

Sermon on the Mount Part XXXII - More on Forgiveness

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[0 : 00] We return once again to the Sermon on the Mount, and we are currently in chapter 6 of the Gospel according to Matthew. And we've already given some attention, at least all we intend to, because there are a lot of subjects that I don't know very much about, and fasting is one of them.

So the treatment that we gave of it, this last session that we had, will be the last, unless somebody wishes to pursue that further, in which case I'll give it consideration, but I don't plan to.

So we are dealing with this great subject, this monumental topic of forgiveness, and along with having located my Bible, which was misplaced, we've got the balance of the questions.

that you had submitted, one of which was, why would anyone spurn God's forgiveness? And another has to do with, is it possible to be forgiven after death?

And one asks, would you please address 1 Corinthians 6-9, while you are covering the forgiveness issue you are now studying?

[1 : 15] And we will look at that, and also connect that with Galatians 5-19, both of which have to do with behavior that those who commit these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

So we'll be talking about those a little bit as well. So we're going to give you a kind of a mishmash, hodgepodge of forgiveness, but all of which I consider very, very important.

And as we've already pointed out to you, let me reiterate again, the importance of understanding the principle of forgiveness under the law of Moses, to which the nation Israel was accountable, and the principle of forgiveness under the dispensation of grace, to which the church, the body of Christ, is accountable.

To say that there is no difference, forgiveness is forgiveness and it doesn't make any difference, is to ignore the changes that have taken place because of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

When Jesus Christ paid in full the ultimate price for the sins of the world, everything changed. Everything changed.

[2 : 31] Dramatically. And for so much the better. So in keeping with that, let me remind you again that Matthew chapter 6 contains a very conditional statement that had been imposed upon the nation of Israel under the dispensation of law.

This is the Mosaic economy. It is imperative that we keep in mind that when Jesus Christ came from the time he was born in Bethlehem until the time he died on that cross, he lived, functioned, operated, taught under the Old Testament economy, not the New.

And the thing that is so misleading about that is because Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are in the New Testament. So it is just an automatic but an erroneous assumption that people make when they come to Matthew chapter 1 and verse 1.

This is the beginning of the New Testament. Actually, most Bibles even say that at the beginning. But you may be sure that was not in the original text at all. So it is absolutely essential.

And it makes such a huge difference to understand that things before the death of Christ on the cross were one way, and they dramatically changed another way after Christ's death on the cross.

[4 : 02] After all, his being on that cross is the reason he came. And when he fulfilled his mission in dying for the sins of the world, it provided a completely new way of access to approach God, namely through this one himself.

Prior to that time, it was pretty much limited to the law of Moses, the day of atonement, the ritual, the sacrifices of animals, and all the rest. And that cared only for the Jewish people.

The law of Moses was only given to Israel, never given to our neighbors. Jews would never have expected the Babylonians to live by the Ten Commandments.

They didn't even know what they were. They weren't given to them. They could have cared less. So what was the plight of the Gentiles? The plight of the Gentiles was terrible. Ephesians chapter 2. Makes that quite clear. They were without God, without hope in this present world. And that simply means that they were limited to the justice of God.

[5 : 09] And so it is today. That's the status of the Gentiles today. Even though Christ, in his death on the cross, paid a corporate price, a corporate price for all of humanity.

This is because, as in Adam, all die. That's not only physical. That's spiritual as well. In Adam, all die.

In Christ shall all be made alive. That applies to the same corporate entity, which means everybody in the whole world. So, we are able to preach to people, Christ died for your sins.

Therefore, you may come to him through Jesus Christ, the one who paid that sacrifice. And that's the good news of the gospel. Missionaries, when we send them forth, whether they're home missionaries or foreign missionaries, they are sent forth to rescue people from the justice of God. Think of that. Think of that. Missionaries are charged with the ministry of rescuing people from the justice of God.

[6 : 27] That's something that nobody wants to come under. Because if you receive justice from God, that means you get exactly what you deserve. And that is the only recourse that is left open to people who do not embrace the gospel of the grace of God and enjoy salvation.

There is nothing left for them. But God's justice. And that is not a pretty thing to contemplate. Because the justice will come from a source of absolute, pure holiness and righteousness. Solemn thing to consider. But I want to go to this passage in Matthew 6. Let's go there now quickly. And emphasize again the conditionality of forgiveness.

Verse 14. Jesus is speaking and he says to these Jews in his audience at the time. If you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly father will also forgive you.

But if you do not forgive men, then your father will not forgive your transgressions. And it is remarkable how many people, well-intended, Bible-believing Christians, try to apply that to themselves today.

[7 : 50] And this has no application. Should we forgive? Well, of course we should. But our forgiving others is not the basis on which God forgives us. God forgives us on the basis of the finished work of Christ.

But when these verses were given by our Lord, finished work of Christ wasn't history. It was future. It hadn't happened yet. So this is given in accordance with the law that was in force at the time, which was the Mosaic Law.

And please understand, nobody is saying, well, this is wrong. No, it isn't wrong. It's wrong now. But it wasn't wrong then. Animal sacrifices are wrong now.

But they weren't wrong then. That's a huge difference. If you do not make that distinction, you will be forever befuddled in the Scriptures.

And believe me, they are too precious and priceless and too much to be richly enjoyed, to be befuddled in these Scriptures. To reinforce this, let me go to Matthew 18.

[9 : 04] Same book, Matthew 18. And keep in mind, we are still dealing with the same time frame. This is all prior to the cross. Verse 21.

This is a very familiar passage, but I didn't mention it in connection with this before, so we want to take it now. Then Peter came and said to him, Lord, how often shall my brothers sin against me and I forgive him?

Up to seven times? Well, that seems pretty generous. If somebody has ripped you off, you forgive them. And if they do it again, you forgive them. And what about the seventh?

Peter probably thinks he's being quite generous here and quite tolerant. How about seven times? He's feeling very generous. And the Lord said, I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to 70 times seven.

Now, who's counting? We're talking 490 times. And it seems a little ridiculous. Well, it is supposed to be ridiculous. Our Lord is stating it.

[10 : 10] And the point that he is making is this. You are to forgive him as often as forgiveness is needed. Who's counting? So, for this reason, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.

Now, Jesus is going to give a parable. And the parable is designed to emphasize and illustrate the need to forgive as we are forgiven.

And that passage, by the way, back in Matthew 6, and I didn't read this, but I think it's in verse 12. Remember in what is referred to as our Lord's Prayer, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Some translations render it debts. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And the idea is that God's forgiveness is called forth on the same plane and to the same degree that we forgive others.

There's that conditionality again here. And this illustration is given by way of a parable. So, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.

[11 : 31] Now, this is an astronomical amount.

I mean, this is beyond the pale. This is a huge amount of money. And, again, it is deliberately intended to be out of reach.

But since he did not have the means to repay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had and repayment to be made.

The slave, therefore, falling down, prostrated himself before him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will repay you everything.

And the Lord of that slave felt compassion. And he released him and forgave him the debt. Huge amount of money.

[12 : 29] He said, That's okay. I'll write it off. Don't worry about it. The debt is forgiven. But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii.

Now, a hundred denarii is a drop in the bucket to ten thousand talents. I mean, this is a real chump change. This is next to nothing.

And this man who had been forgiven this astronomical debt thanked his master for forgiving him, walked outside his establishment, and ran into someone who owed him money.

Not much, but just a little bit. And he said, he began to choke him. He seized him and began to choke him, saying, Pay back what you owe.

So his fellow slave fell down and began to entreat him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will repay you. He was unwilling, however, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed.

[13 : 42] So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their Lord all that had happened. Then summoning him, his Lord said to him, and by the way, the use of this word Lord is not referring to Jesus.

It's referring to an earthly master who was involved in this situation at the time, and he is referred to as Lord. Don't confuse this Lord with the Lord Jesus Christ. There's two different Lords here. He reported to their Lord all that had happened.

Then summoning him, his Lord said to him, he brings back this wicked slave, the one that he had forgiven so much. He calls him back in, and he says, You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you had treated me.

You begged me for forgiveness, and I forgave you. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?

And his Lord moved with anger, not compassion, anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.

[14 : 52] So shall my heavenly Father also do to you if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.

What is this saying? This is saying this is a reinforcement of the conditionality of forgiveness in Matthew chapter 6.

Jesus is simply giving an illustration here. Now, there is no reason to believe that this was a true occasion. He made it up. It was understood that it was made up.

He just created on the spot a story, and he related it to them to illustrate the point that forgiveness is conditional.

After Christ died, everything changed. We need to understand that. Everything changed. The whole Mosaic law is set aside. We're not under law.

[15 : 52] We're under grace. Law came by Moses. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. We have an entirely different format to follow now in the dispensation of grace.

What we enjoy wasn't even thought of back here. In fact, what we enjoy now in the body of Christ under the dispensation of grace was fully repudiated by the whole Jewish community when they first began to preach it.

When the apostle Paul began laying out the principles and the doctrines of grace, his greatest objectors and antagonizers were the Jews, because they had come from a background of the law, the law, the law, the law.

And they thought the law would be enforced. The law of Moses would be enforced forever. As long as God is God. The law of Moses will always be enforced. Had they just read Jeremiah 31.

Jeremiah makes it very clear that the day shall come when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Not like the first covenant which they broke.

[17 : 12] He's talking about the law of Moses. But the new covenant will be a radical departure from the old. It is infused with grace in a way that the old is not.

And it is just remarkable. The difference is just tremendous. So then we compared that with Colossians chapter 1.

And for anybody who can read these passages and not say, hey, there's a real problem here. I just don't know what they're thinking with.

I just don't know how they reason. Because I see a tremendous problem here. Colossians 1 and verse 13. For he delivered us.

That is, God the Father delivered us from the domain of darkness. That's spiritual darkness. And transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

[18 : 16] In whom we have redemption. The forgiveness of sins. And he is the image of the invisible God. The firstborn of all creation.

For by him all things were created both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

All things have been created by him and for him. And he is before all things. And in him all things hold together. He is also the head of the body, the church.

And he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he himself might come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him.

And through him, through Christ, to reconcile all things to himself. That is, the Father. The Son reconciles all things to the Father.

[19 : 11] Having made peace through the blood of his cross. Through him, I say. Whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds.

Yet, he has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death. What does he mean? Now. Now, as a result of the death of Christ being a historical fact and that corporate penalty was paid.

But this verse would not have been possible to have been given before the death of Christ. Well, I suppose it could have been given prophetically. But it could not be given as an accomplished fact.

Because it wasn't accomplished. Not until that fateful day outside Jerusalem. Somewhere in the area of 30 to 32 A.D. On that Roman hill called Calvary.

Yet, he has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death. In order to present you. Who? Who is the present you?

[20 : 23] Who is the you? Well, if you come back to chapter 1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God and Timothy our brother.

To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae. They are the you. They are the addressees to whom he is writing. And all who are in the body of Christ because they have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their sin bearer.

You become a separated one. A sanctified one. You become a saint. Admittedly, our behavior is not always saintly.

But your position is you are a saint. The word simply means a separated one. You are one as if you were standing here in a crowd of people.

It is just as if God reached down and picked you up. Lifted you up out of the crowd of the world. And brought you over here. And set you in a much smaller crowd.

[21 : 33] And that much smaller crowd is the spiritual body of Christ. Where all who are believers in Christ dwell. So, here is the world. Big crowd.

He separated you. He picked you up and brought you over here and set you down in this new group. He sanctified you. That's the meaning of sanctify.

He separated you. He pulled you out of the mass and put you in this special group over here of believers. Fabulous. Yet, he has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death.

Christ's death. In order to present you. And this word is just beautiful. It means in order to make a present of you.

He makes a present of you. To the Father. He purchased you. You become a present.

[22 : 40] And he presents you as a present to the Father. Before him. And look at this. Holy. And blameless. And beyond reproach.

What? Holy. Blameless. Beyond reproach. That is our position.

It has nothing to do with our behavior. It has everything to do with our being a saint. Someone has said, there are saints and there are ain'ts.

And there are the only two kinds there are. So, if you're not a saint, you're an ain't. If you're an ain't, you're not a saint. This is unconditional.

This is not based on your behavior. It's not based on your deservedness. It's not based on your performance. That's why it's called justification by faith. All that means is, you are declared righteous solely on the basis of having believed.

[23 : 46] You mean that's it? Just having believed? Yeah. Well, anybody could do that. Yeah. That's why it's so wonderful. That's why it's good news.

You don't have to be an intellectual. You don't have to be wealthy. You don't have to be well-connected. You don't have to be well-groomed. You don't have to be any of those things. All you need to do is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, because all the merit is his.

And then he goes on and talks about, If indeed you continue in the faith, firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

I think this has to do with what we do and how we conduct ourselves afterwards. Because once we are in that position, then we are also in a position to make our performance count worth something. And not all believers do. So we are going to be judged and evaluated at the Bema seat. This is the award throne of Christ. That's in 1 Corinthians 3, where he talks about our works, wood, hay, and stubble, gold, silver, and precious stone.

[24 : 59] Everybody has something to commend them or something to detract from their reward. But because Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sin, there's nothing left for us to pay.

Jesus paid it all. All to him I freely owe. Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow. We are presented to him unblemished. And it's just, it's all because of grace. Come over to chapter 2 of Colossians. And let's just jump in with verse 12.

Well, 12 is so good, let's start with verse 11. And in him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands. Well, what in the world does that mean?

That means it's a spiritual circumcision, not a physical circumcision. What was the physical circumcision? That's what the Jews did. But hey, that dispensation is gone.

[26 : 05] That's past. Physical circumcision has been replaced with spiritual circumcision. This is God circumcising the heart. That's entirely different.

It is spiritual, not physical. And the baptism that he is speaking of here is a spiritual baptism. Before, it was a physical baptism.

It was John the Baptist's baptism. When and how did John the Baptist function? Under the law, the Mosaic law. And water baptism was the order of the day.

And John baptized who knows how many thousands, including our Lord Jesus. But in the New Testament, under the dispensation of the grace of God, water baptism has been replaced by spirit baptism.

So when Paul writes Ephesians 4, 5, he says, One Lord, one faith, one baptism. That is being baptized into the spiritual body of Christ.

[27 : 05] That's the baptism that regenerates, that cleanses the soul, the spirit, that does the job of making a new person out of you on the inside.

So there's spiritual circumcision and there is spiritual baptism. And continuing with verse 12, Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

And when you were dead, that's again, spiritually dead, separated from God. In your transgressions, these are the acts, the deeds, the negative behavior that we participate in. The lying and the stealing and the conniving and all that goes along with it. These are our transgressions. And we are dead in these transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together. This is spiritual life. With him, having forgiven us all our transgressions. [28 : 19] That is part and parcel of the forgiveness. All our transgressions and being made alive. When he made you alive in him spiritually. Now listen, this is really important.

When he made you alive in him spiritually and gave you spiritual life, it was a perfect, thoroughly regenerated spiritual life.

Nothing lacking. Nothing lacking. That is your official position before God. And if you have one blemish on that record against you, you are unacceptable.

We are presented before him holy, without spot or blemish. That means absolutely perfect. Even though some of us are real stinkers.

You are a stinker in your performance. Not in your position. And you know something? In our performance, everybody is a stinker.

[29 : 23] No exceptions. Oh, there are nice people. But we don't have any nice, perfect people. We have only nice, marred, imperfect people.

Still nice by human standards. But the standard that counts is the one that God has set. And God's standard is perfection.

Everything about God is perfect. His ways are perfect. His word is perfect. His life is perfect. His demands are perfect. God demands perfection from us.

And we cannot provide perfection. So in his grace and love, he turns right around and provides for us what he demands from us that we can't give.

So where are you going to get that perfection that God requires? You get it from the only one who has it to give. And that is Jesus Christ. And that's what it means to be in him.

[30 : 23] In him. You share in his death, his burial, his resurrection, his life, his righteousness. You are an heir of God and joint heirs with Christ.

This is incredible. This is just nothing more but an elaboration on the good news. This is all part of the package. And he has forgiven us all trespasses.

All. That is your official position. Yeah, but yesterday I lied. I told a whopper. Well, you shouldn't do that. Lie not one to another. Let every man speak truth to his neighbor.

You're not supposed to do that. But as a Christian, one with a perfect position, yeah, you can blow it. You sure can. Because you still have a volition. When God saved you, he did not remove your will from you.

The will is what you use to do stupid things with. Sinful things. Bad things. You use that will. God did not regenerate the human will.

[31 : 24] You still have the ability to do really dumb things. You still have the ability to disobey God. No one should be more obedient to God than a believer.

But sometimes you can choose to go your own way. You can tell God, bug off. I'll call you if I need you. Believers can do that. That does not affect your official standing at all.

That prodigal son, when he took his portion of the inheritance and went off to a far land and blew the money. And we don't know. It was probably the equivalent of Las Vegas and wine, women, and song, something like that.

And he was completely broke. He really lived a very, very messed up life. A life that was terribly unbecoming of him and injurious and wounding and hurtful to the father.

But he was doing his thing. And yet, all the while he was doing that, he was a son of the father.

[32 : 31] That was his official standing. His behavior was wretched. It was wretched. And when he came back and his father saw him from a far distance and ran and grabbed him and hugged him and, give me the gold rings and kill the fatted calf and we're going to have a big party.

Wow. Isn't that amazing? That's the principle. The principle there of grace, too. Well, one other thing I need to treat, and that is, well, there's a couple of other things, but someone submitted the question about, in some sense, are we, the question about election, predestination, et cetera, and

are we all elect or how could we all be elect?

Some saved and so on. So I wanted to go, first of all, to 2 Peter 3. This is a really remarkable concept.

And I would be the first to say, I don't know how else to interpret this if it isn't what I'm going to tell you.

And, of course, I don't have any business telling you if I haven't arrived at what I consider to be an acceptable interpretation. And, yes, it's true. It is true that the whole world, all of humanity, is elect in one sense.

[34 : 01] And that is the sense that is being set forth here in 2 Peter 3. And it's a familiar verse that we've been over before.

It has to do with verse 9. And Peter says, I think the King James probably says, Well, what did he do to demonstrate that?

If God wasn't willing for any to perish, what did he do to take care of that situation? And the answer is this. He sent his son to die for the world, the sins of the world.

And when Jesus died on that cross, he paid the penalty for every single last human being who ever lived or who ever would live. He paid the penalty for as many as those that came under the penalty through the death, through the disobedience of Adam.

And that's everybody, all of humanity. And the word that is used here, that God was not willing that any should perish, is the word that's translated in the Greek, probably doesn't mean anything to you, but it is the word *bulimai*.

[35 : 33] And it means the settled conviction or the determination of God. In other words, God had made up his mind absolutely, positively, he was going to take steps so that it would not be necessary for anyone to perish.

So in the death of his son, Jesus Christ, which is the fulfillment of this verse, that's what demonstrates or proves that God was not willing for any to perish.

That is, he provided his son to die for everyone, so that none need perish. And the word that is used here has to do with the determinative, deliberate action of God, whereby he wouldn't have it any other way.

It is absolutely determined. He is going to bring it to pass. And when God makes up his mind to do something, he does it. And what God made up his mind to do was to provide a savior, and he would not be dissuaded.

He would not allow this counsel to fail. He made sure that it came to pass in sending his son. He demonstrated that. Now we have an entirely different situation over in 1 Timothy chapter 2, and I want you to look at that.

[36 : 44] 1 Timothy chapter 2. And let's begin with verse...

Well, for time's sake, let's just jump in with verse 3. This is good and acceptable. Talking about the previous two verses. In the sight of God, our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now, how is that different from what we just read in Peter? It is different this way, and it isn't all that apparent at all in the English, but in the Greek, the word that is used here for desires is a completely different Greek word, and it comes from the word *phileo*, and it means God's desire.

Well, what's the difference between a willingness and a desire? A great deal of difference. Let me explain it to you.

In God's willingness and determination, He is committed to bringing the thing to pass, and He is the only one who has any say in it.

[38 : 10] That was in providing the Son. The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. That was God's deliberate, definitive, determined action. He would allow nothing to stand in the way of it.

You know what? He would not even allow the Son to stand in the way of that. That came into play when Jesus said, Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.

He was talking about that cup of death and separation from the Father when He was made sin for the world. And then Jesus added, Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.

And it is as if the Father was saying, Son, there is no other way. It has to be this way. And that's the way it was.

The deliberate, determinative counsel of God. That's why Christ was on that cross. But what we have here in chapter 2, who desires, and the desire is a more accurate translation, who desires all men to be saved, that means He is allowing, now follow me carefully because this is really important, He is making salvation available to all, but He is subjecting it here in 1 Timothy 2 to the volition of the individual.

[39 : 49] That tells me, God wants, God desires all men to be saved, but He is not going to save all men apart from man's volition and personal will.

In His giving man a volition, He is not going to do something to yank it away from him and force him to do something that he does not want to do. Now, this comes into play with God plus man's volition.

In the Peter reference, man's volition has nothing to do with it. Nothing at all. It is completely lopsided. It is all of God and man has no say in it at all. It was God's determination and His alone. And He did that in order to prove, in order to demonstrate that He was not willing that any should perish, so He made a way for everybody. But in the Timothy passage, human volition comes into play.

And God does not make people believe, but He provides an opportunity. That's a huge difference. He is desirous that all men be saved. And each one has its own right.

[41 : 00] Why would anyone spurn God's forgiveness? Well, that's kind of like saying, why would anyone reject salvation? There are a number of reasons that come into play.

I can think of 10 or 12. None of them really make a whole lot of sense, but they do to the person who holds the position. And I'm sure that probably ingratitude heads the list.

There are people who are so self-centered and so unaware of anything that God has done for them that they have no posture of gratitude at all.

Some may see God's salvation or God's forgiveness as being limited in some way, or that God is going to require something from them that they are afraid they can't provide or don't want to provide.

People have different reasons for spurning and rejecting the love of God, none of which makes good sense, but like I said, makes good sense to them. And let's see.

[42 : 12] For the few minutes left, let's go to 1 Corinthians. 6. On your way back, stop at Galatians 5. Galatians 5 and verse 19, and we will at least get that on the record because it deals with the same issue.

Galatians 5 and verse 19. Paul said, Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions.

My goodness, look at this ugly list. Envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

these are practitioners of these vices. And when he says those who practice these things, those whose lifestyle is built around these things, those whose daily routine in and out consists of these things, the practitioner of these events is someone who lives an ongoing profligate lifestyle in complete antithesis to all that God has set forth as righteous and holy and everything.

These are just evil, corrupt, wicked people. Every fiber of their being is given over to this. And this is what he is saying here. And not only that, but we'll see in the Corinthian epistle, Paul lists these things.

[43 : 59] And then he goes on and says, and such were some of you. You come from this background. When he addressed those people at Corinth, the Corinthians lived such a corrupt, immoral life that if you wanted to describe someone who lived a debauched, depraved life back in the first century, you would say, he behaves like a Corinthian.

That means he has tasted every vice that is known to man. That's his lifestyle. He wallows in it. He spews it out day and night. That's all he is.

And these people will not inherit the kingdom of God. It cannot mean that anyone who does any one of these things will not inherit the kingdom.

Because he's already made it clear when he writes to the Corinthians in 6.9, and such were some of you. But you are washed. You are cleansed. You are regenerated. Now that you are a new creature in Christ, you have no business going back to those things.

You need to turn your back on those things and walk away. This ties in also with Romans 6. Do not yield your members as instruments to unrighteousness.

[45 : 24] Your members are your hands and your feet and your legs and your eyes and your ears. Don't give these members of your body over to unrighteousness.

What is that implying? It's implying that you can. You can. And that's called walking in the flesh. And when Paul writes to these Galatian Christians, he says, listen, if you walk in the spirit, you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh. And then he names all of those ugly things in that list that we just considered.

Those are all things that are found in the flesh. And if you walk in the spirit, then you will produce love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, gentleness, meekness, etc.

That's the fruit of the spirit. That's what the Christian is supposed to be trafficking in. But don't say the Christian can't cross over and engage in some of those things. He can.

[46 : 23] That's because your volition is still intact. Those whose lives are characterized by those things, that's the kind of people they are.

And everybody knows them to be that kind of people. These people are not going to inherit the kingdom. And by the way, inheriting the kingdom is a different subject altogether. But it's one that we'll have to give attention to another time.

I haven't time to go into it now. I think we've cleared up some of these. Probably in doing so, I've raised other questions. So if you have one you want to ask, we've got five minutes left.

Anybody? Feel free. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. All right.

I will defer from engaging another issue of forgiveness as well as the unpardonable sin.

[47 : 32] We'll save that for another session as well. Would you stand with me, please? And we'll be dismissed. Father, only those who know how deeply they lack, how deeply we lack in righteousness can really appreciate what you've provided for us.

And we recognize that sometimes those who have lived longer lives and have engaged in more sin in their past have a far greater appreciation for the grace and the love and the forgiveness that they enjoy in Christ.

And we think back with Paul and the criticism that he often endured from those who misunderstood his message that where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more.

And how men are wont to take and twist that concept. Well, then we should have more sin so that we can have more grace.

A complete perversion of what Paul was teaching. And yet this is the evil direction that human thinking can take a man's mind. We are so grateful for the purity of the salvation that you give us and for the position that accompanies it.

[49 : 09] And those of us who best appreciate our undeservedness most heartily embrace your grace and your love. We'll never be able to get over this.

And we don't want to. Nothing so magnanimous as your love and grace extended to us. When we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Thank you for commending and demonstrating your love in such a fashion. We realize that it's really hard sometimes for unregenerate minds to really understand that.

And we know that's why so many do not. And so many just turn off the gospel or turn away thinking that it cannot be true. It cannot be that easy.

It cannot be that good. But we who have believed know that that's exactly what it is. And we are so grateful. If there should be anyone here or in a listening audience who's never made that decision, we pray for their sakes that you will give them no rest and no peace of mind or heart until they come to put their confidence and trust in the only one who can redeem them.

[50 : 29] Bless you for these truths that we've considered. And we look to you for more light that we know we do not have. In Christ's wonderful name. Amen.