

The Harmony of the Gospels Bible Commentary by Rob Robinson
Harmony of The Gospels
Part 23
“Your Sins Are Forgiven”

Our society has developed an interesting phenomenon: **“The Outlet Mall”**.

At these outlet malls, you can find factory seconds, items that are flawed or defective, at more than 75% off the regular retail price.

You can even purchase fine crystal and china that normally sold for thousands of dollars, for just hundreds of dollars.

There is though, one type of fine crystal that is very expensive, and every single piece is absolutely perfect.

It is called **“Waterford Crystal”**.



There are no **“Seconds”** at Waterford, if any piece has even the slightest imperfection, it is crushed, melted and made over entirely.

I think that we forget, or maybe we just don't know, that only perfect people get into heaven, did you know that?

- ☞ **We seem to have developed the idea** that *“If I am mostly a good person, that the Lord will let me into heaven”*.
- ☞ *“If my good works outweigh my bad works, surely the Lord will permit me to go to heaven, for no one can be perfect.”*

David asked the Lord this question in Psalm 15

Psalms 15:1-5

- 1 LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?
- 2 He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart;
- 3 He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend;
- 4 In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the LORD; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
- 5 He who does not put out his money at usury, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved

Let's see here:

- ☞ Walking uprightly, a perfect walk.

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- ☞ Works righteousness, no!
- ☞ Speaks the truth, no
- ☞ Does not talk about other people behind their back.
- ☞ Does no evil.
- ☞ Does not criticize other people.
- ☞ Okay, Okay, you can stop!

I cant do this, how about you?

But you see unless you can do all of these for all of your life, you will not dwell with the Lord in heaven in His Tabernacle, that is what this verse is talking about.

James 2:10

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

So, none of can be perfect, and the law of God requires that for admittance into Heaven you must be perfect...sounds pretty hopeless doesn't it?

Romans 5:6,8

6 For when we were still without hope, at just the right time, Jesus died for the ungodly.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 3:21-30

21 But now God has shown us a different way of being right in his sight—not by obeying the law but by the way promised in the Scriptures long ago.

22 We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done.

27 Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on our good deeds. It is based on our faith.

30 There is only one God, and there is only one way of being accepted by him. He makes people right with himself only by faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles.

You see, I think that sometimes we are worried that if we teach people what the Bible says about "Grace", that it seems to say: "Okay it is alright to do all kinds of terrible things as long and you just walk in afterwards and take the free gift of God's forgiveness.

You and I might be worried about whether or not we seem to be giving permission to people, but Jesus wasn't worried about this at all.

- ☞ **Jesus was not afraid** of giving the prodigal son **a kiss instead of a Lecture.**

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- ⊕ **He wasn't concerned** about how it looked to give him **a party instead of probation.**
- ⊕ **Jesus proved this** by bringing in the older brother at the end of the story and having him bring up all the same objections that we might also bring up.

The Older brother is angry that there is a party for the prodigal brother.

- ⊕ **He complains** to the father that he is lowering his standards and ignoring virtue.
- ⊕ **The older brother** is complaining that music, dancing and feasting are saying to the brother who sinned, that what he did was okay.

To all of this, Jesus has the Father say only one thing:

“Cut that out!, we are not playing good boys and bad boys anymore. Your brother was dead but now he is alive...”

“...the name of the game is Resurrection not Bookkeeping...!”

Listen, the only way that you and I are ever going to be perfect and without one defect, is the day that we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ.

- ⊕ **On that day,** YOU BECOME PERFECT FOREVER!
- ⊕ **It is as if you** had never sinned for all of Eternity.
- ⊕ **There is no record** of any sin that you have ever committed, or ever will commit.

So now, you will go to heaven, because Jesus has made you perfect, you didn't achieve it yourself!

So a question, if I told you that every single one of your sins were forgiven all record of them erased as if they never happened, would that be good news to you?

- ⊕ **Jesus claims** that He has the power to do this for you.
- ⊕ **How do you know** that His claims are true or not?

I mean, c'mon, anyone can say to you “Hey your sins are forgiven...”

- ⊕ **That doesn't mean** they are.
- ⊕ **Who else but God** can forgive sin? No one.
- ⊕ **So by Jesus claiming** that He has the Authority to forgive all sins, He is really saying that He is God.

In the study this morning, Jesus is going to give to you clear proof that:

1. He has the power and authority to forgive sin.
2. That He is God.

A man born paralyzed is healed:

Matthew 9:1-8

1 So Jesus got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

2 Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; **your sins are forgiven you.**"

Mark adds a few more details to this story:

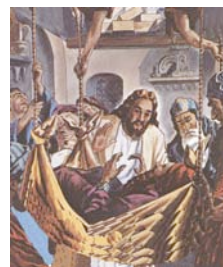
MARK 2:1-12

1 And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

2 Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

3 Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

4 And **when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where** He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.



"Your sins are forgiven you": Are there any more beautiful words than these?

- ☞ **The Greek word here** that Jesus used for "**Forgiven**" describes in detail what Jesus meant by "*You Are Forgiven*".

Forgiven in Greek is "**Aphiemi**" (af-ee'-ay-mee), to send something away, to forgive a debt that is owed.

- ☞ **In Micah 7:19**—the lord say's that he sends our sins into the depth of the sea."

Micah 7:19

Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean!

- ☞ **Jeremiah 31:34**—"I will remember their sins no more."

Jeremiah 31:34

... "And I will forgive their wickedness and will never again remember their sins."

The idea from the Lords perspective, when He "**forgives**" you **it is as though your sins had never existed.** How can you get any cleaner than that!

John 19:30

So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

- ☞ **The Lord** has the unique capacity to forget our sins.
- ☞ **If he can't remember** our sins, and they don't exist.
- ☞ **Why do we have** such a hard time forgiving each other?
- ☞ **Because we can't forget,** but we can let it go and decide to never bring it up again in dealing with that person.

I heard a story of a pastor in the Philippines that carried within himself the burden of some sin that he had committed many years before...

No one else knew about this sin, he had long since repented of it and had suffered for years of remorse for it.

But even to that present day he still had not peace over it, and did not feel that the Lord had truly forgiven him...

A woman who had devoted her whole life to serving Jesus claimed that because of this deep relationship that she had with Jesus, that He often spoke to her through visions.

The pastor had heard of these visions, but was skeptical as to whether or not they were actually true.

One day the pastor asked this woman *“So you say that you actually speak directly with Jesus in your visions, is that right?”*

“Yes pastor, Jesus speaks to me just as you are speaking to me right now”.

The pastor wanting to test the truthfulness of her claim asked her for a favor: *“The next time you speak to Jesus please ask Him for me, to tell you what sin I committed when I was still in college.”*

The woman agreed and went home, returning a few days later...

The pastor asked her, *“Well did you speak to Jesus in one of your visions?”*

“Yes pastor I did, well did you ask Him what sin I committed when I was in college?”

“Yes pastor I asked Jesus that very question for you.”

“And what did He say”, asked the minister?

“Jesus said I’m sorry I don’t remember...”

You are carrying around the guilt and the shame of the sins that you have committed, some of you for years and years, and yet if you have already asked Jesus to forgive those sins and to be your Savior, according to His Word, **THOSE SINS DON’T EXIST ANYMORE!**

- ☞ **Some of us today** have had other people sin against us, and we have not forgiven them yet, even though Jesus has made those sins as though they never existed.
- ☞ **Why would you** want to carry around a sin that doesn’t exist any more?

[Matthew 9:1-8](#)

1 So Jesus got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

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2 Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; **your sins are forgiven you.**"

Does Jesus really have the power to do this?

We are going to see Him from that He can forgive sins and that is because He is God...

Matthew 9

3 And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "**This Man blasphemes!**"

4 But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"

5 "**For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?**"

6 "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"-- then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

7 And he arose and departed to his house.

8 Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

The religious leaders in Israel are very sensitive to what Jesus just said because according to the Word of God, only God can forgive sins.

- ⊕ **By Jesus claiming** to be able to forgive sins, He is making Himself out to be God.
- ⊕ **This is** a very serious claim to the Scribes.

Knowing their concern, and wanting to offer some real tangible proof that He can in fact forgive sins, Jesus gives them a way that they can verify His claims.

- ⊕ **Anyone can say your sins are forgiven** you, but we would have no way of measuring whether or not that actually happened.
- ⊕ **But how about if I say** also to this man, "*Rise up and walk*" and he does, and you know that he has been paralyzed all of his life, "*would that be proof enough?*"

So Jesus tells the man paralyzed, "**Arise and walk, and He does.**"

- ⊕ **Not only** did Jesus prove that He has the power to heal, but He also backed up His claim to have the authority to forgive sins.
- ⊕ **In actuality**, By Jesus doing these 2 things, He proved that He is God.

Mark adds another detail that Matthew did not include:

Mark 2:1-12

5 When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

6 And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

7 "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? **Who can forgive sins but God alone?**"

- ⊕ **Mark adds a good point here:** Only God can forgive sins.

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- ☞ **So, either Jesus is a slightly crazy**, and thinks He is God, or maybe he is just a liar, or there is still one more possibility, He is in fact God and can forgive sins.

Jesus knew that people would question His claim that He is God and can forgive sins, so He provided a couple of ways that we could test His claim and either prove it or disprove it.

1. **He made** the paralyzed man whole.
2. **He rose** from the dead.

Now, lots of men throughout history have claimed to be the Messiah, or the Christ and many have had the power to heal people, but only Jesus backed up his claims with an astonishing statement.

Mark 8:31

And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Matthew 12:40

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

John 2:19

Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

It is so important that when you come to Jesus to ask Him to forgive your sins, that you really believe that He has the authority and the power to forgive your sins.

- ☞ **This is why verses** like these that we studied this morning are here in the Bible, to prove to us that Jesus is God and has the power to forgive all of your sins.
- ☞ **Jesus told a paralyzed man** that his sins were forgiven, and to prove Jesus had this power Jesus also healed the man and made him walk again.

The burden of carrying sin around with you, is indeed a very heavy burden.

- ☞ **If you are still carrying inside of you**, regret for some past sin or offense that you have made, you know what I am talking about.

Equally as heavy a burden though is that of people that you have not forgiven yet.

- ☞ **By your unwillingness to forgive them** and accept them back into your life again as a friend, you subject them to the most horrible of agony.
- ☞ **You force them to carry** a burden of guilt that Jesus died to bear, and bring on the Lord further suffering by your unwillingness to forgive.

Jesus gave an example of this in Matthew 18

Matthew 18

23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him **ten thousand talents**.

Now, a Talent is made up of 3,000 Shekels in Israeli currency.

- ☞ **3,000 Shekels** is equal to **\$13,402.61** Dollars US.
- ☞ **So 10,000 Talents** is equal to 10,000 Times \$13,402.61, which equals more than 134 Million Dollars!

So what is Jesus saying by this example? That this man owed a debt that was impossible for him to ever pay back.

- ☞ **The debt was so great** that it was beyond his capacity in all of his life to ever be able to pay this debt, it was hopeless.

Matthew 18

25 But as **he was not able to pay**, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, "**Master, have patience with me**, and I will pay you all.'

27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

Now what I find very interesting here is that the man that is asking for mercy because He will pay all that he owes, will never be able to come up with **134 million dollars**.

- ☞ **If you were in debt for 134 million dollars**, how long would it take you to earn that much money and be able to pay it back?

If you earned **\$100,000.00 a year for 100 years**, you would earn 100 million dollars.

- ☞ **This man owes** \$134 Million Dollars.
- ☞ **For the average man**, that this man is, He could never earn **\$100,000 dollars a year** and it was for sure He would not live to be **134 years old to earn enough to pay back 134 million dollars..**
- ☞ **It was impossible for him** to pay, **even though he wanted to pay the debt.**

In using this Illustration, Jesus is say that all of us owe to God a debt for our sins, that is like the 10,000 Talents that this man owed.

- ☞ **The debt we owe to God** for our sins **is so great that we can never pay it.**
- ☞ **Even if We wanted to pay**, **we don't have the capacity to pay.**
- ☞ **But like the master who forgave the debt** because He was moved to compassion, Jesus came and paid the price we owed for us, and forgave the debt.

Matthew 18

28 “But **that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants** who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ **(He owes him about \$20.00)**

29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’

30 And **he would not**, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

32 Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, “**You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.**

33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’

34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

35 “**So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.**

The man who had been forgiven \$134 Million dollars, had a friend who owed him about \$20.00.

- ☞ **The friend asked for forgiveness**, but he would not be forgiven.

Jesus is saying that all of us also have people who owe us a debt for the sins they have committed against us, but in the perspective of Jesus, that sin is about \$20.00 worth.

- ☞ **Now the problem is** that we treat the offenses that people do to us like they were a \$134 million dollar debt.
- ☞ **THEY ARE NOT!**
- ☞ **They are small in comparison** to our own sin that we committed against God, that He had compassion on and forgave.

Why do we take so freely Jesus forgiveness for us for a 134 million dollar debt we owed to Him, but we will not forgive the \$20.00 debt people owe us for offending us?

- ☞ **And perhaps you are saying** “*Well to me Rob it feels like a 134 million dollar debt.*”
- ☞ **Why does it feel like this**, because it is not a 134 Million dollar debt, it is just \$20.00.
- ☞ **If you feel that way** then that is part of the problem, **you let what people do and say, effect you more deeply than you should allow it to affect you.**
- ☞ **Perhaps the problem is** that you are not willing to let people’s offenses go as easily as you should.
- ☞ **That is something** that you have the ability to change.
- ☞ **Stop being so sensitive to peoples offenses**, get over it and go on living and loving and forgiving people.

After all your 134 Million Dollar debt is forgiven!

Ephesians 4:32

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Notice in this verse how the Holy Spirit puts this:

“Forgive One Another”

- ☞ **It does not say “Forgive Another”.**
- ☞ **It says Forgive One Another**, that means that **if you have to forgive someone TODAY, it is very likely that you YOURSELF will have to be forgiven tomorrow!**

This action of forgiveness is a mutual operation.

- ☞ You forgive me.
- ☞ I forgive you.
- ☞ We forgive them.
- ☞ They forgive us.

A circle of unlimited forgiveness and love goes around the world.

- ☞ **In case you don't know it**, there is something in you that needs to be forgiven!~
- ☞ **Just as much** as there is something in me that needs to be forgiven by you.

If we began to realize that every time we find fault with someone and they offend us, that **we also have done or are about to do some things that are offensive and are full of fault also.**

The person who has stored an up an offense in their heart, has forgotten their own offenses.

Even by the act of non forgiveness we have offended others our self.

How? I have never met a person that has not been offended that does not speak ill of it to other people.

The person who speaks negatively about another person, has a wrong heart.

The minute that you speak of your own hurt or offense to another, you offend your God, as you become a gossip because you are saying negative things about this other person.

So it is better to let go and forgive the offense right away and do not store them up, for in doing so we add to our own list of offenses that we also commit.

It is for sure that we will have a great deal to forgive in other people, but there will be even more inside of us that we will need them to forgive...

I want to do something this morning that I have never done before.

- ☞ **There are many of us here today** who have not been able to forgive ourselves for some sin that we have done in the past.
- ☞ **I want you to take a piece of paper**, from the bulletin or the study guide, and write the name of that sin on that paper.
- ☞ **Then the Elders** are going to come around with a trash can and collect that sin.
- ☞ **We are going to pray** that when you write that sin on the paper and then throw it in the garbage, that you are going to be healed of the hurt of that sin, and be able to let it go forever.

There are also many of us here today that right now there are people in your life who have hurt you and you have not been able to forgive them.

To forgive someone involves three things:

1. **You have to let go** the right you have to strike back at them, which includes to gossip about what they have done to you with your family and friends.
2. **You must replace your feelings** of resentment and anger with a sense of good will towards this person and a love towards them that you want the Lord to bless them, so you must daily start to pray for them so that your heart will love them also.
3. **You must take some concrete steps** to restore a good relationship with them, by doing some real practical things, starting this morning:
 - ☞ **Take a second piece of paper** and write that sin done to you that you have not been able to forgive.
 - ☞ **Throw it in the waste can** and we will ask the Lord to enable you today to totally let that hurt of and forgive them from this point on.