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GRACE FORGIVES

Ev. Joel R. McGarvey

“Lest Satan should get advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” (2 Cor. 2:11)

During our VBS Adult Bible Conferences this past summer, we spoke from Ephesians 6 on the subject of putting on the armor of God. In doing so, we began with an examination of the Wicked one, the deceiver, Satan himself and his **“wiles”** (v. 11). The word **“wiles”** comes from the Greek word **“methodeia”** from which we also get our English word, **“method”** or **“methods”**. Often this word is translated schemes, craftiness or wiles, but it is essential that we understand the various **methods** the Devil uses to counter the work of God and attack the life of the believer. The working of Satan in this present dispensation is to thwart the work of God through His Church, the Body of Christ. While these methods will be manifested in many ways, it is within the local assembly and amongst the individual believers, that he is most often able to successfully strike. And while he cannot strip the believer of his sealed position in Christ, he is able to bring about a disruption in unity and discouragement to the believers.

One such area of great attack is linked to the passage quoted above. The Apostle Paul had written his first letter to the saints in the church of Corinth addressing the existence of immorality within the church (1 Cor. 5), instructing them to take the action necessary to rid the sin out of the church. Without going into the details, when we come to Paul’s second letter, he addresses the situation here in chapter two and speaks of the need to now extend love to the individual and to forgive (2 Cor. 2:6-9). It is in the area of this needed love and forgiveness that the Apostle Paul then speaks of forgiveness, ***“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us...”*** (v. 11).

When love and forgiveness are lacking it opens the door for Satan to gain an advantage (*make a gain, outwit*) in the life of the believer (**unforgiver**). In truth, the failure to forgive generally hurts the **unforgiver** much more than it does the **“guilty”** party. For the **unforgiver**, Satan gains that advantage and brings about feelings of alienation, isolation, mistrust, increased anger, discord, and perhaps revenge. It is for this reason that the onus of forgiveness

rests upon the so-called **offended** party. But how is that forgiveness to be offered?

Two passages of Scripture directly address the subject of forgiveness in the life of the believer. ***“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”*** (Eph. 4:30-32). ***“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness”*** (Col. 3:12-14). Someone mentioned to me the so-called **“Lord’s Prayer”** but this is first, not addressed to the Church, the Body of Christ, but rather it is instruction for prayer to Israel in the future Kingdom. Second, it is warning, which is in fact absent the grace, that we see in the present age. Under that prayer, man’s forgiveness from God is meted out in the same manner man forgives man. In this present Church Age, God has already forgiven through the shed blood of His Son, and that forgiveness is applied the very moment the individual places his belief, faith, and trust in the finished work of Christ, His death burial and resurrection. Today I am thankful that I am not forgiven according to how I forgive, but rather in accordance to His finished work on my behalf, and the way He forgives.

If we examine the passage from Ephesians, beginning in verse 32, we are to offer forgiveness in the same manner, (*even as*) Christ freely forgave us. ¹Brock points out that, when the verb **“forgive”** is used of God, it is in the aorist tense (a one-time, completed action). The word **“forgive”** means to give or bestow freely and is linked to the word **“grace.”** Under the dispensation of the Grace of God forgiveness is grace in action. What is grace? Grace is simply the reception of something undeserved. This thought is conveyed in the letter to the Colossians where Paul wrote, ***“even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye....”*** (Col. 3:13). So the question naturally arises, ***“How are we then to forgive?”*** The answer is simple. In the

Christ Died for your Sins

The Need:

“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“For the wages of sin is death...” (Romans 6:23a)

“...there is none that doeth good, no not one.” (Romans 3:12b)

The Result:

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

God’s Response:

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

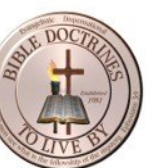
“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins....” (Ephesians 1:7a)

Man’s Response:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved...For I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

Believe it. Receive it. Have Eternal Life

To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery. Ephesians 3:9



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same manner Christ forgave you, executed through His shed blood at Calvary, through His death, burial and resurrection. Nowhere in Paul's writings do we find the confession of sin, or the repentance of sin leading up to, or as a requirement, for salvation. (But what about 2 Corinthians 7:10, "...sorrow worketh repentance to salvation..."? Paul is not addressing soul salvation here, but rather it is a deliverance or rescue (salvation) from the act of sin. This verse is linked to Paul's earlier letter and the sin that was in the church. His letter brought them sorrow and that sorrow caused them to be delivered, or to turn away from the sin.) The finished work of Christ carried out everything that was necessary for the forgiveness of sin and the result of that work becomes ours when we simply believe. Remember that He was raised for our justification; the sin question has been fully satisfied (propitiation) (Rom. 4:25; 3:25). Therefore, though one is wronged by another, it is the responsibility of the one wronged to forgive. This is the grace and love of God in action. **"Owe no man anything, but to love one another..."** (Rom. 13:8). Is there an offense for which there is no forgiveness? In this age of Grace there is no offense that, through the power of the Word and prayer, can't be overcome.

When is this forgiveness executed? In truth at the moment of the offense. But they have not yet acknowledged their wrong or apologized. Perhaps, but remember God's love is unconditional. God loved us even while we were yet sinners at war against Him

(Rom. 5:6-10). If we were honest, an apology really accomplishes little more than puffing up the flesh, "See, I was right after all." And if we were really honest we'd admit that perhaps not all the blame is one sided; it takes two to tangle. "But I just can't forgive that easily." **"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"** (Phil. 4:13).

Finally, it has been said that to forgive is to forget and if it cannot be forgotten then is it really forgiven? To that I would offer this thought; while it is true that we cannot forget, it is also true that we can choose not to remember. What's the difference? The action will not be forgotten, it will forever be etched in the memory banks, but we can make the choice not to "remember" it, not to bring it up again. The offense can be placed in a file in the brain that we simply **choose** (don't go there) not to open. So many schisms exist in believing homes and churches because the child (ren) of God has allowed Satan to get the advantage and bring disruption to meaningful relationships and service.

I will close with several Scripture references that may help us in our quest to resist Satan's attempts to render the believer ineffective through a spirit of unforgiveness: Romans 6:12-13, 19; 12:2-3, 9-10; 13:8-14; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:15-32; Philippians 1:24; Colossians 3:12-17; 23.

¹ Robert Brock **The Fourth Dimension** Volume 2, p. 56

Memorials

Absent from the body, present with the Lord

In Memory of...

S. Lee Homoki

Dwight and Darlene Anderson
Jan and Harry Bultema
Cheryl Bosset
Steve and Cindy Christner
The Ed Crabbe Family
Steven Erwin
Jon and Mary Field
Robert G. Floyd
Randy and Debbie Foulke
Mary and Rich Geers
Nancy Giacometti
Nancy and Norm Grinnell
Ron and Carie Hodgson
Alvin & Gail Kellum
Glenda Kneblick
Ken and Bonnie Lawson

Mike and Cathy Levenhagen
Lesley and Elaine Lewis
Cindy Lippincott
Bettye J Loudd
Beverly Lynn
Henrietta McCormick
Joel And Susan McGarvey
Joel McGarvey Jr.
Joan Melahn
Tadd and Carolyn Mencer
Roger and Susan Neff
Dean and Fran Oldson
Rick and Fay Owsley
Mary Reich
Ken Remington
Irene Renwick
Linda Siler

Neil and Diana Schnaath
Carl & June Schutter
Walter and Donna Stupor
Duane and Joann Terpstra
Mr and Mrs Bruce Townsend
Carol Troutman
Janet and Paul Turner
Eloise Wasilchenko
Jim and Joyce Webb
Kirby Wood
Gary and Susie Wright
Community Bible Church—Tipp City, OH
Grace Community Church-Cadillac, MI
(Hersel Wing)
Grace Community Church—Sioux Falls, SD
Greystone Bible Church, Mobile, AL
"Riding for the Brand" (Carl Schutter)

In Memory of...

Sally Harkness

Nancy Giacometti

In Memory of...

Harold and Alibeth King

Lorraine King

The MAILBAG

A few words from our readers...

Thanks so much for the last issue of Truth Aflame. So fun to read and remember Brother Lee. To my two boys he was Cowboy Lee. They have good memories also. My own best personal memories were his preaching and then the one on one Bible discussions. Loved talking Bible with him. Soooo much to share with whoever was willing to talk to him. Much missed, but I know he is home Precious in the sight of the Lord. Death to us = life for Him. Keep serving. OH

Just finished reading the Memorial Edition. Wonderful, sincere tributes to the man we all loved. Well done. IN

Finally received our Truth Aflame today and I read it cover to cover. Great issue. IA

It was wonderful to have Joel and Susan in our church this week for VBS. Great turnout for children and adults. Praise God. WV

For the ministry of Joel and Susan McGarvey-Blessings abound through your ministry to kids and their families across the Midwest. OK

The specific accusation surrounding the account of Daniel here is that no man could survive a night in a den of hungry lions. Ultimately, I agree. Read what happens to Daniel's accusers in verse 24; they were dead before they even hit the floor. So, ultimately, I agree that lions will do what lions do, and it won't end well if you get in their way when they feel threatened or hungry, UNLESS the Creator God is involved and acts sovereignly in the powerful way only He can.

As King Darius nervously approached the opening to the den of lions the next morning, what does he ask? He calls out, ***"Was your God able to save you?"*** The answer was a resounding yes. The Lord had provided a miracle (Read 6:20-22).

I understand why people struggle with some of these miracles, when they are reading them from a purely humanistic, naturalistic viewpoint, because understanding these things starts with understanding the God who accomplished them.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk. 1:7). I remind you that the context of this verse is found in the conception of a virgin. Mary asks, ***"How shall this be, seeing as how I know not a man?"*** In other words, it isn't scientifically possible, because I am a virgin. The angel responds that nothing is impossible with the Creator, the Sovereign God. This is how the miraculous can happen, how a sea can part, a lion can be tame, a fish can obey, and the sun can stand still in the sky. God makes the impossible (to us) possible. When you finally come to understand God through the Savior Jesus Christ, only then does the Bible truly make sense. When you understand the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, it completely changes your life and destination. This is the most amazing miracle the

world will ever know! The only way a person will ever believe in miracles is to submit to the truth of God.

Ephesians 1:19-23:

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places."

The greatest evidence I can give you is the Bible, the very word of the eternal Creator. Read it with an open mind and see what great things God has done for you. The same God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead can forgive your sin-debt and make you His child, if you will just believe that He paid for your sins, was buried, and rose again so that you can have eternal life with the one, true, REAL God of all creation. Won't you trust Him today?

¹ Withnall, Adam. "Man Mauled to Death by Lions in Front of Busloads of Zoo Visitors." Independent, 21 January 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/man-lion-kill-mauled-india-zoo-safari-enclosure-mohali-a8738511.html>

² "Czech Man Mauled to Death by Lion He Kept in Back Yard." BBC News, 5 March 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47454610>.

IT'S JUST SO UNBELIEVABLE

ANSWERING THE ACCUSATIONS

PART 10

Pastor Matthew Ritchey

There are many accusations made against the validity of Christianity. We have briefly touched on nine such accusations directed against a biblical faith and practice. Throughout these articles, we have attempted to show you that there is another, more believable explanation denying the accusations. Our prayer with these articles has always been two-fold: to disarm excuses that keep people from accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and to solidify the faith of those who have trusted in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The great fallback position for the skeptic who denies the Bible is that "It's just so unbelievable." Some mock that a person would actually believe the parting of the Red Sea and a man not eaten by lions. They roll their eyes when told about Jonah and the big fish. "How could all those animals fit on the ark?" they ask with a sneer.

Certainly, at first glance, many of the accounts recorded in the Bible just seem so unbelievable. I get it. I can understand. These things: healing of lepers, the blind gaining sight, the sun standing still, walls falling down with a shout just don't happen to us today. We have not witnessed anything like them in our lifetime. It is not our experience and it does not fit with our science. So, let's look at one example of an unbelievable account recorded for us in the Bible.

In January of 2019, at a zoo in India, a 20-year-old man ignored posted warnings and climbed over the twelve-foot high safety wall into a lion enclosure. A busload of people watched as the lions mauled this man to death.⁽¹⁾ Two months later, a man from the Czech Republic was found dead inside the cage, where he kept his "pet" lions.⁽²⁾ How awful! How could these things happen? Well, I would suggest not scaling a fence to fall into a lion enclosure or keeping a lion in your backyard. Lions will do what lions do, and it won't end well if they feel threatened or are hungry, which makes the account of Daniel and the lion's den sound too good to be true.

Most of you, whether you attend church or not, are aware of the story of Daniel being thrown into the den of lions. I would encourage you to refresh your memory (and challenge your assumptions) by actually reading the account of this incident in Daniel chapter 6 before

continuing to read this article.

The background of the story is that King Darius of Persia admired the Israelite captive Daniel. Daniel was respectful of the king's authority and was a benefit to the king. Others were jealous of Daniel's position as president over all the princes (Dan. 6:3), so those under Daniel's authority sought a way to get rid of Daniel, not because he was a bad leader, but because they coveted his position. Daniel's jealous peers tried to dig up dirt on Daniel to no avail. But, they knew that Daniel obeyed His God above all others; they equally knew that most kings like laws that appeal to their egos (what leader doesn't like to be told how great they are?). This was their way to get rid of Daniel. The group of presidents and princes gathered before the king and suggested that everyone was in agreement that a royal statute should be declared that, for one month, anyone making requests of any god other than the king would be sentenced to death by hungry lions. The king thought this sounded like a grand idea, so he signed it into law.

When Daniel heard of the new, temporary law, he continued to do what he had always done according to God's Law – he bowed in prayer. The other leaders were watching Daniel, of course, and when they saw Daniel disobeying the edict by bowing down to pray, they ran to King Darius to tattle. The king's heart broke when he realized what he had done. He had essentially sentenced his most trusted advisor to death. He tried all day to find a loophole in the law that would deliver Daniel from death (6:14).

The leaders who had deceived the king were immovable; the law had to stand. Finally, the king gave word that Daniel was to be brought and thrown into the den of hungry lions. Notice what the king says to Daniel at the end of verse 16, ***"Your God whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."*** Indeed, God was going to use Daniel to show the Mede-Persian king the power of the one true God.

God's covenant with Israel was verified by signs and wonders (e.g., Gen. 12:3; Jdg. 6:17; Isa. 8:18; Jer. 32:20; Acts 2:22). God did these miracles so that Israel knew that He was their God and no other (e.g., Ex. 6:7; 16:12; 1 Ki. 20:13, 28; Ezek. 11:12; 13:9; 20:20; Joel 2:27, 3:17). The Church does not have these promises today and should not expect to experience miracles in this way (1 Cor. 13:10; 2 Cor. 5:7). God is not verifying His faithfulness in the same way. Today, he uses His written Word and the Holy Spirit, but in Daniel's day, God WAS proving Himself through miraculous physical signs.

Position OPEN

It is with mixed emotions that we say goodbye to our bookkeeper, Carolyn Mencer, after 17 years of faithful ministry. We are certainly going to miss her diligent labors and especially her smiling face and cheerful personality.

Now we are faced with the task of finding an individual to fill the dual role of Bookkeeper and Secretary. Interested parties must have some computer knowledge, be good with figures and willing to learn. A knowledge of Quick Books is beneficial, but not required.

As a "missionary" ministry all staff members of BDTLB must seek to raise their personal support. Benefits would include paid vacation and sick leave.

If interested, we ask that you prayerfully consider your desire to serve the Lord through BDTLB. All employees must give testimony of their personal salvation, as well as their understanding of the Word of God Rightly Divided.

For more information...

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Email: joelm@bibledoctrines.org or jrmcgarvey@gmail.com



for

Youth

Volume 4. Number 1.

WORKS



GOD'S WORD SAYS: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works..."
Ephesians 2:10a.

The Bible talks about our works as the things we do. We can do good works, or we can do bad works. Some examples of good works would be reading the Bible, helping others, obeying our parents, telling others about Jesus, and being kind. Some of the things that would be bad to do would be lying, disobeying, fighting, and making fun of someone.

How does God feel about our works? Good works make Him happy. When we do bad works, we are really disobeying Him. Boys and girl, we may be able to hide from our parents and our teachers, but we will never be able to hide from God. He sees everything. He knows when we are being bad even when no one else sees us, like stealing money from our friends. He knows when we are doing good, like helping someone who is sad. God wants us to do good things **FOR THE RIGHT REASON**.

Now, it is very important to understand that we do not do good works so that God will let us into Heaven. The Bible tells us that we are saved by grace through faith, **NOT BY WORKS**. Jesus Christ has already done all the work to get us into Heaven. God asks us to believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, was put in a grave, but came back to life again. We are saved and get to go to Heaven by believing with all our heart that Jesus Christ took care of all of the bad things we do and that we are **NOT** saved by our good deeds.

We could never do enough good works to get God to let us into Heaven. We have to believe in Jesus Christ. We will never be bad enough for God to keep us out of Heaven, because Jesus Christ paid for **ALL** of our sins.

So, we do not do good things to **GET** to Heaven. We do good things because we want to obey Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ helps us to do good things for Him. Some people, who have fought in war, said it was an honor to serve our country. Well, we have been given the honor to serve our Savior.

I pray you all understand that we are not saved by doing good works. It is only after we are saved that

Color the pictures below.

Christ did the work to save me.



When you trust that Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and came back to life, you are saved forever! Since you are saved, we can do good works for our Savior.

In the box below, draw a picture of something good God wants you to do.

