



## Two Camps of Forgiveness

As a Christian writer, I often have lots of fun with certain subjects, and this one is no exception. Recently, my wife described what was said in the van when she was picking up kids some kids from school. These boys were all around 14 years old. They were talking about an upcoming party and one of the boys asked the party host if he was invited. The response was a resounding, “yes,” and he went on to say, “I’m also going to have a sleepover.” A second, quick question came at him from the same boy, “can I come to that too?” The answer seemed almost brutal if “no” could sound that way. “Why not,” he said. “Because my mom doesn’t like you,” came the reply. “What



do you mean,” as the boy’s eyes pooled into tears. Almost before the words had sailed through his lips, he heard, in a most matter-of-fact way, *“my mom doesn’t like you because of the trouble you got into a couple of months ago.”*

Nothing but shock settled over the riders. Even my wife couldn’t speak for a moment, but she finally did say something to the effect of, “there’s no forgiveness in that.” “You’re supposed to forgive people.” Of course, this is the crux

of many matters, isn’t it? To forgive or not to forgive you might think, but I say no! That’s not the crux of it at all. The crux of the matter in situations like this is far different. Most people don’t forgive people at all. This is especially true with parents and kids. Many of you have experienced something like this, and probably still smart from it. *The crux of the matter is, “why do you fake forgiveness?”* That’s right. Parents are especially good at faking forgiveness, much like acting out a tantrum. But they really don’t forgive the person at all. The above example tells you that the mom of the 14 year old said one thing, but acted a different way. She told her son that she didn’t like the other boy and that

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he wasn't welcome in her home. But she told the boy, believe it or not, just a few days before, that she did like him. He happened to ask her if she did and she replied, "Yes."

So, people in general tend to fall into this sort of mess. They think one thing and act another. It's a very sad state of affairs, especially when involved with forgiveness. Basically, there are two camps: one of the forgiven, and the other of the unforgiven. Which camp do you think is fuller? I think the camp of the unforgiven is definitely fuller. I'll bet you can cite me some great examples. The first one I hear from you is from the Roman religion, commonly called, "Roman Catholic." ***Their laws of forgiveness are so harsh that a practitioner must visit with another man, called a "priest," to first confess his or***

***her sins, then to be dolled out some sort of payment plan to assure forgiveness.***

But, let's not pick on the Roman religion. All religions have a basis of fear-based doctrine, the likes of which keeps people coming back for one reason or another. Regarding forgiveness, religious doctrine can serve as a platter of fear, making people believe that they are not accepted by God because of their sins. Think about it. According to what religious doctrine were you raised? Do you still believe what you were taught about forgiveness of sins? Were those teachings biblically based? Do you experience spiritual freedom from sin, fear and doubt now that you are in God's Family? These are real questions whose primary job is to access your heart vaults of the past, past things that you refuse to tell anyone, but things that hold you back from manifesting a

wonderful, Christ-filled greatness, possible only when you have been released from your prison of sinful despair.

If you think about the two camps, the camp of the forgiven, and the camp of the unforgiven, where are you? Like I said, most people are mulling about in the camp of the unforgiven. ***All major religions prey on naive hearts; trying to maim them into thinking they are unforgivable.***

I am amazed, that today, long after so much fantastic Biblical knowledge has been released to the masses of believing Christians through the Internet, media, or other modern day communication methods, people are still enslaved in sin consciousness. It truly is a sickness, far more devastating than any bird flu, terror attack, or act of war. Why? Because it cuts a person off at the knees, maiming his heart so that he cannot walk

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into a gratifying spiritual walk. It keeps his head hanging low, while his heart trails along after him in the dirt of life's false doctrines. To which camp do you belong?

The Bible says that Jesus Christ brought forgiveness of sins to mankind in a single act of love.

Who[God]hathdeliveredusfrom the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: (Colossians 1:13-14)

It's a fact that we receive forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. What about all of the world's religious people who believe in their worldly religions? If they don't believe in Christ's humble acts of love, which enabled such marvelous forgiveness, they aren't forgiven. Perhaps, God has something else in store for them,

but that's not something we are privy to.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; (Ephesians 1:5-7)

You gotta love Ephesians! No matter how hard you try, you can't make anything up that betters what it says here. According to the riches of his grace, we HAVE forgiveness of sins. Most people read right over this. They think that they had forgiveness of "a" sin, but not "all" sins. That's not what it says here. It says, "Forgiveness of sins." That's what it means. You can try to redefine "plural" if you want, but I'm not planning to join your

camp of the unforgiven (if that's where you are). "Sins" means, "sins." One sin, or a thousand. It doesn't matter. No matter how many, you've been forgiven.

If you take the average unbeliever, he or she really doesn't care about forgiveness, and seldom does the subject of "sin" get discussed.

*It's not until a person becomes a Christian that he get all messed up on this subject.*

And, this messing up could have happened at any time throughout his life. Momma could have been really bitter about sin. Poppa could have been super strict, all in the name of religion. Auntie could have had that stern stare every time Bubba tried to have a bit-o-fun. You get the picture. In fact, you've probably painted a few good ones yourself! *Why are Christians so worried about sins?* Because that's what they have been taught! I say

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what a shame! *To me, there's really not much to talk about regarding sin, especially after you become born again.*

That's got to be true if we've all been forgiven. The sacrifice has already been accepted.

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Hebrews 10:9-14)

To which camp did you say you belonged? If you still pay your homeowners fees to the camp of the unforgiven, you need to take a moment, a very long moment, and ponder what you just read in Hebrews. Did you catch that a "second" something was established by Jesus Christ? How about that, "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all?" I almost chuckle when I read the part about the "every priest," because I imagine the Roman ones, the Indian ones, the Japanese ones, the Asian ones, and there are many more, nearly all of which use the term "priest." Now, I know that God is talking about Mosaic Law, Old Testament-type priests, but it's quite an interesting parallel, isn't it? *What do your priests do? If they act in some, and I mean "any" sacrificial way, they are losers.* Their

acts of ignorance are completely void, even if you think they are God's gift to mankind, holier than the holiest of holies. They can never do anything to take the place of Christ or what Christ accomplished. What they do can NEVER take away sin. I guess that all those religions never got the email? What do you think?

Did you catch that Christ is a "man?" Most Christians get this one all messed up too. They say that he is God, but that's a different Artios article, isn't it? How about that Christ offered himself as "one sacrifice?" You might be enticed to wonder, "Who could have done something SO GREAT with only ONE act?" I'll leave the answer up to you to find. And I REALLY hope you caught those two words following "for sins," – FOREVER! If the single act of forgiveness enacted something called "forever forgiven," upon what basis do your religious teachers get off on

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teaching you that you are still a sinner and that you belong in the camp of the unforgiven? *You just gotta give this some thought, even if you are deathly afraid that you might slide down the path to hell* (of which the Bible doesn't teach as a fate for Christians – but that's yet another Artios too). You've just gotta listen for a minute, not to me, but to the Word of God. If you think you can't, then pray that God lightens your fearful load just enough to allow the light of this fabulous gospel to shine into your heart.

Whereof the Holy Ghost [a strange way to say, "God"] also is a witness to us: for after that he [God] had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord [God, not Christ], I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds

will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. (Hebrews 10:15-17)

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Slow down there. What did God say? Did I hear, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more?" Yes, I did. What did you hear? I wonder what people hear when they read such simple verses. I suppose that most people add in their own thoughts and make this read a little differently, like, "and their sins and iniquities will I remember!!!!!!!" Now, that would be sick, wouldn't it? But, that's exactly what unforgiven campers believe. They just can't get away from this kind of pain, even if they see others who don't have it anymore.

*If you can't get out from under the thrashing whip of sin and despair, the devil has a hand on you and it needs to be removed,*

but you first have to be willing. Are you willing to have this satanic grasp ripped away so that you are no longer controlled by something you cannot see, but can most certainly feel and know? If you are, then pray this prayer: Father, free me from satan's grasp so that I may, for once and forever experience the life Jesus Christ made available – in the name of Jesus Christ. If you're not yet a Christian, then become one by doing this: Confess that Jesus is Lord in your life, and also believe in your heart that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. That's how you become a Christian according to Romans 10:9 and 10. Now, become free!

If God's not going to remember your dirty laundry any more, why are you going to? Why do you keep talking about it? Why do you tell others about it? You need to learn to drop your laundry off at the cleaners with a caveat. You



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don't have to go back and pick it up. You don't even have to pay for it. Why? Because Jesus paid the price! Not only have you been cleansed; God remembers the lousy things no more. You may not understand that the way you think has much to do with how you live, but you will one day. One day, you'll realize that your thoughts make you you. If you have lousy thoughts, then you live a lousy life. If you have great thoughts, then you live a great life, especially if those thoughts are based on God's Word.

Now where remission [forgiveness] of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (Hebrews 10:18-20)

Ah hum! Did you hear that, or did you read right over it? "NO MORE OFFERING FOR SIN." Folks, that's what it says and that's what it means. I know. You're saying, "Now Jerry, you've taken this a little too far. You're oversimplifying this." Say what you will, but be sure to go back and read the same verses on your own. They'll say the same things, over and over again! The works of Jesus Christ accomplished something that never needs to be re-done. That said, *"What act could you or your priest do to get one up on Christ?" The answer is painfully simple. Nothing.* What are you supposed to do with this fabulous forgiveness? Enter into the holiest of holies. I often teach people, that when they are praying, to imagine standing at God's throne. Stand right at His feet as a righteous Son of God. This is the new and living way, consecrated

just for us. When you pray, just how consecrated do you act? *Are you still behind the bars in the camp of the unforgiven?* How about acting out something positive? Acting out not being forgiven is a pretty hard act to follow, but if any act should follow it, this one should. Act out forgiveness in a wonderful and consecrated way. Come on, get busy. No more excuses. That's right. No more. Then ...

... having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) (Hebrews 10:21-23)

Jesus Christ is our high priest over

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the house of God. Folks, the house of God isn't your church building. It's not your prayer corner. It's God's house, something spiritual that you are part of as a Christian. You are part of the family of God and you must act the part. How do you do that? Draw near to the works of God, Jesus Christ, and all that Christianity stands for. Change your mind and change your heart to believe the truth, truth like "you are forgiven from your sins." *Then, after you draw near and your thoughts are all cleaned up with the truth, HOLD FAST to the truth AND DON'T waver.* Man will try to make you waver, especially when you are leaving the unforgiven camp. But don't. Don't waver. God's Word is true and faithful. It will never let you down, even if someone or something tempts you to think otherwise.

But, if you hear that a Momma

told her son that she won't forgive his friend for what he did, you've got a Godly message to share with her – if she'll listen. Then, when Bubba comes home with his head hung low, you can inflate him with words of life and see him spring back in a good and solid spiritual way. *The next time you are picking up the kids from school, and they are batting around ideas of what to do, perhaps having a sleep-over, listen closely,* for you may be able to bring deliverance to one of their pained hearts by teaching them the true meaning of forgiveness.

Much love in Christ,

Jerry D. Brown