

100 BIBLE LESSONS

These lessons were originally given at Manila, Philippines, in 1958 and 1959 by former missionary to China, Alban Douglas. Give these lessons to people you visit, youth groups, hospital patients, church visitors and new members. Use them in Sunday School, bus ministry, jail services, nursing homes, Christian schools, small discussion groups and many other places. God's Word will answer your questions and help solve your problems.

LESSON 6 – FORGIVENESS

INTRODUCTION

By virtue of the fall of man all men have become sinners. Sin is the one thing that will keep men out of heaven; heaven is a holy place and nothing evil shall ever enter there. The keynote to getting to heaven is forgiveness; if God forgives us our sins then no one will be able to prevent us from entering heaven. To sinful man forgiveness become the most important problem in his life.

In the Old Testament there are three words for forgiveness: One means "to cover"; another means "to lift away"; and the third means "to send away".

"In the New Testament forgiveness is the separation of the sinner from his sins through the sacrifice of Christ and upon the ground of pure grace" – R. Lee

I. THE AUTHOR OF FORGIVENESS – God alone

Since the sinner has broken the law of God, only God can forgive him that sin. If you steal my hammer I can forgive you for that but if you break one of the laws of the Philippines I cannot forgive you for that. When you break the law of God no man upon earth can forgive; only God can forgive you.

Lk. 7:49, ...*began to say within themselves, who is this that forgiveth sins also?*

Mk. 2:7, *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?*

The Jews in both cases were correct for only God can forgive sin. Never go to a human being for forgiveness when you've broken God's law; go directly to God. Never go to a human mediator for forgiveness; go directly to the One sinned against. 1 John 1:9, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive ...* He, the Lord God, the holy One, the giver of the law, is willing to forgive sinners. Because Jesus is both God and the Son of God, He has been appointed to forgive sin. Acts 5:31, *Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

II. THE CHANNEL OF FORGIVENESS – Jesus Christ

Acts 13:38, *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (Jesus Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.* This is the wonderful message of salvation to sin-burdened souls.

In Luke 7:48, the Savior personally forgave the woman, *Thy sins are forgiven.* In Mark 2:9, Jesus personally forgave the palsied man, *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* Jesus is not here bodily today but He is here invisibly ready to forgive each one of us. We can close our eyes right now and tell Him all about our sins and He will forgive. Forgiveness cannot be found in a Church, sacrament or ordinance but alone in Christ.

III. THE FOUNDATION OF FORGIVENESS

1. Forgiveness is bestowed on the ground of the Lord's compassion. Psa. 78:38, *But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not.*

2. Forgiveness is bestowed on the ground of Divine justice. 1 John 1:9, *...faithful and just to forgive...*; God can forgive sin and yet remain holy and just. See also Romans 3:25-26.

3. Forgiveness is bestowed on the basis of the Blood of Christ. Eph. 1:7, *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins...* By Blood is meant the propitiatory crosswork of Christ. On the cross he shed His blood as a ransom and complete payment for our eternal redemption. God has decreed that, *The soul that sinneth, it shall die*, Ezek. 18:4. Sin brought death, and because man sinned, as a consequence he must die. Gen. 2:17, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* God has always required blood, symbolical of death as payment for sin. To cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve, blood was shed to get the coats of skin, Gen. 3:21. Abel's offering was accepted because it contained blood, and Cain's offering was rejected because it did not have blood, Gen. 4:3-5. Lev. 17:11, *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*

IV. THE COMPLETENESS OF FORGIVENESS – All sin

When Jesus forgives sin, He forgives ALL of it, not one quarter or one half or 499/500, but ALL.

Lk. 7:47, *Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven...*

Psa. 103:3, *Who forgiveth ALL thine iniquities...*

Psa. 32:1-2, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity...* The Lord forgives the transgression, sin, iniquity – everything, ALL forgiven.

Col. 2:13, ...*having forgiven you all trespasses.*

Matt. 12:31, *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men...*

This is a most important point. If one sin remained unforgiven that individual could not go to heaven, but would be forced to spend eternity in hell. Rev. 21:27, *And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth...* One sin can contaminate you and heaven forever; one sin brought death on all men.

V. THE POSSESSION OF FORGIVENESS – “We have”, a present possession.

Many expect to wait until after death to know whether or not they have been forgiven. The Gospel brings the glad news of a forgiveness that is a present possession.

Eph. 1:7, *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins...*
The woman in Luke 7:36-50 received forgiveness immediately.

1 Jn. 2:12, *I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.*

We present a positive Gospel message that men might know assuredly here and now that their sins have been forgiven beyond the shadow of a doubt.

VI. THE CONDITIONS OF FORGIVENESS

1. Repentance. Acts 5:31, ...*to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

Repentance comes before forgiveness; repentance is turning from sin unto God.

Acts 2:38, *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...*

In the story in Luke 7:36-50, the woman expressed her repentance in tears and humility.

2. Faith. Luke 7:50, *Thy faith hath saved thee;* repentance led to faith and forgiveness.

3. Confession. 1 John 1:9, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Psa. 32:5, *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.* This was David's experience and it can be our experience, too.

4. Forgiving others. Matt. 6:15, *But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* See also Luke 6:37.

Let us remember the exhortation of Eph. 4:32, *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

Forgiveness should be easy for a Christian as pictured in Matthew 18:21-35.

VII. THE FREQUENCY OF FORGIVENESS – How often can we be forgiven?

As often as we sin we should confess our sin. Repentance involves forsaking sin.

Rom. 6:1-2, ...*Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid...*

Shall we continue in sin then, that grace might increase, because God will readily forgive us, anyway? This question was propounded in Romans 6:1, and answered by the Lord through Paul in Romans 6:2, *God forbid*, for such a thought is anathema to the Lord.

How often should we forgive someone who sins against us? The Savior answered this question in Matt. 18:21-35, not till seventy times, but continuously.

CONCLUSION

The three messages that have been written personally by God:

1. The 10 commandments in Exodus 20. The law is God's standard of behavior for man.
2. Dan. 5:27, *Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.* – GUILTY, Roman 3:23.
3. John 8:1-11, Jesus wrote with His finger in the sand. What did He write? We do not know, but I think that He wrote the word, "*Forgiven.*" Come today and receive the full forgiveness for ALL your sins and then, *go and sin no more.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why were the devout Jews so puzzled and righteously indignant in Luke 7:49 and Mark 2:7?
2. What is the significance of the word "just" in 1 John 1:9?
3. State the 3 facts on which forgiveness is based with one Scripture for each.
4. What is the significance of the word "man" in Acts 13:38?
5. In what way is Eph. 1:7 the fulfillment of Lev. 17:11?

6. Give 3 verses to show that God forgives ALL of our sins.
7. On the basis of Rev. 21:27, how many sins would it take to keep one out of heaven?
8. How would you prove that it is possible to have complete assurance of forgiveness TODAY?
9. List 4 conditions of receiving forgiveness from the Lord (one Scripture for each).
10. How often do we need forgiveness? How often must we forgive others?