

will become redemptive forces in our lives.

So the forgiveness of sin, it gives us an insight into the character of God otherwise impossible. We understand God's fellowship which we have never understood before. A sinless person can never know God's grace.

### III. THE QUESTION OF PRACTICALITY

We have thought about the necessity, and we have thought about the possibility, and now let us determine how practical - and whether or not forgiveness is really the practical thing for God to do.

Now if God passes over our sins, so some may argue, and he restores the relationships that have been broken. Is God encouraging sin.

Is there a danger instead of saving a sinner that you will make him worse. Is this right. Is this ethically right that God should bring forgiveness to a person.

Now this is a question to search.

Here are the consequences of sin. And Christ is going to stand in the place of that sinner. And bear his load. And that is real difficult. As we read Romans and he talks about the dangers of sin. And how far men will go in sin.

And he tries to find some answers, to their sins. Now some people would argue, it would be like a man who would say - "oh, never mind." It is of no importance. "Is that the way God forgives. No, it does not mean that. God, in his righteousness appears. And where divine pardon is given, we discover that divine judgement is also brought. God shows that he hates sin, in the very act of cleansing it. It was a terrible thing. And out of the cross, he takes this truth.

And God is not encouraging the sinner who came and said - I do not condemn thee. I forgive thee, (go - and sin no more.) Now is God making light of sin. No, if we look, we will discover that God's forgiveness is not in that way.

I think that God's forgiveness is exactly the opposite. It brings the great force of his righteousness upon the world. Here is Peter. I have wrecked my life. I'll never be able to face the world again. I'll never be able to look anybody in the eyes. And what has happened. It's what an animal would do. And this is the end of everything and the world. But remember, just a few hours later - Jesus said, Simon lovest thou me. Then feed my lambs and feed my sheep. And Jesus gave him a commission that was new and fresh. He put his work back in his hands in perfect trust. Now this was divine forgiveness and it was very practical. It was perfect trust - that had been broken and would have ruined him.

There is no greater dynamic in all the world, to a person who comes and says that they trust in Jesus for salvation and for forgiveness and believe that their sins have been forgiven. This is just hard for anyone to understand because the Greek word for forgiveness implies the mercy which wipes out sin. The word means to wash over. In Biblical times, you could discharge a debt by crossing it out.



With a capital "X". But Paul never used that word in relation to the sacrifice of Christ. He always used the word that means to wipe out sin. And so, you could sponge it out - you could wipe it off. This is the word of forgiveness.

A prominent preacher of a past generation received many slandorous letters. After his death, in his study he found a large envelope, which contained the letters. That he had received. And across the front of the envelope was written - "I pray that God will forgive the writers of these letters, even as I have forgiven them."

Who can understand such forgiveness and such a word.

God offers forgiveness and the practicality of it is - that it works.  
Act. 10:43.

First, through forgiveness - God lets man get right with God. There is no way that the sinful man can get right. He can never be good enough. He is totally helpless. And he cannot purchase it. Isa. 64:6.

Second, through forgiveness - God leads us to get right with one another. The God that has forgiven us and enables us. Those who have experienced injury at the hands of others. Those who live by the law of retaliation. God will fully forgive. Matt. 6:12-14-15.

3  
Through forgiveness, God enables you to get right with yourself.

There are some people who have difficulty forgiving themselves for their own sins. They continually punish themselves. They refuse to forgive themselves. And they refuse to forgive and carry the guilt. To forgive does not mean that one condones or permits.

Now, every preacher knows of this experience that people goes through. Some refuse to forgive themselves for the mistakes they have made in life. Some feel the past guilt and they refuse to forgive themselves. A Christian does himself, and God - no service by continuing to dwell upon his own past failures and sins.

④ Through forgiveness, God (encourages us to worship with joy). We come to his throne of love. A sense of guilt can be good only when it leads to confession.

⑤ Forgiveness in the next place leads us to engage in service. Isa. 6:8. When Isaiah had his life clean and forgiven of his sins, he heard God's voice and he said - here am I, send me.

⑥ When forgiveness comes, we have in our hearts the dream of Heaven. God offers forgiveness and is full and free forever. He does not bestow this indiscriminately. Forgiveness can be received only by those who are willing to seek the Lord with all of their heart.

And forgiveness comes to those who will willingly turn from their evil and trust him.



Professor Walter Rauschenbusch who taught in a divinity school, one day he was crossing the street. He was hit by a trolley car. The motorman became very angry and began to explain to him how he had sounded the gong. The professor said, 'I am very sorry that I crossed the street in front of you. But you see, I am deaf. And I did not hear you approaching. The old man then reached into his pocket and took out a \$5 bill and gave it to the motorman saying, take this as a gift and forgive me.'

A man with that kind of spirit must have been truly a great soul. Of course, it is hard to forgive someone who deeply hurts you. It is even harder to forgive someone who hurts someone you love. It takes what we call grace. Divine action.

Lincoln said, with malice toward none!

What a prayer - give us oh God, the power to be forgiven. Because we have so much to be forgiven.

Through our text, through his blood - even the forgiveness of sins, I trust you have discovered - as such is the kingdom of Heaven. None of the ransomed ever knew how deep were the waters crossed. How dark was the night that the Lord passed through. Only you who have discovered this forgiveness rejoice in that.

Dr. Ward in his echoes of flanders told about a soldier. A boy who had run away from home. And had gone from bad to worst - in all kinds of sin. Joined the

Army and was there on the battlefield. And so finally he made some corrections in his life. And on a dark night the enemy attack and he was critically wounded. And he had not forgotten however the prayers of his mother. And while he was on the stretcher, they heard him begin to repeat these words --

The day is done, oh God the son  
Look down upon ~~thy~~ little one  
The light of light, ~~keep me~~ this night  
And spread-around ~~thy~~ presence bright.

On his face seemed to be the light of radiance. As he thought of Heaven.  
And finally, in these words, before he ~~became~~ silent. (I need not fear-if thou-  
art near. Thou art my Saviour, kind and dear.. So happily and-peacefully, I  
lay me-down-to rest-in thee.)

So he crossed the river.