

The Greatest Treasure ever known to Mankind

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Introduction:

Treasure stories such as the California Gold rush, King Tut's tomb, and the movie "National Treasure" captivate our minds. The idea of treasures beyond our wildest dreams conjures up the most inner desires of the mind. These hidden treasures are never on the surface for the casual observer to pick up but rather take time and research to find. The Bible speaks of a treasure that far exceeds any treasure man has ever found upon the earth. This treasure can be had by all who are willing to search it out. When it is found it will sustain one into eternity. Beware; however, this treasure can be lost and if truly careless one may never find it again. The greatest treasure of all is the forgiveness of sins.

I. True vs. perishable treasure:

- A. What distinguishes true treasure from that which perishes and eventually is useless?
- B. True treasure surpasses any and all other earthly treasures and is eternally worth risking all one has to obtain (cf. Matt. 13:44).
- C. True treasure is eternal (Matt. 6:20).
- D. Perishable treasure is temporary (James 5:3).

II. Identifying true spiritual Treasure:

- A. The gospel message holds the treasures of God (cf. II Cor. 4:7).
- B. The apostle Paul was willing to give up all for this treasure (cf. Phil. 3:8).
- C. God's treasure for humanity to discover is the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38-39).

III. What does it mean to have my sins forgiven?

- A. Without the forgiveness of sins we are eternally cursed (Gal. 3:13-14).
- B. One forgiven of sins has "freely" received God's "grace" (cf. Rom. 3:24; 5:15-17; 6:23; Eph. 2:8).
- C. Note that God's "grace" is an equivalent term for "forgiveness of sins"
 - 1. Paul equates justification (forgiveness of sins) with God's grace (Rom. 5:1-2).
 - 2. Paul equates man's redemption with Christ's blood, the forgiveness of sins, and God's grace at Ephesians 1:7.
- D. Having the forgiveness of my sins places me in fellowship with the heavenly Father (I Jn. 1:7).
- E. Having my sins forgiven gives me a true hope of being in heaven (cf. Rev. 21:27).

IV. How do I receive the Forgiveness of my Sins?

- B. Fire purifies metal and water the flesh but blood alone is the only substance that has the power to clean a man of sin (cf. Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:9; Col. 1:19-20; Heb. 12:22-24).
- C. One receives the forgiveness of sins through obedience to the gospel message:
 - 1. The apostle's message was intended to produce obedience (cf. Rom. 1:1-5).
 - 2. The gospel message contains the needed information for man to tap into the power of God (to be forgiven of sins (Rom. 1:16).
 - 3. Note that the forgiveness of sins is equated with righteousness (cf. Rom. 4:5). My righteousness is achieved through my obedience to God's word (cf. Rom. 6:16).
- D. What instructions am I to obey to receive the forgiveness of sins?

1. First, I must die with Christ through baptism to receive the forgiveness of my sins (cf. Rom. 6:1-7). To die with Christ is to purpose not to sin any longer (i.e., Repentance cf. Acts 17:30) (Acts 2:38).
2. The gospel message convicts me as a sinner and I am moved to obedience (cf. Rom. 3:23).
3. When I hear and believe the gospel message of the saving blood of Christ I am motivated to obey its instructions (cf. Rom. 10:17).
4. To act on obedience is to confess the name of Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God (Rom. 10:9-10).

V. I must be willing to forgive others:

- A. God forgives us through His mercy when we ask and so the Christian must do today (Luke 6:36)
- B. The Christian is commanded to be forgiving (cf. Matt. 6:14-15; 18:21-22; Eph. 4:32; Jude 1:22)

Conclusion:

There is more to this life than the limited time that you and I spend here. Let us all open our eyes of reason and conclude that *“In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble”* (Prov. 17:14).