

What Forgiveness Did

Edited from an article by Dr. Guthrie

In the garrison town of Woolwich over 175 years ago, a soldier was about to be brought before the commanding officer for a misdemeanor. The officer hearing the case exclaimed, "Here he is again. What can we do with him? He has been before us often, and nothing seems to turn him around!"

The sergeant-major apologized for intruding and said, "There is one thing that has never been done with him yet, sir."

"What is that, sergeant-major?"

"Well, sir, he has never yet been forgiven."

"Forgiven?" shouted the colonel, "See the long list of accusations against him?"

"Yes, I see, but the man is not before you yet, and you can cancel it."

After reflecting on the matter, the colonel ordered the man to be brought before him. When the prisoner was asked what he had to say regarding the charges brought against him, he replied, "Nothing, sir. Only that I am very sorry for what I have done."

After making some suitable remarks, the colonel concluded, "Well,

"When God pardons sin, he consigns the offenses to eternal forgetfulness."

we are resolved to forgive you."

The soldier was struck with astonishment. Tears ran down his face as he wept. The colonel felt deeply, when he saw the man was humbled. After thanking the colonel, the forgiven soldier left.

For two more years, the soldier remained in the army. Not once were further charges brought against him during that time, or was fault found in the man. Mercy triumphed. Kindness conquered.

Such is the same mercy given to any that will humble themselves before the Father. With a simple, sincere admittance of sinnership and trusting in Christ's gift of eternal life, one can likewise be forgiven and have a new and different life.

Sin, the Deceiver

Edited from a poem by Keach

*Sin is composed of nothing but subtle wiles.
It fakes and flatters, and betrays
by its smiles.*

'Tis like the panther, or the crocodile.

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We're All Sinners

Bill Brinkworth

His friends whispered as loudly as they dared, "No, Avijit. Do not go up to those people. They do not want you there. Stay with us."

Avijit walked on towards the settlement, ignoring his friends' pleas. "I'm not like you," he muttered. "They will take me in and help me."

As he approached a woman laden with wares she had just purchased at the bazaar, she shrieked as she gazed at the boy approaching her. "Stand back," she warned. "Don't get any closer!"

"But," he tried to present his case, "I am not as bad as the others," he pointed to the three that stood at the city's outskirts, watching what would happen.

"Still, you are a leper!" reminded the woman.

"But Ketak's fingers and toes are disfigured," he pointed to a distant figure of a young girl wrapped in tattered rags. "Look at mine. They are straight and strong." He showed the woman

his young, brown fingers. They were not affected by the dreaded disease.

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Sin, the Tyrant

Edited from an article by John Bate

An Arab miller was one day startled by a camel's nose thrust in the window of a room where he was sleeping. "It is very cold outside," said the camel, "I only want to get my nose in to warm it."

The nose was allowed in, then the neck, and finally, the whole body worked its way into the abode. Soon, the miller began to be extremely inconvenienced by the ungainly companion he had obtained in a room certainly not large enough to hold both. "If you are inconvenienced, you may leave," said the camel. "As for myself, I shall stay where I am."

Thus is the ploy of sin. It slithers in just a bit, and soon, a whole life is inconvenienced and plagued by its dominance.



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We're All Sinners

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"Maybe not, but still, you have the cursed disease. Stand back." She said as she also took one step backward.

"But, my sores are not as bad as Badal's," he pointed to another figure looking on from afar. "See, they are a lot smaller," he pointed to the sores on his face and ears.

The woman shrugged as she looked at the disfiguring mass of sores spread across the young boy's face and body, "But still, you have leprosy. If you get any closer, I could also get the disease. Stand back. Stay with your kind, so we don't get it," and she quickly scurried away.

No matter how Avijit compared himself to others, the truth of the matter was that he still had a contagious disease. He was still a leper and was a danger to others around him. Many compare their sins to others in a similar manner. They know what they have done but justify their iniquities as not as "bad" as others' deeds.

They compare themselves to the convicted thief behind bars and justify, "Yes, I have stolen pens from work, but I'm not as bad as that man who robbed a bank."

The truth whispers back, "Ah ha, but you are still a thief."

"I may lie to keep myself from getting in trouble with my parents, but I'm not as bad as that person who always lies."

Again, the truth speaks softly to the conscience, "But you still are a liar!"

Stumbling for an example to clear any suggestions that they are guilty of being "bad", justification fires back, "But, I am a good person. I'm not as bad as others!"

The small, soft voice of conviction answers, "But sinning only once still qualifies you as a sinner. Do not compare yourself to other sinners. The penalty for iniquity is Hell."

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." II Cor. 10:12

Unfortunately, it is "human" to compare ourselves to others. It is not our measuring tool that matters, however. It is God's judgment that matters, and He says no sinner can go to Heaven.

Since we are all sinners, the prognosis is not good. However, because God loves us, He gave us a way to have our sins forgiven and forgotten. That way is to recognize you are a sinner and believe that Jesus has paid for your sins with His blood at Calvary.

All we need to do is admit our sinfulness and trust Christ's death is sufficient to pay for our sins; and then we can have God's promise of Heaven one

day. All sin can be forgiven, and we can have our name written in Heaven's "Book of Life!"

"And there shall in no wise enter into it [Heaven] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Rev. 21:27

Curse of Sin

Dr. J. Parker

O Sin, how hast thou curst us! Thou hast thrown up a barrier between ourselves and God. With thy chilling breath, thou hast extinguished the light of our household joys. Thou hast unstrung our harp and filled the air with discordant cries. Thou hast unsheathed the sword and bathed it in human blood. Thou has dug every grave in the bosom of the fair earth. But, for thee, we should not have known the name of widow or orphan, tear and sigh, and sorrow and death. But for thee, our hearts had been untorn by a pang, and our joy pure as the ecstasies of Heaven.

Deceitfulness of Sin

Modified from an article by Henry Smith

When a man sins, he thinks within himself, "I will do this no more." Soon, another sin rears its tempting head, and after falling for its "bait," the partaker of the sin again lowers his head in defeat and shame, promising never to do it again. The lesson

is still not learned, and after another sin is committed, it is repeatedly promised to "never to do it again."

That is the way of sin to spur a man forward in his involvement in it. Each time iniquity is committed, the man feels farther from God, less good about himself, and tormented by his own conscience.

Sin, the Deceiver

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*It hugs the soul, and hates, when it vowed to love.
It plays the tyrant most by gilded pills,
It secretly ensnares the souls it kills,
Sin's promises they all deceitful be:
Does promise wealth, but pays only poverty.
Does promise honor, but only pays us shame
And quite bereaves a man of his good name.
Does promise pleasure, but only pays us sorrow.
It promises life today, but pays death tomorrow.
No thief so vile, nor treacherous as sin,
Whom fools do hug and take much pleasure in.*

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" Romans 5:12