

Upcoming Events

Business Meeting: Today at 4:30 p.m.

Ladies Bible Class: March 17 at 4:00 p.m.

Panera Bread Open Bible Study: Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Hebrews class Thursdays at 11:00

God's Grace and Mercy

“Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).” Ephesians 2:4-5

March Birthdays

4 Joseph McKnight 8 Drina Zamarripa

9 Jessica Aguiar 18 Buddy Cashion 30 Barrett Hoffman

March Anniversaries

6 Harold & Dortha Gentry

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Christ is the Cleanser of the Soul

Homily by D. Thomas from the Pulpit Commentary

“And washed [‘loosed’] us from our sins in his own blood”
(Revelation 1:5 KJV).

The moral restoration of the soul to the knowledge, image, and enjoyment of God is represented in a variety of figures in the Bible, which is a highly figurative book. When the lost state of the soul is represented as a state of condemnation, then its restoration is represented as forgiveness or justification; when its lost state is represented as enmity to God, then its restoration is set forth under the metaphor of reconciliation; when its lost state is represented as a state of death or sleep, then its restoration is set forth as a quickening and awakening; when its lost state is represented as a bondage, then its restoration is set forth as an enfranchisement; when its lost state is represented as a state of pollution or uncleanness, then its restoration is represented as a washing or a cleansing. All these figurative expressions represent one thing — the moral restoration of the soul; and this is spoken of in the text as wrought by Christ. *“Washed us from our sins in his own blood.”*

To be washed in blood is an expression that sounds incongruous and somewhat offensive; but it does not mean material blood, as the vulgar and the sensuous understand, but the spiritual blood, which is his moral life, his self-sacrificing love. The cleansing influence which is here applied to the blood is elsewhere applied to the “Name of Christ.” Now *“ye are clean through the word I have spoken;”* again, *“Sanctified through thy truth.”* Then to the *“water of the Word,”* *“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.”* The “Name,” the “Word,” the “Spirit,” the “Truth,” which are represented in such passages as

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Sunday.....6:00 p.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
Mike McKnight

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cleansing the soul, must of course be regarded as meaning essentially the same thing as “blood” here, which stands for the moral spirit of Christ, which is the same thing as Christ himself. He it is who cleanseth the soul — cleanseth it by his life. The figurative language here is purely Judaic, taken from the old temple ceremonies; for “*almost all things were purified by the Law through blood.*” The grand mission and work of Christ are to put away sin from the soul. Sin is the guilt, sin is the curse, sin is the ruin of human nature. Sin is not so engrained, so wrought into the texture of the human soul that it cannot be removed; it can be washed out, it is separable from it, it can be detached.

Forgiveness

By Sam Willcut

Mark Twain once said, “Forgiveness is the fragrance the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it.” Many in the world do not understand the subject of forgiveness since they fail to see what God says in His word about such. Some think that if we only pray to God concerning sin, no matter what the circumstances, God automatically and immediately forgives. Some think that we should forgive others even if they refuse to admit guilt, express remorse or show any signs of repentance. What are we to make of this confusing subject?

Let us first define this word in the way the Bible defines it, which it does, employing five different terms:

- It uses a financial term called “remission” (Matthew 26:28). Concerning sin, man is indebted to God (Matthew 6:12), but in forgiveness, the blood of Jesus remits the guilt of past sins and forwards a zero balance.
- It uses a judicial term called “justification” (Romans 3:24-26). Concerning sin, man stands guilty (James 2:10), but in forgiveness, the blood of Jesus removes our guilt and releases us from the penalty of sin.
- It uses a ceremonial term called “purification” (Titus 2:14). Concerning sin, our souls are defiled (Jeremiah

2:23), but in forgiveness, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from the filth of iniquity (1 John 1:7; Isaiah 1:18).

- It uses a geographic term called “sanctification” (Hebrews 10:29). Concerning sin, we stand in the realm of the world and all who are friends to it (James 4:4), but in forgiveness, the blood of Jesus cuts us loose and sets us apart for holy service in His church (Romans 12:1-2).
- It uses a social term called “reconciliation” (Romans 5:10). Concerning sin, we are separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), but in forgiveness, the blood of Jesus satisfies the justice of God and allows us to draw near to Him in fellowship (Hebrews 8:10; James 4:8).

Now, there is actually a great deal of difference in demonstrating a forgiving spirit and obtaining forgiveness, because forgiveness is a two-way street. Let us now distinguish the two. The Bible declares that we must be people who are willing to forgive (Matthew 5:44-45; 6:14-15; Mark 11:25; Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 18:21-35). This was the demonstration by example of our Lord on Calvary in Luke 23:34: “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*” Nevertheless, unless the perpetrator recognizes fault and expresses proper remorse, one cannot obtain forgiveness. Since we have offended God by our sins, we must obtain His forgiveness based upon His terms. The Bible is replete with passages that inform us of the need of developing a broken and contrite spirit (Psalms 34:18; 51:17).

The New Testament declares thus for the child of God: “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9). Peter told the anguished ones who crucified the Lord, “*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...*” (Acts 2:38). For this reason—while Jesus demonstrated a forgiving spirit, they still needed to indicate proper steps of recognition and remorse for what they did. With both of these, they were able to obtain forgiveness from God, which serves as a wonderful pattern for us in forgiving others also.