

Benefits of BeliefIV -- A MUST LISTEN!

Forgiveness for believers is different from that of unbelievers. Once Saved, always Saved. What is your current "status" with the Lord?

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[0 : 00] For a scripture this morning, I would ask you to turn to Psalm 51, David's great penitential psalm. We are going to be talking about the subject of forgiveness.

And we have presented this as probably the, well I guess we have presented it as, the first divine operating asset that is available to us, that enables us to grow and mature in Christ more than anything else.

And it is understanding what your position is that you are accepted in the beloved. You are not on probation. You have received salvation.

And there are numerous benefits that accrue to the account of every believer just because you are in Christ.

That is an incredible concept. That means you share his righteousness. You share his peace. You share his joy. You share his exaltation.

[1 : 03] You are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. You are locked into him and nothing can change that. Not even God himself.

Because he cannot deny himself. And all who come to him shall be kept by him and will in no wise be lost. This provides the basis for stability, for confident living, for security, knowing where you stand with God.

We are pursuing this and I must confess I'm spending a little more time on this than we will on the others. Probably because it seems to be the most stellar of all of the issues.

And that is the enjoyment, the assurance, the knowledge, the comfort, the peace that comes from knowing. Not hoping, suspecting, guessing.

Knowing that you are forgiven. That you enjoy God's favor. And that it is unconditional. You do not have a greater need.

[2 : 09] No human being has a greater need than the need for forgiveness. Knowing that you are forgiven and accepted of your heavenly father is probably the greatest burden lifter that anyone can experience.

It is part and parcel of being in Christ. And it is available only to those who are in Christ. Because there is one God and one mediator between God and men.

The man Christ Jesus. This salvation, this forgiveness is available through him. Because God has made it available through no other source.

The joy of knowing you are forgiven provides you with the basis of moving out in the Christian life. Of enjoying the Christian life.

There are so many believers who live under a kind of umbrella of spiritual neuroticism.

[3 : 18] They are hither and yon, pillar and post. They don't know where they stand. They are up today and down tomorrow. What a terrible roller coaster ride when God has provided something better for us through his perfect forgiveness.

So today we are going to talk about that and we are also going to discuss the issues. I call them the what abouts. What about forgiving in order to be forgiven?

What about when I just don't feel like I have been forgiven? And what is the difference between the sin of an unbeliever and sin committed by a believer?

And we will be talking about that. The distinction between the sins of a non-Christian versus the sins of a Christian. But first we want to go to Psalm 51.

And in it we have David's confession. This is one of the most beautiful psalms and one of the most realistic in all of the Bible.

[4 : 30] Realistic to human nature. David has grievously, grievously wronged his God.

Wronged his country. Wronged his body. Wronged Bathsheba. Wronged Uriah the Hittite.

He's wronged just about everyone. And he's been confronted with his sin by Nathan the prophet. Who recounted the story about the man with the sheep and taking the neighbor's only sheep and offering it. Or only lamb and offering it for a sacrifice.

And David was livid over the injustice of this. And who would do such a terrible thing? And Nathan said, You, David, you are the man.

[5 : 34] He was found out. His sin was revealed because God revealed it to Nathan. And David is just crushed. He is depressed.

He is depressed. He is depressed. He is a broken man. Nothing breaks a man like sin.

And the confrontation that comes from it. So, the psalm opens with, Be gracious to me, O God, according to thy loving kindness.

Right away, David is appealing to what he knows to be the nature of God. According to the greatness of thy compassion, blot out my transgressions.

Probably the thing that grabs me the most as I read this is that David doesn't begin with excuses, blame shifting, finger pointing, denying.

[6 : 41] He just flat out owns it. He takes responsibility. He is man enough to say, I am at fault.

I am to blame. I have no one else to blame but myself. It takes a big, big person to do that. Little people will find someone else to blame.

Little people will deny it. David was a great sinner. He was a great man also. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity.

And cleanse me from my sin. None of this devil made me do it. For I know, I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.

Now, I want you to understand something that is really, really important. David is making this confession and talking about his personal sin from the standpoint of being a believer.

[7 : 57] David is not an unbeliever on the outside looking in. He's not trying to confess his way into a relationship with God. He is already in a relationship with God.

David is what we would call the equivalent of an Old Testament Christian. True, Christians as such didn't exist then.

But he was a believer. He was connected with Jehovah. He had a relationship with him. He had enjoyed God's favor. And that's probably the thing that made his sin so grievous is the fact that he was in favor with God.

He's not sinning as some stupid, ignorant pagan outside a relationship with Jehovah. He is sinning as an insider.

As one who is described as a man after God's own heart. Do you know human sin, sin, bad behavior on the part of a believer, somehow in a way we don't understand, grieves God.

[9 : 18] We know that we can grieve the Holy Spirit. We know that we can quench the Spirit.

We know that we can resist the Spirit. All of these things are done by believers. Unbelievers. We are the only, think of it, we are the only ones as Christians in a position to wound the heart of God. Unbelievers can't do that. They're already sold under sin. But believers who have that coveted, wonderful, personal relationship with God.

We are the ones who can really hurt God. Now, I know we're talking in terms that we don't really understand because we think of God as being omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient.

Nothing gets to him. Nothing hurts him. Nothing changes him. Nothing. But the Scriptures speak so often about God's passion, about God's feelings.

[10 : 28] And I know God does not feel like we do. But he has some kind of an equivalency that is reserved for deity. That even though he doesn't hurt by the kind of things that hurt us, he is hurt nonetheless in his own way.

And I think we need to keep that in mind. We can displease God. Do you know what that means? It's the opposite of pleasing God. And what does it mean when you please God?

It means that you give God pleasure. The word please and pleasure come from the same root word. It means you can give God pleasure. And you give him no greater pleasure than by acts of obedience.

Nothing pleases God more than an obedient believer. It's the same thing as parent-child relationship. The kids who live next door can never wound and hurt your heart like your kids can. And it's the same way with God. We can please him or we can displease him through our behavior. David is very much aware of that.

[11 : 48] Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.

It haunts me. Can't get away from it. Wake up thinking about it in the middle of the night. He had to relive this scenario so many times. Bathsheba.

Uriah the Hittite. Putting him in a position of vulnerability where he was virtually assured that he would not survive. He has to relive that whole thing over and over.

Against thee, thee only I have I sinned and done what is evil in thy sight. So that thou art justified when thou dost speak and blameless when thou dost judge.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin my mother conceived me. Do you know what David is saying here? By way of modern translation, let me just fill in a Wiseman translation.

[12 : 51] David is shaking his head as he prays to God and he is saying, Oh Lord, I am rotten to the core. That's what he's saying.

I am rotten to the core. Right down to the very depths of my being. I am bad. And I admit it. From the very get-go, I was contaminated.

Behold, thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part thou wilt make me know wisdom.

Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. I want you to notice here, David really knows and understands that he cannot wash himself.

Human sin defiles, but it requires the cleansing of deity, not humanity.

[14 : 00] We cannot cleanse ourselves. We can go to our confessional booths, and we can go to the baptismal fonts, and we can go the way of contrition, and prayers, and promises, and all the rest.

But only God can provide the cleansing that the human really needs. Make me to hear joy and gladness. Haven't heard it for a long time.

Let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins. Blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from thy presence. Do not take thy Holy Spirit from me. Apparently, this was a very legitimate concern that David had. It's wonderful that believers don't need to worry about that, because the Spirit of God indwells us in a way that he did not indwell David, because the Spirit of God was not a permanent residence in Old Testament believers, like it is in New Testament believers.

Since the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, when we place our faith in Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God comes in and takes up residency in the mind and spirit of the believer, and he will never leave us nor forsake us.

[15 : 25] But David was concerned that God would take his Holy Spirit from him. And he says, Restore to me the joy of thy salvation. And the point has been made that David is not asking God to re-save him or to save him over again.

He is saying, All of the joy and the gladness and the enjoyment of my salvation has left me.

It left me when I engaged in this sinful activity. And only by way of forgiveness can I recapture the joy.

So there's no concern about his recapturing his salvation. It is because he is saved that he is even making this plea. He's asking for God to restore something that had been lost, and that is the joy of his relationship with him.

Sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways and sinners will be converted to thee. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation.

[16 : 43] What does that mean? David is saying, I've got blood on my hands. I'm guilty of murder. And you are the only one who can deliver me from it.

There's no way that I can atone for this. And if you do not deliver me from the guilt of this sin, there is no way that I can ever be rid of it.

Then my tongue will joyfully sing of thy righteousness. O Lord, open my lips that my mouth may declare thy praise. For thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it.

I would offer however many rams and bullocks and goats would be required. I'd be glad to do that. But I know that won't do what needs to be done. You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it.

You are not pleased with burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God. Do you know what God wants by way of a human sacrifice? Here it is.

[17 : 56] He wants a broken spirit. A broken spirit. What is a broken spirit? A broken spirit is an attitude without defensiveness.

You can always tell if someone is genuinely repentant and apologetic when they offer an apology. You can always tell if the repentance is genuine because true repentance never comes with defensiveness.

all the defenses are down. I'm not trying to defend myself in any way, shape. I don't have any defense. I am just flat out, plain guilty.

No excuses. No defense. No plea I can make. This broken spirit delights God.

And I'll tell you why. Because a person with a broken spirit is someone who is living in reality as opposed to denial.

[19 : 14] It is confronting the issue as it really is. God is a God of reality. That is like saying God is a God of truth because truth is that which corresponds responds to reality.

And when someone comes to God with a broken spirit that's the only honest way they can come.

That's true of all of us. Unworthy, undone, needy, sinful, broken, that's me.

human ego and human pride is that which short circuits a broken spirit.

A person with a broken spirit has really done business with their own ego and they know the problem is within.

How many times have you heard me say we are all our own worst enemy? Not your parents, not your boss, not your mate.

[20 : 33] We are all our own worst enemy. And when you understand that you have a properly broken spirit. It's a beautiful thing.

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. You know what that means? It means exactly what it says. It means God will not overlook a broken and a contrite heart.

A contrite heart is one that is genuinely open and submissive to God. is one that is thoroughly open before the Lord with nothing to hide and no excuses to make and no denial and no justification.

Just step up to the plate and take full responsibility for your actions. That delights the heart of God. God will not look down upon that and he will not overlook that.

He looks upon it with great favor. And it is as though God is saying when we come to that position oh I'm so glad you have stepped into reality and that you have owned what you did.

[21 : 53] Now we can do business. Now I can gladly bestow my forgiveness because you have taken responsibility.

You can't provide the forgiveness but you can provide the broken spirit and contrite heart and if you do that I'll take care of the forgiveness.

Isn't that something? That's meeting God on his terms. You come with a broken and a contrite spirit and God will take care of the forgiveness.

It's a beautiful thing. The difference between the sin of an unbeliever and sins committed by a believer and I need to reiterate something that we talked about earlier just a little bit.

We'll not go there but I just want to remind you about that passage in Colossians 2 and I think it's verse 13 where the apostle reminds those who are in Christ that we are forgiven all trespasses.

[23 : 00] This is a blanket forgiveness and that is part and parcel of being in Christ. When you receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior God imputed to you the righteousness of Christ.

He makes you accepted in the beloved. You are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ and you are in union with him.

As such you receive a blanket pardon from God for all your sins past present future everything.

That is your official standing before God. It cannot be improved upon. The reason it cannot be improved upon is because it is based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ and there is no way

that that can be improved upon.

We are connected. We are linked to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ because we were crucified with him, buried with him, raised with him, and we share in everything that he is as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

[24 : 26] That is our standing. It is fixed. That is our position. That is our relationship. It cannot and never will change because the controlling force behind it is God's, not yours.

It is all dependent upon him. your standing is fixed, your position is fixed, your relationship is fixed, and nothing changes that.

But, something else needs to be said for your state. Your state and your standing are two different things.

In the same way as it is with the person to whom you were married. what is your standing with the person to whom you were married? The standing is you're married.

You are in a relationship that is designed to be until death us depart. That is your standing. You are as married as you can possibly be.

[25 : 40] You can never get more married than being married. married. That's married. But, what is your state? You say, what's the difference?

And, the answer is this. How are you getting along in your marriage? What kind of terms are you and your mate on?

Do you really enjoy each other's company and presence and fellowship and love and devotion? or are you on the out?

Did you spend last night on the couch? If you did, you're probably not here this morning. But, that's, you know, married couples have these ups and downs.

They have these tips. They have these differences. They have these fights. That affects the state of your marriage.

[26 : 41] marriage. But, it doesn't prevent you from being married. You're still married. Even if you spend two nights on the couch, you're still married. Your standing hasn't changed.

Your state fluctuates. And, so it is in our relationship and our fellowship with God. We have a relationship that is static, that is fixed, that is determined by the finished work of Christ.

that can never change. So, your relationship with your heavenly father can never change. But, your fellowship can be just, some Christians, some Christians spend a lot of nights on the couch as a Christian because the state of affairs that they are in with their heavenly father is not what it ought to be.

They are on the outs with God. They're still believers. They're still married to him. But, the state isn't what it ought to be.

What changes it? And, as I've said before, if you're not as close to God as you used to be, guess who moved? You moved. How did you move? There's only one way that we can move away from our closeness to the Lord.

[28 : 06] And, that is, we displease him through our attitude and through our actions. These things are called sins. They are moral failures. They are not mistakes.

They are deliberate acts or deliberate attitudes that are contrary to the nature and being of our heavenly father.

We are not acting like a member of the family. We are embarrassing the family when we engage in that kind of behavior. Our state fluctuates.

Our standing is fixed. Our practice as Christians fluctuates because some days you're ornery and disagreeable and nasty and hard to get along with.

Some days you are sweet and kind and pleasant and helpful. We fluctuate. That's part of our humanity. We're all like that. We're all like that.

[29 : 18] Our standing is our relationship. Our state is our fellowship. And I think the crowning example that we've just given in the Old Testament was with David.

crowning example nationally in the Old Testament is the nation of Israel. What was the problem with Israel? What wasn't the problem with Israel?

God continually chided them for their sin and their disobedience. And why did he take them to task so often for that? Because they were his kids.

That was a problem. You don't find God going after and blaming the Assyrians like he did the Israelites. You don't find him chastising the Babylonians like he did the Israelites.

You don't find God complaining about the idolatry of the Hittites or the Gergashites or the Hivites or the Parasites.

[30 : 21] Who is it that God is always coming down on for their sinful behavior? It's his own people! But never does he say, alright, that's it! I've had it with you people! You're not my people anymore!

I'm going to find somebody else! I'm going to kick you out! Nope! With loving arms outstretched to you all day long, I plead with you because God has a relationship to Israel, a relationship not based on their performance, repentance, if it were, he would have ended them all in the desert, not just that generation, but all of them.

And what is their way back to him? Repentance, acknowledgement of their sin, confession of their sin, broken in a contrite heart, heart, and they experienced periods of revival where they were in tune with God and then they would go back just like us, only they did it nationally, we do it individually.

In the New Testament we've got numerous examples of this. I think of the Corinthians whom the Apostle Paul continually refers to as saints, holy ones, holy ones, think of that, hagios, holy ones, holy ones always act in a holy manner, right?

No. Holy ones sometimes can be really unholy. Christians can be very un-Christianly sometimes.

[32 : 21] And Paul never says to the Corinthians, I call them his spiritual juvenile delinquents, he never says to the Corinthians, you people, your behavior is so crummy, your divisions, your nastiness, the stuff you put up with, the things you engage in, I tell you you realize you have forfeited your sainthood, you aren't saints anymore, you used to be, but you send away your sainthood and God kicked you out, you don't find that kind of language, God never loved the Corinthians because of their saintliness, he loved them because he loved them, he loved them because they put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ and they put themselves in a position of irrevocable love of God, and can you abuse that love and take advantage of it?

We do it all the time, we do it all the time, grace opens itself to abuse and taken advantage of, and Christians know how to do it, and there isn't a one of us that hasn't done it, myself included.

Every time we sin, every time we covet, every time we are envious, every time we are unkind, every time we are hateful, we are taking advantage of God's grace.

We do it all the time, and it's wonderful that God never responds with pure and simple justice. grace. It's just more grace and more grace and more grace. For where sin abounds, grace does much more abound.

[34 : 15] Incredible. What about forgiving to be forgiven? Let's go to that passage in Matthew chapter 6.

Matthew chapter 6. I know the typical dispensational answer to this because I have taught it, but I have a better answer now, I think, and I want to run it by you.

I think this is the same thing, the same principle. I would certainly agree that there are dispensational distinctives because you've got to keep in mind that what Christ is talking about in the Sermon on the Mount is prior to his death, burial, and resurrection and his securing for us something that did not exist before his death, burial, and resurrection.

And by that I'm saying all of these many benefits of which we have just begun to explore the first one. But here in Matthew 6, there is an interesting expression that is used and our Lord has just given the model prayer that is commonly referred to as the Lord's Prayer, but it's more appropriately the disciples' prayer.

And that is in verse 8 through 13. But I want you to notice in verse 14, Jesus said, If you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

[35 : 52] But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. What does that mean? I think it means exactly what it says.

And it needs to be in this context. But he is not talking about forgiveness as it relates to personal salvation. These to whom Jesus is speaking are his apostles.

They are already in a covenant relationship with Jehovah, not only nationally with Israel, but individually and personally. Now, we don't know the intricacies of exactly what they believed before the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was available for belief, but they were believers in the Old Testament mode, the same as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were.

And that is important to note, because when Jesus says your heavenly father will not forgive you if you don't forgive others, he's not talking about their salvation or their relationship, he's talking about

their fellowship.

How do I know that? Because he's made it quite clear, your heavenly father. The heavenly father is not the heavenly father of unbelievers.

[37 : 19] He is the heavenly father only of believers. That's true Old Testament and new. Our father who art in heaven pertains only to those who are believers.

He is not the father of those who are not believers. True, he is the father by virtue of creation in that all were created by him.

But we are talking about a spiritual sense. And when Christ said to the Pharisees, you are of your father the devil, he made a clear distinction.

He never told the Pharisees that God was their heavenly father because he wasn't. But he is clearly the heavenly father of these. They are already in a relationship with God. So what does that mean? It means to them that if you have a grudge against a brother, if you have hatred or animosity against a brother, or if a brother has something against you and you will not resolve it, you will not make amends with your brother, what do you think that does to your fellowship with God?

[38 : 35] where does that put you with God? Well, you're still a believer and you're still in relationship, but what about your fellowship?

Do you think God is pleased if you have a grudge against someone? Or if someone has come to you because they have wronged you and they ask you for forgiveness and you say, I've been hurt too deeply, I just can't forgive you, I just can't forgive you, I'll try, but I just don't think I can forgive you.

Then, do you think that you can go to your heavenly father in prayer and everything is fine? Of course not. What does God want you to do?

God is saying, listen, if you want to be on good terms with me, oh, I know you're my child and I know you're in relationship with me and I know that isn't going to change, but if you want to be on the terms with me that you ought to be, you go to your brother whom you refuse to forgive and you ask his forgiveness for refusing to forgive him and you forgive him.

You make things right with him and then you come and talk to me and my office will be open. This is all about fellowship. It's not about relationship.

[40 : 09] If you have someone against whom you have a grudge or an issue and you will not resolve it, you will not rectify it, you will not forgive or you will not apologize or whatever the case is, where do you think that puts you with your heavenly father?

Do you think that Jesus Christ died on the cross so that we could treat each other in such a shabby manner? God is saying, you make things right with your brother, then the way is open to come to me and make things right with me.

Don't expect me to forgive you when you are unforgiving towards someone else. That classic passage in Ephesians 4, be ye kind one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

a believer can have unconfessed sin in his spirit that injures and hinders his relationship with his heavenly father.

It has nothing to do with your salvation. It has everything to do with your closeness to him. Now, I'd like to turn for just a moment to that passage that is very controversial, especially among grace believers.

[41 : 46] And it's 1 John 1, 9, and you're all familiar with it. And again, I take the position that this is a very clear case of fellowship versus relationship.

And I think that this is a principle. This principle of confessing our sin, which means to acknowledge, own up to, admit it. Because what do we do?

I remember several years ago, we had a conference, a grace conference here. And I don't know exactly how the issue came up, but I asked the question.

I was in the audience and I asked the question, and Paul Sadler was in the pulpit. And I asked the question, what about believers, that sin?

And already 1 John 1 9 had been disavowed because it was not considered Pauline. And the issue, I tried to press the issue, well, what then do we do as believers?

[42 : 51] What does a believer do when they know they have sinned? And the answer I got was, that's an interesting question, we'll have to research that. I don't know, some of you might have been here and remember that.

But that's as far as it went. And they said, maybe at a future conference, I don't know if it was ever dealt with or not, at least not to my knowledge. But what does, let me put it this way, do you know when you've sinned?

Boy, I do. Sometimes I feel like I can't get away with anything. And about the time I'm ready to complain about that, the Lord reminds me, Marv, it's a lot better to have a sensitive conscience than to have a seared one.

So, don't feel bad if you can't get away with anything. And besides, there are probably plenty of people who think that I get away with a lot, that I'm probably not nearly as sensitive as I ought to be about a lot of things.

And I don't doubt that that's true. But what do you do when you know you have sinned? And by the way, when you bark and snap at your mate, when you're critical, when you're surly and hard to get along with and cranky, when you say unkind things, do you know what that is?

[44 : 19] That's sin. That's sin. Don't call it mistakes. Oh, yeah, make mistakes. Oh, get out of here. with that. That's sin. That's sinful behavior.

It is contrary to the nature and character of God. Sinful behavior. So, what do you do about it? As a Christian, what do you do? You can take the position, I don't do anything because I'm already forgiven.

What's to do? That sounds kind of callous. That sounds sinful, too, doesn't it? To have that kind of an attitude. So, do we say, well, I'm already forgiven all sins, past, present, future, just forget it. Does it bother you? It should. My sin is always before me. You excuse it?

Well, I shouldn't have done that, but there's a lot of people who've done a lot worse than I have. life. I'm only human. Deny it.

[45 : 26] Justify it. Well, I probably shouldn't have said that, and I wouldn't, except she made me so mad, so it's her fault. That's all blame shifting.

That's passing the buck. What do you do with it? I'll tell you what you do with it. First thing, you admit it.

You admit it, and that is hard. That is hard, especially if you have to go to your mate and say, I know I deeply hurt you, I don't have any excuse.

I shouldn't have said that. I shouldn't have done that. It's my fault. There's no one to blame but myself. I take full responsibility. I'm really sorry.

I want you to forgive me. Would you please forgive me? When you do that, you are taking a position of weakness, but it's coming out of a position of strength, and you are putting them in the driver's seat.

[46 : 51] Now, they hold all the cards. You're asking for their forgiveness. They are in a position to give it or to deny it. Hopefully, they will give it because they should.

forgive. And if they don't forgive, then they are compounding the situation and they're making it worse than it was. That's what Christians do with their sin. We go to God and we just admit it.

But I want to make this very, very clear. This is very important. And I'm not splitting hairs. This is a very important theological distinction. You do not ask God for forgiveness.

You ask people for forgiveness. You never ask God for forgiveness. And I'll tell you why not.

Because when you ask for forgiveness, what does that imply? You're right.

[47 : 57] It implies maybe it will be granted, maybe it won't. Sometimes we think that if we go to God and ask for forgiveness, God's going to pull out his ledger and say, let me see now, this is the 37th time that you've maybe I won't be so eager to forgive this time.

I'm going to let you sweat. If we acknowledge, if we own up to, if we admit our sin, he is faithful. That means God is reliable, dependable. you can count on him. He will never fail. He will always make good on his promise.

He would not know how not to. He is faithful and just. That means God's righteousness is not compromised because he forgives you.

It means God has not lowered his standards because he forgives you. it doesn't mean that God has looked the other way or that he has minimized your sin because he forgives you.

[49 : 29] But he is just in being able to forgive. It means he remains righteous even though he is able to forgive you. and that which enables him to do so is because Jesus Christ paid for your sin.

All of your sin. So God is able to take your sin and throw it under the blanket of the forgiveness provided through the finished work of Jesus Christ.

And what about sin? Is it possible that I could sin against God and not even be aware of it? Of course! That's our humanity again sticking out all over us.

I find that sinning is so easy I can do it without even realizing it. Just some kind of a knee-jerk reaction. And then not even remember that I did it.

So you know what God does with that? He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[50 : 38] All unrighteousness. That tells me that if we bring an attitude of admission ownership confession to God He not only forgives us what we confess but He takes into consideration that broken attitude and He forgives us all sin.

and cleanses us from all sin. What if you don't feel forgiven? Yes, I've gone to God I've confessed my sin I've owned up to it I've acknowledged it but I just don't feel like God has forgiven me.

Well all I can say is you'll have to decide whether you want to place your confidence in what God who cannot lie has said or in what your feelings which are very capable of lying you'll just have to determine the best source.

if God says he has forgiven you all trespasses in Christ can you believe that or do you think your feelings have more credibility than God's word.

I'll tell you what I don't trust my feelings any further than I can throw this pulpit and I've lifted this thing enough times to know this baby is heavy.

[52 : 15] Your feelings are fickle your feelings will lead you astray you dare not trust your feelings God wants us to trust his word he cannot lie and when God says I've forgiven you you just take that as gospel truth because that's what it is.

Can you do that? This is one more aspect of what we have been saying for so many times all God wants is to be believed and in this case has God really forgiven me yes if you have acknowledged if you have owned admitted that's that's the meaning of the word confess it means to say the same thing as to agree with we don't excuse it justify it explain it away we admit it and when we do that God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins so what do you do when you sin again well you confess it again and what does God do he forgives you again he does not resave you he does not place you back into the union with

Christ because you were never out of the union but you were out of fellowship and God wants sweetness and closeness and warmth and contact with you as a believer and when we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin to cleanse us from all unrighteousness I don't find this a dispensational thing at all I find this a biblical principle from Genesis to Revelation and while there are different ramifications dispensationally for believers now on this side of the cross it doesn't really impact this great and important principle so I am going to consider this first and foremost issue of one of the benefits of being a believer as sufficiently dealt with certainly not thoroughly dealt with by no stretch of the imagination have we completely covered the waterfront on this there's a great deal more that could be said but

I plan to move on and deal with other divine operating assets that God has made available that come along with the forgiveness package and we'll be developing that in the future if you have questions or if you have found my more than welcome to do so I would even encourage it and just feel free to write out your comments or questions and drop them in the offering box on your way out and you don't even have to sign your name if you can do so if you want but if you want to be anonymous that's fine and just drop it in the offering box and I promise to give it faultful consideration and again I'm sorry that I've exhausted all the time and you didn't have any for Q&A; but I'll try to make it up to you did I say that last week too will you forgive me how can you not may we stand please father there is nothing about you that we would change even if we could and we recognize that the incredible great grace that you possess is always available in unlimited supply for any of your dear children who come to you in need we can always find grace and help in time of need thank you for being the

God that you are for your availability for your great loving forgiving heart and for your concern that we as individuals face the reality regarding our own sin and that we deal with it appropriately and how grateful we are that you have made more than ample provision for that sin if there is anyone here today that does not enjoy the knowledge the certainty of the forgiveness of sin we pray that they may see Jesus Christ as their substitute for that sin and that they may with their will embrace the Son of God saying Lord Jesus you died to pay the price for my sin and I want to trust you I want to believe on you and enjoy that relationship that comes from being in Christ here is my heart and

my mind and my will

[57 : 36] I give them to you with thanksgiving in Christ's name amen if you've made that your prayer be sure to tell someone or tell me I have some literature that would be helpful to you and gentlemen if you could help me for just about five minutes