stood in the presence of the God Who knows you through and through, and said, “If You Lord, should mark my iniquities, how shall I stand?” Once you ask this question, no concern is of greater importance to you, than that of discovering the way of forgiveness revealed in the Scriptures and making sure that the forgiveness revealed in the Scriptures is your personal possession, so that you can face the day of judgment with absolute confidence that the God Who knows you through and through will find nothing to condemn you in that awesome day.

This wonderful biblical theme of forgiveness, a forgiveness that gives us peace that we can face judgment with confidence, has been the theme of our study.

## REVIEW

**Ephesians 4:31–32. 31** *“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.”*

**Colossians 3:12–14. 12** *“Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; 13 forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do you: 14 and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.”*

This series started by seeking to demonstrate **THE CENTRALITY OF FORGIVENESS** in biblical revelation. That is, when we pick up our Bibles and ask the question, “What's the Bible all about?” we cannot turn to any section of this Book without coming to the conviction that the Divine way of forgiveness of sin is

central to the material found in our Bibles. We noted that:

**(i) Forgiveness is central in the character and disposition of God.**

**(ii) Forgiveness is central in the substance and proclamation of the gospel.**

**(iii) Forgiveness is central both in the initial, and ongoing experience of the true children of God.**

That initial study was summarized by making this statement: "The God whose disposition is to forgive has procured and proclaimed in the gospel the way of forgiveness through Christ, and by means of that Gospel embraced, He gathers men and women into local communities called churches. These men and women are both a forgiven, and a forgiving people."

That's what the church is. That's not all it is, but that's what it is in its essential identity.

Next, **a biblical definition and description of what forgiveness is** was constructed. This was done by looking at the seven major Hebrew and Greek words used to convey the reality of forgiveness in the Old and New Testaments.

Then a number of vivid word pictures were considered by which God describes what happens when He forgives, and what should happen when we forgive one another. The working definition and description of forgiveness is at follows:

**DIVINE FORGIVENESS** [that is vertical forgiveness, the forgiveness that God extends to sinners] is that gracious act of a Holy, Just and Loving God, by which He removes from the sinner the guilt and the liabilities of his sin, thereby clearing the way for a restored relationship between Himself and the sinner.

**HUMAN FORGIVENESS** is a gracious, godlike act of one sinner to another sinner by which the offended party makes a commitment of his will not to remember the sin of the offending party, thereby clearing the way to a restored relationship between both parties.

That commitment is a four-pronged commitment. When I say to someone who has asked my forgiveness for a specific offense, "I forgive you," I am making a pledge and commitment of my will that has four prongs to it:

(i) I am committing not to voluntarily and volitionally remember this issue. If it pops up upon the screen of my mind, I push the delete button.

(ii) I do not go back over it, I do not mull over it. I have determined to put it away.

(iii) I will not raise it with the person who has sought my forgiveness.

I will not raise the issue with others.

(iv) I will not allow it to remain a barrier in my relationship to the one who has sought my forgiveness

Then, having hammered out this biblical definition and description of forgiveness, we moved in the next message to what was one of the most crucial issues in this entire series. **The pattern for our forgiving one another is to be God's forgiveness of us.** A careful examination of Ephesians 4:32 was considered, noting this central fact: God's forgiveness of us in Christ is to be the basis, the motive, and the pattern of our forgiving one another. We are commanded to forgive one another *"even as God in Christ forgave us."*

We saw in our study of that passage, that God's forgiveness is an act of free, overflowing grace. It is located in the Person and Work of Christ. It is a forgiveness rooted in the Love of God.

If we are confused about how God in Christ forgives us, we'll be confused about how we are to forgive one another.

With that foundation block in place [the pattern for our forgiving one another is God's forgiveness of us] we address the question, "What are the conditions upon which this Divine forgiveness is conferred?"

**IS GOD'S CONFERRAL OF FORGIVENESS TO US, CONDITIONAL OR UNCONDITIONAL?**

We are not asking, "Is His love unconditional?", that is clear. His love is unconditional. That is, it is not conditioned by anything in us, not by anything He does in us, nor is His love to us based upon some response we would make in the future.

**We are not asking, "Is His disposition to forgive unconditional?" but what we're asking is, "Is the conferral of God's forgiveness conditional or unconditional?"** The unanimous testimony of Scripture is that God's forgiveness, rooted in His unconditional love, manifested in the sending of His Son, presently filling His own heart as His disposition towards us, is never conferred unconditionally. God does not extend unconditional forgiveness. He forgives when we own

our sin and seek forgiveness. Our forgiveness of one another is to parallel God's forgiveness of us.

**God's forgiveness is conferred upon REPENTANCE AND FAITH.** [God's forgiveness towards us is conditioned upon repentance and faith. Those conditions are not meritorious. Those conditions are not self-generated. Nonetheless, no one can say they are forgiven by God who is still an impenitent sinner. No one can say he is forgiven by God if he is still an unbelieving sinner. It is only penitent, believing sinners that can lay claim to forgiveness according to the Scriptures. Therefore, if God's forgiveness of us is the paradigm or the pattern of our forgiveness of one another, all of this talk about unconditional forgiveness ought to make us a bit suspicious of it, and we ought to question whether or not it is rooted in a sound handling of the Word of the Living God.]

Therefore all this loose talk about horizontal or relational forgiveness being unconditional, absolutely violates the Divine paradigm of forgiveness.

Next, **4 common mistakes** concerning the privilege and duty of the mutual, horizontal, human, forgiveness were taken up. We noted that

**(i) There is the failure to distinguish between the relinquishment of vengeance, and the mortifying of bitterness, and calling this forgiveness.** It is not forgiveness. When I say, "Lord I will not take vengeance, that's Your prerogative," I recognize the sin still exists, and God will deal with it with vengeance, in His time and in His way.

Likewise there is a second mistake. **(ii) A failure to distinguish between the disposition of a forgiving spirit, and the act of forgiveness itself.** I am always to have, by the grace of God, a disposition of readiness to forgive, just as God does. **Psalm 86:5** *"You Lord are good and ready to forgive, plenteous in mercy to all that call upon You."* **\*THE DISPOSITION OF FORGIVENESS IS NOT THE CONFERRAL OF FORGIVENESS.** The conferral of forgiveness awaits the acknowledgment of the fault and the seeking of forgiveness, and it's a mistake not to distinguish between the disposition of forgiveness that is always to be present and the act of forgiveness itself.

The third mistake is this, **(iii) A failure to distinguish between a love-motivated, unilateral covering of the sin, and the bilateral conferral of forgiveness.** There are certain sins, according to the Scriptures, that I am to

cover with the blanket of love, but the covering of the sin in love is not to be considered forgiveness. God uses words for forgiveness and He uses a word for covering.

And the fourth mistake is **(iv) A failure to distinguish between loving one's enemies and forgiving one's enemies.** We are called upon to love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to those that spitefully use us, but we are not called to unconditionally forgive our enemies.

Then **3 practical, pastoral perspectives** concerning mutual forgiveness were considered next. The first was this:

**(i) The common practice of apologizing and the biblical pattern of confession and seeking forgiveness, are not identical and interchangeable things.** The common practice of apologizing was described and illustrated, then these three things in common apologizing were identified. These three things make it fall short of the biblical concept of confessing, seeking, and receiving forgiveness of sin.

Then we analyzed what an apology may be from the best thing it can be to the worst thing that it often is – using it as a substitute for the flesh-withering, grace exulting, biblical pattern of owning our sin as sin and seeking the forgiveness of another for that sin.

**(ii) Secondly, the conferral of gospel forgiveness, completely and without reserve, and the restoration of damaged trust are separate and distinctly different issues.**

The differences between biblical confession and forgiveness and the common practice of apologizing, the difference between conferring forgiveness completely and without reserve, and the earning of trust and confidence that has been broken were taken up, because these are areas where the people of God struggle.

## END REVIEW

Now we come to the third of these practical, pastoral perspectives regarding forgiveness.

**(iii) The conferral of gospel forgiveness of sin does not cancel or reverse the natural consequences of the sin that is freely and fully forgiven.**

For example, consider the case of one whose sin was committed prior to that full and complete forgiveness in connection with their conversion.

When we are converted, think of Acts 26:18. Paul was commissioned to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light that they might receive, forgiveness of sins. **Acts 26:12** *"Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. 14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goad. 15 And I said, Who are You, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you persecute. 16 But arise, and stand upon your feet: for to this end have I appeared unto you, to appoint you a minister and a witness both of the things wherein you have seen Me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto you; 17 delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send you, 18 to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Me."*

Or Acts 13:38, where Paul says that we are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. In this One is preached to you the forgiveness sins.

**Acts 13:37** *"But He Whom God raised up saw no corruption. 38 Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: 39 and by Him, every one that believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets:"*

Here is someone who has committed a certain sin, prior to his or her conversion. In that conversion, there is among other things, a full and complete wiping the slate clean. All of the sins are forgiven. One is justified from every sin. Now the question is, what about the effects of those sins, the consequences of those sins? Does the forgiveness of those sins granted, when converted, automatically cancel or reverse the natural consequences of those sins? The answer is, "No." Here is a man who, prior to his conversion and that once for all forgiveness of sins, has committed a felony, a serious crime. When he is converted he goes to the authorities and he acknowledges his crime. He is indicted, he is brought to trial, he acknowledges his guilt. He is sent to prison for five years. The sin itself, in terms of its place

in the record books of God has been totally and completely forgiven, however God's forgiveness does not reverse or cancel the natural consequences of the very sin that has been freely and fully forgiven.

In another case someone who has been sexually promiscuous contracts AIDS, then gets forgiven. God blots out all of the sins of sexual promiscuity. Does God automatically heal that person of their AIDS? Or will that person carry that death knell until they go to their grave?

The next example is in the case of a true Christian whose sin was committed as a child of God after their conversion. Here is a young man converted in his teens who has earned the trust of his parents and part of that trust is that he's entrusted with the family car. He's even entrusted to have other young men and women with him in that car. One night, he's out and some of them begin to egg him on to see how fast the car will go and see how he can handle it through this winding road. He violates his conscience, he violates good judgment, there is a horrible wreck, and one of the young people is killed, another is severely paralyzed, and he, the driver, has his hand cut off. He recognizes his sin and he's deeply broken. He prays through passages like **Psalm 51:1** *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness: According to the multitude of Your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Your sight; that You may be justified when You speak, and be clear when You judge."*

God graciously promises to do that, but the question is, is God going to resurrect the other young person who was killed? No. Is God going to mend the spinal cord of the one who's been paralyzed? No. Is God going to grow back the driver's hand? No. The natural consequences of this sin abide, even though the sin is fully, and freely, forgiven by God. That's not only the observation of common experience, but that's the teaching of the Word of God.

In Galatians 6:7 we are told, **7** *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that sows unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work*

*that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith."*

We've already seen the consequence of David's sin.

It's crucial to understand this very simple principle concerning forgiveness: That the forgiveness of God does not cancel or reverse the natural consequences of our sin, whether the sin is committed **prior to** conversion or **subsequent to conversion**.

Why make the point?

#### **TO SOME WHO ARE NOT YET CONVERTED:**

The devil is a gospel preacher, but he's a lying gospel preacher. He preaches a false gospel, and as you go on in your sin the devil comes to you and says, 'Look, it's no really big deal. You know, the preachers preach all the time that God's forgiveness is such that there is no sin that God cannot forgive. No sin that cannot be washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, so go on sinning until you really want to take seriously the whole matter of your conversion. It makes no real difference. God can forgive a little mountain of sin. God can forgive a great mountain of sin. The preachers always say where sin abounds grace does much more abound.'

But what the devil doesn't tell you is this, the natural consequences of the sins in which you persist will be carried with you, some of them for the rest of your life. God can forgive any and every sin of sexual promiscuity, but He doesn't give you back your virginity. God does not come and cauterize your memory in the chambers of your mind where those memories are stored. People wrestle with the haunting, ghostlike memories of sin, of sin long since forgiven and cleansed in the blood of Christ. They're not going around crippled with unforgiving guilt –they know they are forgiven– but they fight against being hobbled with the memories. Young people, we don't want you to be hobbled with the memories that are the natural consequences of sins that God, even though God can forgive, and pardon them based upon the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every sin is not only an offense to God, but is opening up a file drawer in the secret chambers of the soul.

#### **TO THOSE WHO PROFESS TO BE IN CHRIST:**

David said, "Remember not against me the sins of my youth," talking about sins committed after conversion.

Remember Noah? The only righteous man in the whole world, and no sooner does God cause the waters to recede, then we find that man, Noah, drunk in a

shameful state of nakedness that provokes his perverse son to engage in some kind of sin that brought a curse upon him and his line for generations to come. After that curse is pronounced upon his own son, do you think if you sat Noah down and said, "Noah, did you ever think that staying too long by your glass of wine would bring this?" What do you think Noah would've said? "Cursed be my cup of wine."

What about Lot? God sends hell out of heaven upon the cities of the plains and, before long, Lot is out in a cave. When Lot left how did he have enough wine with him to get drunk in a cave? He left everything but evidently he didn't leave his jug of wine. He and his jug of wine had already begun to be very close friends, and he becomes drunk; and drunkenness is followed by incest, and incest gives birth to 2 nations, the Moabites and the Ammonites, that were a perpetual plague to the people of God. Did God forgive him? Yes. He's called in the New Testament righteous Lot. We will see him in the Day of Judgment resplendent in the righteousness of Christ. Lot will stand as righteous as Christ Himself in this Day of Judgment, but it doesn't go back and rewrite the history of the Ammonites and the Moabites.

It's the devil's gospel that says, "Oh, Christ will forgive you as a Christian. You can't lose your salvation. It's just a little thing. The Lord will forgive you." Yes, but ask yourself the question, "What will the consequences be?" God gives no promise that the consequences will be canceled or reversed. None whatsoever. \* The devil will try to give you the **COMFORTS OF THE GOSPEL** at the very point when you need to hear the **TERRORS OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN**.

Then, when we are crippled and weighed down with the horrors of our sin, the devil will press us and say, "Ah, but you've gone too far and there is no forgiveness." If the devil quotes Bible verses to Jesus, do you think you will ever going to be off bounds to him? We need to understand as we wrestle with this issue of forgiveness –the marvelous, wonderful, biblical doctrine of forgiveness– this very pastoral, practical perspective that gospel forgiveness does not cancel or reverse the natural consequences of sin freely and fully forgiven.

Now the fourth and final pastoral, practical perspective:

**(iv) The conferral of gospel forgiveness of sins does not preclude the possibility of chastisement for the sin that has been freely and fully forgiven.**

There is a popular notion that when we repent and seek forgiveness from God or our fellow man, that the forgiveness extended to us places us in a position as if the sin had never been committed in every respect. That's not the teaching of the Word of God, rather, there may be chastisement for sins that have been freely and fully forgiven; a chastisement that is part of the responsible, principled love of God for His children.

The clearest example of this is in the life of David. The prophet comes to David and indicts him. David's heart is broken and he cries out in 2 Samuel 12:13 *"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also has put away your sin; you shalt not die."*

*"David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord."* And as was demonstrated in a previous message, you get the picture that God's heart was yearning to forgive His sinning servant and child. Forgiveness was dammed up in the heart of God, bowing the door of His heart, but when David finally says, "I have sinned," that door breaks open and divine forgiveness cascades down upon the head of David, and the prophet says, "The Lord has put away your sin." His sin is freely and fully forgiven on the basis of David's Greater Son, who, according to Scripture, is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There is applied to David in that moment all of the virtue of the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus; however, that pronouncement of free, gracious, full gospel forgiveness, is flanked on both sides, by pronouncements of Fatherly chastisement for the sin that David had committed. Verse nine *"wherefore have you **despised the Word of the Lord** to do that which is evil in His sight, you have smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, you have taken his wife to be your wife, slaying him with the sword of the children of Ammon now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house because, you have **despised Me**, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife, thus says the Lord, behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house, I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of the sun for you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun."* Notice, when David said, "I have sinned," and the Prophet said, "the Lord has put away your sin," the prophet does not go on to say, "and David, all that was threatened with respect to the sword in your house, the violation of your wives in the sight of all Israel, that's all canceled now that you have confessed your sin." No it wasn't. The subsequent

biblical records shows that God meant every single Word that He pronounced in this matter of chastisement upon David. So the pronouncement of forgiveness is flanked on the one hand with this clear statement of divine chastisement, but now, on the other hand, verse 14, having said the Lord has put away your sin, *"you will not die. Howbeit, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child that is born unto you shall surely die."* So on the other side of the pronouncement of free, full gospel forgiveness, is a further chastisement.

Think of the nature of this chastisement for a moment. It was not arbitrary nor capricious either in its nature or it's severity. David's lust led him to use the sword, "the sword will now remain in your house," and it did. 'Your sins have a great culpability because of two things David, **(i) the measure of your blessing.**' God says, 'I gave all this to you David, the chastisement will be proportionate to the measure of your blessing,' and **(ii) the jeopardy David brought to God's Name because of his position.**

**2 Sameul 12:7** *"And Nathan said to David, You are the man. Thus says Jehovah, the God of Israel, **(i)** I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul; **8** and **(ii)** I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto you such and such things. **9** Wherefore you have despised the Word of Jehovah, to do that which is evil in His sight?"*

'Because of your position, what you did in secret will be openly known, and what has been done has given the enemies of God occasion to blaspheme you, the man, who I had designated as the man after My own heart, My righteous King that I would raise up in place of Saul.' So the measure of David's blessing and the jeopardy to God's Name, because of his position, determined both the nature and the severity of the chastisement.

Having stated that perspective, that sin forgiven with gospel forgiveness, does not preclude divine chastisement for that sin already forgiven.

Consider this vital qualification of this principle of chastisement of sin.

**Two things by way of qualification of this principle, that sin forgiven with gospel forgiveness does not preclude divine chastisement for that sin already forgiven.**

**(i) Such chastisement is the activity of a loving, reconciled father and not the judicial punishment of an angry and alienated judge.**

**Hebrews 12:4** *"You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin: 5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons, My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd of Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. 7 It is for chastening that you endure; (1) God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chastens not? 8 But if you are without chastening, whereof all have been made partakers, then are you bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 All chastening seems for the present to be not joyous, but grievous; yet afterward it yields peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the palsied knees; 13 and make straight paths for your feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but rather be healed."*

**Hebrews 12:5** *"You have forgotten the word which reasons with you as sons, my son despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd of Him, for whom the Lord loves, He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives."* And the writer to Hebrews goes on to emphasize chastisement is **A BADGE OF SONS**. David understood this. How do we know he understood it? What did David do? No sooner had there been the pronouncement of forgiveness, flanked by this severe chastisement, but David is found fasting and praying for seven days that God might spare his son. Do you go and seek the face of a God whose posture toward you is an angry Judge and ask Him to change His mind about an element in that chastisement? No. David was conscious that the sin was dealt with. Conscious of the chastisement, he knew it was the chastisement of a loving, reconciled Father. For months, David hadn't prayed in any sense of intimate, blessed communion with God. Read Psalm 32. Read Psalm 51. His soul was troubled, he cried, he moaned, he groaned, he felt the Spirit was being taken from him, but now, when he hears the words, "your sin has been put away,"

David can again come into the presence of His Loving Father.

Then you have the pain of chastisement, mingled with the joy of seeing the Father's Face again, and knowing that the chastisement is **A BADGE OF HIS LOVE**. It's hard for us to believe that, and it was hard for the Hebrews to believe it. That's why the writer to Hebrews said, 'you have forgotten this vital passage out of **Proverb 3:11**,' *"My son, despise not the chastening of Jehovah; neither be weary of His reproof: 12 For whom Jehovah loves He reproveth even as a father the son in whom he delights."*

The second qualification is this:

**(ii) Such chastisement is a fruit of the perfect sacrifice for sin made by Christ, not a supplement to that sacrifice.**

By what you do in flagellation, in internal grief and mourning and other things, do you make up something that is not quite sufficient in the sacrifice of Christ? We must understand that such chastisement is a fruit of the perfect sacrifice for sin made by Christ, not a supplement to that sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice was made to what end? He gave Himself for us, that He might bring us to God **I Peter 3:18**, *"Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;"*

**Ephesians 5:25** *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; 26 that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present the church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*

His expression of love through Self sacrifice isn't to allow the church to be full of moral wrinkles and spots. The church is to **LISTEN, LEARN, SUBMIT, REPENT, BELIEVE AND GROW**. His love removes spots and wrinkles and sanctifies, cleanses and makes holy. What is more important? External spots and wrinkles or a pretty face and internal spots and wrinkles? Do you really believe that? Do you have reverence? Do you listen? Do you pray? Is the Word dwelling in you richly? These are **the spot and wrinkle removers of the soul**. How much time do you give to the state of your soul over a period of a month? How much time do you give to your physical appearance over a period of a month?

Christ loved the church, gave Himself up for her. Why? That He might present her to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. One of the instruments that God uses as a fruit of the sacrifice of Christ to make us more like Christ is His chastisement. It's a fruit of the sacrifice of Christ, not a supplement to it, so that when we are very conscious of the sting and the bitterness of chastisement, the sting and the bitterness is laced with the joy that it is not only a confirmation of my Father's love, but it is the fruit of the sacrifice of Christ, and God's not going to quit on me until He presents me with all the church in glory without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. That's what we've got to understand.

Having stated the principle, having illustrated it from the life of David, having given these vital qualifications, now, what are the practical implications of understanding this principle?

### APPLICATION

#### **#1- It will help us to understand and respond as we ought to some of God's dealings with us in our own personal lives.**

If we understand that free, full gospel forgiveness does not preclude the necessity of Fatherly discipline, that will help us to understand (not all) some of God's dealings with us as His children.

We've owned our sin. We've asked God's forgiveness. Following upon that there comes these providences that we have every reason to believe are elements of divine chastisement. How are we to respond to them? Is there something imperfect in my repentance? No. Don't go back and dig up the repentance and the seeking and the laying hold afresh of divine forgiveness because the rod of God is upon you, but understand that this chastisement, in the wise Fatherly loving disposition of God, has been laid upon you to enforce some very vital lessons in your life as a Christian. One lesson is to make the sin bitter that you would not be as quick to go back to it again –to make the aftertaste in your mouth, your spiritual mouth, such that you'll think twice before you go back to it again. Understanding this principle will help us to understand and respond as we ought to some of God's dealings with us. Secondly:

#### **#2 - It will help us to be godlike in our dealings with others, both in the home and in the church.**

When God said to David through the prophet, "*the Lord has put away your sin,*" David understood that the

chastisement on both the front and the backend of that statement were in no way making up for some imperfection of the forgiveness pronounced through the prophet. David understood that God's forgiveness does not preclude His chastisement and you parents have got to understand that.

You've told your child this is what your to do. If you don't do it here are the consequences. Here are the paternal and maternal chastisements that will follow. If they get the idea, 'If I show repentance and acknowledge fault for what I did, mom and dad cancel the chastisement,' you'll make clever little hypocrites out of them. Every time they've done something wrong they just come with a look of repentance and say, "Mom, Dad I'm so sorry, please forgive me" and there's nothing that follows in the way of chastisement, you'll make little hypocrites of them. They must understand that free, full forgiveness of offenses to mom and dad against house rules do not cancel the chastisement that follow for breaking the rules. The manner in which they come, whether they got found out or whether their own conscience found them out, the degree to which they were entrenched in the deception, all of that, needs parental wisdom. Sometimes there is a lessening of the chastisement to reinforce, 'when you come quickly, and when you come on your own before you're caught, you don't get as much as you would if we caught you.' Or, you may want to underscore grace and mercy and negate the consequences.

There are all kinds of dynamics and there are no amount of books in the Christian bookstore that are going to answer all your questions. You need divine wisdom as you live before God with the Bible. Everybody wants a guru and books to give an answer for every little thing that happens. Do you see the principle? This principle is applicable not only in the family, but in the church.

If a believer is guilty of the kind of sin that warrants some form of discipline, and people say, well if he or she is repentant why should there be any discipline? There are good and wise reasons why there should be. It's Godlike in some situations to implement discipline, even where there is repentance, just like with David. We need, by God's grace, to resist this weak-kneed concept, that if someone shows repentance, it doesn't matter the nature of the sin and everything should go back to square one the way it was before the sin was committed. (2)



So understanding, this principle will help us be godlike in dealing with our children. It will help us to be godlike in dealing with one another in the church. It will help us to have a healthy fear of provoking God to discipline us. You and I should sit here today as Christians with a healthy fear of provoking God to discipline us. Where do we learn that? 1 Corinthians 11: this is Paul's point at the end of this chapter from which we read every time we come to the Lord's table, 1 Corinthians 11:29.

**1 Corinthians 11:23** *"For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, This is My body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of Me. 25 In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood: this do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. 26 For as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. 29 For he that eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. [He's correcting abuses in conjunction with the Lord's table] 30 For **this cause** many among you are **weak and sickly**, and not a few sleep. 31 But, if we discerned [discriminated] ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are **chastened of the Lord**, that we may not be condemned with the world. 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait one for another. 34 If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not **unto judgment**. And the rest will I set in order when ever I come."*

He's saying, 'So order your lives in conjunction with the Lord's table, that you don't provoke God to chasten you, to judge you to be coming to the table unworthily and, as a result of that, join the ranks of the weak and the sickly and those who have died prematurely. We should have a healthy fear of God's chastening.'

As a father, I never caused the children to fear that I would walk by them and cuff them on the side of the head or put them over my knee and spank them for no reason whatsoever. I never disciplined the children, irrationally, capriciously, with carnal context. It was always for some specific house rule that was broken, in a way that I was in perfect control. The very fact that

you had to walk up to the bedroom, things were done out of sight under control, they never had reason to think that their father would discipline them, arbitrarily or capriciously, but do you think the children feared their fathers disciplined? You bet your boots they did. And there was many a time they did what they ought to have done because they didn't want their fathers chastisement. And they knew their dad loved them. Get the point? The writer to Hebrews argues from the one to the other, and says, 'we had fathers after the flesh who disciplined us as it seemed good to them, shall we not rather be in submission to our Heavenly Father, whose discipline is wise and loving, and has as its great end, that we may be partakers of His holiness.'

Remember, the sin you're contemplating will be forgiven the moment there is true confession –if we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins. He that covers his sin shall not prosper, but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall obtain mercy.

Your sin may provoke God's discipline, and you ought to have a healthy fear of God's chastisement as a motive to avoid sin. Now I know that doesn't sound spiritual to some who think that we ought to be so captivated with a love for Christ and pleasing Christ that nothing else matters. But if God has given us the motive of fearing his chastisement, then don't be wiser than God. It is vital in the complex of evangelical motives. It must never be a sole motive or the dominant motive, but it is a vital and legitimate motive.

### **Our final word of application to those who are strangers to God's grace, yet wedded to their sins.**

You've heard the gospel many times. For you, the fear ought not to be God's Fatherly chastisement, but of His anger as the Righteous Judge of the universe. If you sit here not covered in the righteousness of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, you are bearing your whole being to the Almighty and Infinite Justice, and it's only a heartbeat that keeps you from meeting it, in irreversible, righteous, eternal, consequences. What a frightening position to be in. Seek forgiveness in the only place and from the only One who can give it to you. Seek it in Christ, seek it now, for the Scripture says, *"Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near, let them wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."*

It's a wonderful thing to be able to preach a gospel of free, full, forgiveness of sin in Christ for every penitent, believing, sinner. Why would you not seek such forgiveness? Why go on running the risk of God's fury being let loose upon you, without mercy? May God be pleased to open your eyes and lay hold of your heart and draw you to His Son.

May we as God's people be wise in this matter of divine forgiveness, recognizing these vital principles that sooner or later you're going to have to understand if you're going to walk steadily as a child of God, if you're going to give proper instruction to your children, if you're going to be able to enter in as you ought, to the activities of the church when matters of discipline are vital and essential to the church's purity and the integrity of her witness. Remember, the conferral of the gospel forgiveness of sin does not cancel or reverse the natural consequences of the sin freely and fully forgiven. The conferral of gospel forgiveness for sin does not preclude the possibility of chastisement for that sin which has been freely and fully forgiven.

### (1)

[If you endure disciplining MLV same Pink's commentary]

### (2)

[David wasn't removed from office and neither was Peter]

