

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

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## CHRIST AS THE FORGIVER OF SIN

BY: C. D. COLE

*"Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more," John 8:1-11.*

**INTRODUCTION:** Of all His offices none is more valuable to the sinner than that Christ is forgiver of sin. He cannot save unless He can forgive. If not the forgiver of sin, everything else that He is or might be is of little worth.

If we think of Him only as an example, we are left hopeless as we compare our lives with His.

The narrative before us encourages sinners of every name and degree to go at once to Christ. He will in no wise cast them out. There are no more touching stories on the gospels than those which tell how Jesus dealt with most degraded sinners. The woman at Sychar, the dying thief, the woman who washed His feet; Jesus does not put penitent sinners off when they come to Him for forgiveness. He does not prescribe a protracted period of praying and begging and working before He speaks the word of forgiveness. He is prompt to hear the cry of penitent faith. He is truly a present help in time of need.

A woman taken in sin and dragged before Him by Scribes and Pharisees illustrates prophecy that a bruised reed shall he not break; and smoking flax shall he not quench. Always tender and forgiving towards self-confessed and penitent sinners. Harsh and critical in presence of proud self-righteous...*"God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble,"* I Peter 5:5.

The scribes and Pharisees staggered and were amazed when Jesus assumed prerogative of forgiver of sin. Right when they asked, *"Who can forgive sins but God only?"* Mark 2:7. Jesus did not deny implication. Blasphemy for mere man to forgive sins. No stronger proof of deity then when he said, *"Neither do I condemn thee,"* John 8:11; or *"Son, thy sins be forgiven thee,"* Mark 2:5. If not God a blasphemous; if not more than a bad

man; no good man will claim right to forgive sins against God.

### THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS

**Loving.** Contrasted with much that characterizes human forgiveness. Men often say they forgive but there is a bitterness in the way they forgive. Beechen hedge--hog forgiveness--bristles all over with sharp quills to stick offender. When Christ forgave sinners, they were made to feel better. God pardons like a mother who kisses offense into everlasting forgetfulness. A little boy once said: "Forgiveness is the scent flowers give when they are trampled on and crushed."

**Sincere.** No pretense or hypocrisy. When you really forgive a person you feel toward that person as though he had never wronged you. For example: the boy who displeased his sister said she hadn't forgiven him: "Cause you ain't smiling." There is no frowning face when Christ forgives.

**Benevolent.** Seeks the good of the one forgiven.

### THE BASIS OF FORGIVENESS

1. Not innocence.
2. Not by setting the law aside.
3. On ground of His shed blood.

*"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,"* Ephesians 1:7.

"Chief of sinners though I be,  
Jesus shed His blood for me;  
Died that I might live on high,

Died that I might never die;  
As the branch is to the vine,  
I am His and He is mine."

The word forgive means to take off or send away, as a burden is lifted or a barrier removed. Sin is taken off us because it was laid on Jesus Christ. It was a heavy load but He gladly bore it. *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree..."* I Peter 2:24. Samson carried away the gates of Gaza, but that was nothing to the load that Jesus bore on our behalf. Every pardon is the price of His blood.

### THE CHANNEL OF FORGIVENESS

**Repentance.** Scriptures associate repentance and forgiveness. *"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,"* Luke 24:47. *"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins,"* Acts 5:31.

Human forgiveness rests upon repentance. *"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him,"* Luke 17:3. *"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,"* Luke 13:3. Repentance is an attitude of mind concerning sin and self and salvation. Repentance is not physical exercise, it is not a righteous work, it is a change of mind in which sins are perceived and abhorred and abandoned. The man who is sick of self and fond of Christ has repented.

In the story before us the woman took the place of a sinner. She did not deny her guilt; she made no protest before the accusers. They were silenced by Jesus and not by the woman.

"Come ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love, and power.  
He is able,  
He is willing, doubt no more.

"Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream;  
All the fitness he requireth  
Is to feel your need of Him:  
This he gives you;  
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

### THE DEMANDS OF FORGIVENESS

*"Go, and sin no more."* This is still His word to those who have been saved by His grace. Ours is not a sinning religion. Every believer is responsible not to sin, but his responsibility is not that of a criminal under law, but that of a child under grace.

Responsibility must always be viewed in the light of relationship. This will save us from doctrinal error and will establish us. The unbeliever is related to God as a Judge and his responsibility is to the law of God. The believer is related to God as a Father and his responsibility is that of a child. Responsibility in one case issues in death; in the other in chastisement. The unbeliever is condemned; the believer is chastened that he might not be condemned with the world.

Chastisement is from a father. From a loving heart, for profit. *"...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons,"* Hebrews 12:5-8. All children are chastised, likewise God chastens his children.

"How oft, alas, this wretched heart  
Has wandered from the Lord;  
How oft my roving thoughts depart,  
Forgetful of His word.

Thy pardoning love, so free, so sweet,  
Blest Saviour, I adore;  
O keep me at thy sacred feet,  
And let me sin no more."

# IGNORANCE

BY: C. D. COLE

**Introduction:** Human existence is in two realms, the physical and the moral. As a physical being man is akin to the animal creation; as a moral being is akin to the angels - *"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,"* Psalm 8:5. The animal creation is under God's law of nature; man is under God's moral law which is in the nature of commandments. The animal can follow its instinct and physical desires without fear of future retribution, but man, as a higher order of creation, created in the image of God is under obligation to regulate his physical desires by the moral law of God. *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,"* Matthew 4:4.

Human knowledge is also in two realms; the realm of the natural and the realm of the spiritual. We acquire knowledge in the natural realm by the study of nature or God's works; we learn in the spiritual realm by the study of God's word. There are a great many subjects in both realms that may be studied to profit. Ignorance in the natural realm, in the realm of physics; will result in temporary inconvenience and even hardship. Suppose we had to do away with all knowledge that men have acquired in the study of nature! It would mean the loss of thousands of inventions, such as electric power and lights, the modern means of travel, the modern ways of treating diseases. Suppose in this crowded world we had to go back to the primitive ways of living; well, we would all be seeking a better place to live.

A person may know much in one of these realms and little or nothing in the other realm. Or, a man may know much in both realms. There is so much to be known in the natural realm that we have realized that it is impossible for one man to know everything and so we have specialists in the various lines of human endeavor. One man will know medicine, another surgery, and even here there is so much to be known than one man will specialize in diseases of the head, such as ear, eye and nose troubles, and another will be a specialist in abdominal operations. The dentist concentrates on the teeth. And so it is in all the fields of

human endeavor.

The principle is also applied in war. War is perhaps the most complex and technical of all human activities. The art of killing has been perfected to the nth degree. The country's armed forces are split up into many departments and each department literally teems with specialists. Two kinds of warfare; offensive and defensive, one has to do with attack and the other with defense. It is all too complicated and laborious to dwell upon.

Knowledge in the natural realm has its profit in this life, but ignorance here is not fatal to our eternal welfare.

There is another realm of knowledge where ignorance is fatal to one's eternal welfare. This is the spiritual realm. *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent,"* John 17:3.

*"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart,"* Ephesians 4:18.

All of us were at one time in absolute ignorance of God and Christ. This ignorance can only be dispelled by the word of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit. Wherever the Bible has not gone, men are ignorant of God and the way of salvation. *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe,"* I Corinthians 1:21. And wherever the Bible has gone and the Holy Spirit has not been the teacher, men are ignorant of the gospel. *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them,"* II Corinthians 4:4.

## THE WHY OF THIS IGNORANCE

Because the birth into the natural realm does not give capacity for knowing spiritual things. *"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"* John 3:3. *"But the natural man receiveth not*

*the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,"* I Corinthians 2:14. Many a man has become famous for his knowledge in the natural realm who has no understanding of the things of God. You can't find God in a test tube. God must be found in His word. God can't be discovered; He must reveal Himself if He is to be known. And in this Bible He has revealed Himself. There are many ologies such as biology, the science of life; geology, the science of rocks; but the greatest of all ologies is theology, the science of God. Theology is knowledge derived from the Scriptures.

## EXAMPLES OF SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE

**The Greeks:** *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness,"* I Corinthians 1:21-23.

**The Jews:** *"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved,"* Romans 10:1.

**Israel:** *"Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider,"* Isaiah 1:3.

**Laodicea:** *"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,"* Revelation 3:16-17.