

Proclaiming the Gospel

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (*1 Cor. 1.18*).

Edifying the Body of Christ (*Eph. 4.10-16*)

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The Wise Still Seek Him

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Bless Them – and Forgive Them?

The Word of the Lord God of Israel is for us to live, to obey – daily.

Many do not understand, especially in this day and age in which many hiding behind a pulpit while standing on a pulpitum (stage) give a word straight from hell, from Satan that he has given to the world and the churches saying, “Do it your way. Do whatever makes you feel good. God understands.” “God wants the best for you” is a *feel good* teaching today. The Lord God does not understand our walking in sin. We are called to walk in the ways of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is but one way.

Bless them – and forgive them comes straight from the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not about how you feel about it, but it is a command from the Lord. How many times do you say the model prayer (commonly called the Lord’s prayer) found in Matthew 6:12 “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” We race through this without thought for what we are saying, without thought of what is demanded of us. The enemy says, “You repeated it; you are now free to go on. You did your religious thing; all is well.”

Following this prayer in Matthew Six are these two verses which one must take seriously for one’s soul’s salvation. Read and reread Matthew 6.14, 15, asking the Lord Jesus to forgive you for not walking in obedience to His command.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

What is oft times not understood is that to **know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior** is a call to live a life of holiness and live in His righteousness. It is a call to walk all the way with the Lord. As Jesus was dying on the cross, He prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Lk 23.34).

As was written in “*The Message*” last month, St. Stephen prayed also for his enemies as he was stoned to death: “And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” (Acts 7.60).

praying for those who have hurt us that their souls would be saved that they might live now and all eternity with the Lord Jesus. It is said of Paul that his spirit was stirred when he saw the people whose hearts were turned to idolatry (Acts 17.16). Our hearts should be stirred seeing these people living lives of sin – all in the Name of Jesus.

Forgiveness is praying that the Lord will make them happy and holy, that they will come to Jesus. It is letting go of the pain of the memory that we might be able to pray for their souls with the love of Jesus Christ who died for our sins – and rose victoriously over sin, hell, and the grave. This we do with much prayer, laying ourselves before the Lord Jesus Christ for His healing.

Can you imagine being put in prison falsely by someone who later turns his life over to Jesus Christ and the Lord uses him mightily – and – you are still in prison – and that person is free to preach for Jesus, that person’s life has been changed, and he is on “fire” for the Lord, bringing souls to Jesus? Would you be able to forgive him and pray for him and the ministry to which the Lord has called him, rejoicing in the Lord? Oh, **bless them AND forgive them**.

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Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31)

How many times have we heard, I forgive them BUT I'll never forget what they . . . And, yet, we want forgiveness from the Lord Jesus Christ that is never to be remembered against us. How beautiful are the words written of the Lord Jesus Christ, "As far as the east is from the west, *[so]* far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Ps 103.12). Let us read further in the Holy Word of the Lord from Micah 7.19: "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

The Lord tells us that His ways are higher than our ways, His thoughts than our thoughts in Isaiah 55.8-9.

For my thoughts *[are]* not your thoughts, neither *[are]* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

For *[as]* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Another word from the Lord is in verse 7 of Isaiah 55:

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

We serve a merciful and loving God. But, let us be clear that the living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob calls us to a life of holiness. He makes it clear that His love is not a worldly love that says it is okay to continue in sin. God's forgiveness is for those who repent, who turn from their wicked ways and turn to Him, to walk with Him at all costs. Notice that Isaiah 55.7 says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: AND let him return unto the Lord . . ." It is then that the Lord God of Israel will have mercy upon him; and will abundantly pardon.

There is another false teaching, a teaching that does not come from the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ: Forgive yourself. Know that the teachings of Satan, of the world, the "churches" and those hiding behind a pulpit while standing on a pulpitum are not, I say are **not**, from the Holy Word of God. You cannot forgive yourself; only Jesus Christ Who died on the Cross of Calvary can forgive you – if you repent and ask Him to forgive you. You, however, must surrender your life to Jesus Christ. You must "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isa 55.6).

Now let us put together all these passages from Isaiah 55.6-11.

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts *[are]* not your thoughts, neither *[are]* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

For *[as]* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *[in the thing]* whereto I sent it.

All that the Lord commands of us is not for our *feel good* experience, but it is for our good **and** for HIS glory that we might serve Him as He calls us to serve.

Ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins; turn from the enemy and turn to the Lord Jesus that you might be able then to forgive those whom you need to forgive – asking Jesus to help you (Ps 25.18).

Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For thou, Lord, *[art]* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. (Ps 86.4, 5)

II Kings 6.22 shows the love of God, His mercy through Elisha. The Old Testament prophets speak powerfully through their obedience to the Lord with their whole being. They may be hurting badly because of what others have done to them, but they know also they were under the Lord's mercy as for the sins in their lives – as well. Read II Kings Six and experience with Elisha the presence of the Lord God of Israel, His mercy and, yes, His grace in the Old Testament.

The world and the worldly "churches" and those hiding behind a pulpit while standing on a pulpitum tell you to have it your way, that the god of which they speak, and the world accepts, is one that says, "It is all about you!" However, the Psalmist and many others – as well as the Old Testament prophets and the disciples and apostles of Jesus Christ - understood what a life lived in the Lord's will meant. Hear the Psalmist:

The troubles of my heart are enlarged: *[O]* bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins. Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee (Ps 25.17-20).

They were able to look at themselves and their sin and neediness and without hesitation turn to the Lord God as they stood in need. "Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I *[am]* poor and needy (Psa 86.1).

There is more to being a follower of Jesus Christ. It is not only laying ourselves before the Lord Jesus Christ seeking His face, but it is loving with the love of Jesus those whose lives are broken; it is praying for them. Love is