

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

# THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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## FORGIVENESS WITH GOD

By: Dr. C. D. Cole

Psalm 130:4, *“But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”*

Introduction: But there is forgiveness with God. Spurgeon says, How significant is that word ‘but’! As if you heard justice clamoring, Let the sinner die, and the friends in hell howling, Cast him down into the fires, and conscience shrieking, Let him perish, and nature itself groaning beneath his weight, the earth weary with carrying him, and the sun tired with shining upon the traitor, and the very air sick with finding breath for one who only spends it in disobedience to God.

Psalm 130:3, *“If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”* The implication is, that the man is about to be destroyed, to be swallowed up quick, when suddenly there comes this thrice-blessed but, which stops the reckless course of ruin. But there is forgiveness with God. Blessed news! Glorious truth!

### WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

The word forgive means ‘to let off, or send away.’ You wrong me and say you are sorry. I say, I forgive you. It means that I do not hold it against you. I have the same attitude as if you had not wronged me. In forgiveness, God does not hold our sins against us. We are let off from pun-

ishment; our sins are sent away. Behind His back so that He does not see them. Isaiah 38:17, *“...for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.”* Cast into the depths of the sea so they never appear again.

Sinner, aren’t you interested in this? Don’t you want forgiveness from God? It is either forgiveness or justice. Which will you take? You are awfully deceived if you prefer justice.

### BASIS OR GROUND

The basis or ground of forgiveness: Is there anything in God that must be satisfied in order to forgiveness? Suppose you wrong me and repent. Is there anything in me that must be satisfied before I forgive you? No, not a thing. Why? Because I am not a judge, I am a brother. Vengeance does not belong to me, but it belongs to God. I cannot demand the payment of any sum as a price for forgiveness. But God is the judge and there is His justice that must be satisfied in order to forgiveness. Sin flouts the law of God and there can be no forgiveness without the law being satisfied. Sin is objective guilt as well as subjective defilement. And this guilt must be atoned for in order to forgiveness. A deeply convicted sinner was told that God could cleanse his heart and make him over, he replied with righteous impatience, This is not what I want. I have a debt to pay first. He

saw the truth that sin was a debt against God and that it must be paid. If cleansing the heart and making a man over was all there is to salvation, there would be no place for Christ. The Holy Spirit does the work of cleansing and making new. Christ did the work of expiation. The publican did not ask to be made over; he cried, Let the blood make propitiation for my sin.

The ground of forgiveness is satisfied law. The sin-debt must be paid in order to forgiveness.

Now this was the work of Christ. Ephesians 1:7, *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”* Romans 3:24, 25, *“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood...”* In order to have forgiveness there must be expiation of guilt by the Saviour and repentance on the part of the sinner. Luke 24:47, *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at*  
*(Continued on Page 3)*

# MY CREED

## By: Dr. C. D. Cole

**I Peter 3:15, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”**

In the passage before us the Apostle is writing to the Hebrew Christians of the dispersion; to the believers who were suffering because of their faith in Christ. Their hope concerning belief in the Christian faith was being challenged, and the Apostle tells them to meet this challenge with a readiness to give a reason for the hope that was in them. They were not only to believe something, but they were to be able to give a reason for their belief. Now, this passage is a part of eternal truth, and has a wider application than to those to whom it was directly and originally addressed. And it needs to be pressed upon the consciences of believers today. We are living in a creedless age; a day when the masses of professing Christians are saying that one faith is as good as another.

Our text justifies a creed, yea, it makes a creed obligatory upon all believers. The word creed comes from the Latin “creedo,” which means, “I believe.” So a man with a creed is the man who believes something. I count my creed the most valuable possession of my soul. But, by a creed, I mean something more than a set of dogmas copied from some ancient theology; I refer to something more than a collection of rules to which one may become an unwilling slave; I mean something better than the cold letter of words: I mean eternal, vital, heart-gripping, soul-stirring, life-regulating truths; truths that have become a very part of one’s being. To illustrate: a few years ago a man sent out a questionnaire to several of the brethren, asking their belief touching a plainly revealed truth of the Bible. All did not answer. Some replied in a way to make the brother’s heart thrill with joy; others answered that they were away from their libraries, and could not tell just what they did believe concerning this doctrine. Now, by a creed, I do not refer to something that is confined to the walls of a man’s study, but to that which has become the hope of his soul, that

which is the very warp and woof of his life.

I take this as an opportunity to give a reason for the hope that is in me. I shall undertake to give utterance to convictions that are deep and abiding, some of which have withstood the winds of remorseless hate, and have fastened their roots more strongly in my soul. I shall denominate these convictions as so many articles of faith, and of course will have time to give only the salient points in my theology.

### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

I put this first because it is basic and fundamental. To be wrong in belief about God is to be wrong about everything else. The sovereignty of God may be defined as the exercise of His supremacy. It means that He does as He pleases, only as He pleases, and always as He pleases. It means that He is God in fact as well as in name. It means that He sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be. In a letter to Erasmus, Luther said, “Your thoughts of God are too human.” This is the trouble with much of the present-day theology. Of old, God complained to an apostate Israel, Psalm 50:21 “...*thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself...*” Men are continually seeking a comparison between God and man, when the Bible says in no uncertain tones that God cannot be likened to His creatures. He is the incomparable and incomprehensible One.

He was sovereign in creation. He did not create by necessity or constraint. He was free to create or not create as seemed good in Himself. And, in creating, He created just what He sovereignly chose to create. He could have created one world or a million worlds.

He is sovereign in administration. God rules the universe He has created. Daniel 4:35, “*And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*” Isaiah 46:9, 10, “*...I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand,*

*and I will do all my pleasure.*” This world is not run by capricious chance, nor by a fixed law, nor blind fate, but by the Lord, who reigns over all.

He is sovereign in salvation. He was under no necessity to save rebellious men. He might have passed every one of us by as He did the fallen angels. Redemption is not a Divine obligation. God owes His creatures nothing. Salvation is of grace and mercy, and to speak of deserving grace and meritorious mercy is a contradiction in terms.

### SIN AND SALVATION

Sin is a terrible reality and an awful fact in human experience. Sin is that strange something that has wrought terrible havoc with the human race. Most people have woefully inadequate conceptions of what sin is. It is the abominable thing that God hates. Sin is something more than a slight misdemeanor for which God gives man a scolding and sends him off to bed without his supper; Sin is a species of high treason against a thrice holy God from which the punishment is consignment in a lake of fire, where there is not enough water to cool a burning tongue. Sin is something more than a mere pimple on the body politic, which may be covered with the salve of social service; sin is a terrible cancer eating from within out, and permeating the whole social fabric. Sin is something more than a puncture of human resolutions on the highway of life; sin is a blowout that has thrown the car off the highway into the ditch of hopeless despair. Sin is not merely a washout on the road to glory, which makes the train of humanity a little late in reaching its destination; sin is an open drawbridge over the river of eternal death through which the train has plunged to awful depths of woe and despair. Sin is a great deal more than the mere twitching of conscience; sin is a depravity of nature that causes men to hate God and holiness.

Salvation is a blessed fact in human experience. God is the author of it; grace is the cause of it; the death of Christ is the price of it; the gospel is the means of it, and men and women are the recipients of it. Salvation is the snatching of men as brands from the eternal burnings; it is the recovery from the cancer and leprosy of

sin; it is a new car with a new engine, and new tires; it is the lifting of sinners out of the river of death; it is the impartation of a new heart that loves God and holiness.

Salvation is in a person. It is not in doing things and going to places, but it is the trust in a person, and that person is Christ. Christ is the only One who can make us right with God. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

### THE SECURITY OF THE SAINTS

Psalm 37:28, *"For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever..."* Because of the kind of a Saviour they have, He is called the one mighty to save.

Because of the nature of salvation. Salvation is delivery from the curse of the law. The believer is not under law, but under grace. There is no law by which he can be condemned. God would have to resort to mob violence in sending a believer to hell, and this He will never do. Salvation is the impartation of Divine life; it is the beginning of a good work which Paul says will be carried on until the day of Jesus Christ.

Because of God's purpose concerning His saints. Romans 8:28, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

### THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The Lord Jesus is going to return to this earth. This is the blessed hope of the saved, but a funeral dirge to the lost. It will be the consummation of the believer's salvation, but to the lost it will be the casting of both soul and body in hell. To the believer it will be the end of all conflict and struggle with indwelling sin; all tears will be wiped away, and there will be no more pain, neither sorrow nor crying. And these bodies that are being riddled by disease and soon to be turned by death into a dust-heap will be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

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## FORGIVENESS OF GOD

*(Continued from Page 1)*

*Jerusalem.* Expiation takes care of the guilt and repentance takes care of the defiled heart. In repentance the sinner has a changed mind; changed attitude about his sins; he takes God's side against himself; he has the same attitude towards his sins that God has. But this changed attitude

would not bring forgiveness if the guilt before law had not been dealt with. Luke 24:47. Repentance would avail nothing if Christ had not died. Repentance is not the saviour; it is the confession that a Saviour is needed. It is an acknowledgment of guilt and deserved wrath.

### NO COMPETITORS

Jesus Christ has no competition in the claims He has made. Nobody else has ever claimed to open the way to heaven by dying and rising again. Matthew 10:2-8, *"And fear not them which kill the body,*

*but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* Nobody else ever claimed to give his life a ransom. Matthew 20:28, *"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."* Nobody ever claimed that he redeemed sinners from the curse of the law by being made sin for them. Galatians 3:13, *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..."*

No competition as the object of faith. False saviours never say, Trust us for salvation. They promise to save by giving the sinner something to do, not by being the object of faith. All false religions tell the sinner to do something for salvation; they do not hold up to him an object or person to be trusted for salvation. Buddha does not say, "Trust me for salvation." He says, "Do this and that for salvation." The Catholic church says no salvation out of its folds and yet it does not say trust the church for salvation; but do what the church tells you to do. The priest does not say trust me for salvation; he says do what I tell you to do for salvation.

### PROOF OF FORGIVENESS

How can I know I am forgiven? To know you are forgiven you must first know that Christ is the object of your trust. You trust Him as the one who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. You believe that He did what it took to satisfy the justice of God for sins. You have no right to consider yourself forgiven if anything else but Christ and Him crucified is the object of your trust in whole or in part.

Now if you are sure the only object of your faith is that He is in His cross, then you may know that you are forgiven because He says you are. No other way to know it except by faith in His word. If

you sin against me and repent and I say I forgive you, how do you know that you are forgiven except by taking me at my word. You know it because I say so.

I believe that to see and rest in this truth is the greatest incentive to a godly life. The man who has really trusted Christ and takes forgiveness from Him at the awful cost of His death will naturally want to live to please Him.

General J. B. Gordon was a Confederate general in the war between the states. He was wounded in the face. Awful scars were left permanently on his face. He had a colonel on his staff, named Smith, who was also wounded at Gettysburg. Gordon got off his horse and took Smith out of range of fire and to the hospital where he was treated and nursed back to health. After the war Gordon went up and down the country begging the people to forget past hostilities and be one nation. Smith was so full of hatred for the North that he opposed Gordon's reconciliation speeches. In those days the U. S. Senators were elected by the state legislatures. Gordon was a candidate for the U. S. Senate from Georgia. Smith was a state senator. The contest was close and Smith held the deciding vote and the day of the election he made out his ballot against his former commander and started forward to deposit his vote against Gordon, but as he started to the ballot box his eyes fell on the scarred face of Gordon who was sitting in the assembly. Smith broke down at the sight of those scars and tore his ballot to pieces, saying, I can't vote against those scars.

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