

Forgiveness

by David Du Plessis

David Du Plessis emphasizes the transformative power of forgiveness in the Christian life and its necessity for spiritual growth and community harmony.

Duration: 1:11:20

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-15, Matthew 7:3-5, Matthew 7:12, Matthew 18:21-22, Mark 11:22, Luke 6:31

Topics: "Forgiveness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story about an elderly couple who attended a banquet to escape their constant quarreling. The couple had a son who was the mother's favorite, and they had been judging and condemning him. The speaker reflects on his own actions and realizes that he has also been judgmental towards his own son. He is convicted by God and realizes the importance of forgiveness. The speaker's wife later decides to join him in his ministry, and they both trust in God's provision as they sell their house and move. The sermon emphasizes the need to forgive and not judge others, and to trust in God's guidance and provision.

Transcript

Jesus said, Go ye therefore and teach all nations. World Map Tape Outreach is fulfilling this divine commission by bringing you these messages for your spiritual edification. Open your Bible and your heart and share now in the teaching ministry from God's Word.

In 1936, it was my privilege to serve at that time as General Secretary of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa. I had served in that capacity at that time for four years when the Lord brought Brother Smith Wigglesworth to South Africa. I was responsible for inviting him.

Personally, the brethren of the Council were not sure that he would be the type of evangelist that could help us. They said he was difficult to interpret for he was the kind of a man, if he didn't know a word, he made one. And some of his words you'll never find in Webster's dictionary.

English words. But he came and our spirits blended at once. I went with him as much as possible to interpret for him.

And so we got to know each other intimately. Finally, he came and stayed in my home for a couple of weeks because he had to minister in that area. Jimmy Salter, his son-in-law, had just arrived too, so we

had Brother and Sister Salter and Brother Wigglesworth with us and Basil Compton who drove the car, took them around the country.

One morning, my wife told me afterwards, he came into the kitchen at six o'clock and all he said, Where's David? I had a custom of getting up at five o'clock and by six o'clock you find me in the office. From six to nine I did most of my work. By the time the girls came in it was all done.

I had a machine and they had the records. I did the same that morning. All he said, Where's David? She says, Brother Wigglesworth, he's gone to the office already.

He turned around and walked down the hallway and shouted, Jimmy! That's Jimmy Salter. Jimmy looked out the door, Yes, Dad. He says, I must see David at once.

Where's Basil? He says, He must be still asleep. Wake him up. And so the next thing she heard, the car moving out.

I sat in my office quietly reading through the mail that had come in early when suddenly that office door just flew open. No knock, it just opened up. And in walked Brother Wigglesworth looking like he's in a great and desperate hurry and he looked at me rather fiercely and he said, Come out there, come out there.

I got up behind the desk and walked over to him. He put his hands on my shoulders, pushed me up against the wall, looked into my face and he says, God says you've been in Jerusalem long enough. He's going to send you to the uttermost parts of the earth and he's going to do things through you and let you witness the greatest thing that any Christian could ever wish to see.

And he went on prophesying and he said, I shall bring life into the old bodies and through the historic churches will come a revival that will turn the world upside down. Well, these are all things I didn't believe at all. These are the new things that come out there.

And I didn't understand and I wondered what has come over the old man and he was 70-something then and he said to me, I would wish I was 20 years younger so that I could live to see its beginning, but I shall be gone so don't worry while I'm alive nothing will happen. It'll come after I'm dead. And then he bowed his head and prayed and asked the Lord to bless me and walked out.

Shut the door. I went and sat down and I was puzzled and confused. And I said, Lord, whatever it is, I accept this warning.

You haven't told me a thing about all these things. I don't believe the churches could ever recover from their death. And a gentle knock at the door.

I looked up, I said, come in. He opened the door, in walks Brother Wigglesworth. Good morning, Brother David.

How are you this morning? Oh, I said, very well but awfully confused. He said, why? Well, I said, don't you know you were in here a few moments ago? You didn't greet me, you delivered a message that shook me. Oh yes, he said, I didn't greet anybody this morning.

He said, do you know what happened to the prophet that greeted folks along the way? I said, he got in trouble, he says, and I have no intention of getting in trouble. He took the word literally. I never knew a man that could so literally find the truth there.

Well, he says, now I've delivered the message, now we can talk. He says, I didn't say good morning to your wife, I didn't say good morning to Jimmy, I didn't say good morning to Basil, I didn't say good morning to you. I had to deliver a message.

He says, what happened is this morning, four o'clock, I saw visions. And I saw visions of things, he says, I'd better admit, it's so tremendous I can't believe it myself. But I didn't dream, I saw visions.

And then God told me to rise and go to you and tell it to you. And you will live to see it. And he said, so? Now, you've heard some of it.

And then he gave me a little more detail. But it didn't help because it was all wrong. My background, my education, our preaching, our beliefs, our traditions was all different, contrary to what he was saying.

And I said, well, Brother Wigglesworth, I don't know what you think I should do, but I will not act. I promise you this. I'll remember what you said, but I'll never move until the Lord tells me to.

I don't care who the prophet is, I believe the Lord will speak to me and confirm it in my own heart. That's good, he says. But remember, God said to me, that if you remain faithful and humble.

He says, that's not much to remember. Just two things, faithful and humble. Faithful to listen and humble when he blesses.

And he said to me, have you ever been seasick? I said, never been on the sea. He says, do you get airsick? I said, never been in the air except on a swing. He said, come here.

Again he pushed me up against the wall and he prayed. And I thank God for that prayer. He said, Lord, you showed me this young man is going to travel more than most people.

It's bad to get sick at home, but it's a lot worse to get sick around when you're away from home. Please don't ever let him get sick when he's traveling for you. Well, it works so well, I say to my wife sometimes, if I get sick at home, just let me take a ticket and get away.

For I always feel good when I'm traveling and in the service of the Lord. Last night when Brother Mahoney mentioned here what it costs to get preachers and missionaries here, I thought, well, I think I'd be prepared to pay him if he let me preach. Instead of giving me anything.

That's how sometimes I feel how willing I am to bring the message. And a lot of places I've gone, I did it. Don't for a moment think that the councils where I've been paid my fares or even paid my hotel fees.

They don't. And I've never accepted it if they tried to offer. I must always be sure the Lord sent me and he paid all the expenses.

When I go to people where I'm a missionary and I think to go out into the denominations is as much a missionary as going out into the nations. And so the Lord has answered Brother Wigglesworth's prayer. He has provided.

He's kept me healthy. But I waited. In 1936 he prophesied.

Before he left the country, I received a letter from Brother J. Roswell Flower, General Secretary of the Assemblies, inviting me to come to America and attend the General Council of Memphis, Tennessee. I

thought, well, here it starts. I'm getting an invitation.

I've never traveled. I brought it before the brethren. They agreed and gave me six months leave.

I took nine months before I got home again. At that time, I came to Memphis, Tennessee. That was my first General Council meeting that I saw.

And that is where Brother Williams almost compelled me to tell the donkey story. And that helped me that day to get an audience that was really melted. And I shall never forget those days.

There I met Brother Frodgen. He wrote some things in the evangel. I traveled through the United States.

Thirty-six states I traveled through. When I got back to Springfield, Brother Flower said to me, Now you know more about the Assemblies of God than I do, for you've traveled to more churches, seen more schools, more districts. And the things those days had bothered me was the lack of fellowship between the Pentecostal saints.

I was the guest of the Assemblies and could not visit the others. Some of the brethren encouraged me to go to others. I went to Angus Temple, but I had to be careful to sit back where Mrs. MacPherson wouldn't see me so that she wouldn't invite me on the platform, because if I went on the platform, I was out of the rest of them.

Those were the spirit of that day. And it was in those days that I prayed and said, Lord, if you ever send me back to this country, please don't let me be the guest of anybody, but come to be the guest of everybody for the Lord Jesus. Ten years later that happened.

And so there you have the story of the beginnings. But ten years later when I came back, this is after the war, I was free then. I started in at Grand Rapids with the General Council.

I began where I was previously. And from there on, it was after the World Conference in Paris, in Zurich, Switzerland, that gave me a good opportunity to say we at the World Conference talk so much about fellowship and unity, let's have some of it. So I visited General Council.

I went to Church of God headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee. I went to the headquarters of Pentecostal Holiness Church. I went to Fourth Square.

I went to all the movements, visited all the headquarters, and some of them weren't very nice. They weren't willing to listen to my idea of fellowship. One Pentecostal brother said to me, you mean I now have to have fellowship with these brethren that I preached against for 20 years? What will I preach afterwards? Some of us now have to have fellowship with the churches that gave us a lot of material to preach against.

Now what do we preach now but the love of Christ? Amen. I went back home, and as I said, 47, in Lancashire Motel in Los Angeles. One morning, four o'clock, the Lord woke me up, or I woke up, and he began to speak to me, and he said, I intend to fulfill the promises and the warnings that you received through Smith Wailsworth.

Cable back to South Africa and resign from your position. I was going to fly from Los Angeles to New York straight home. My season of vacation was over.

Send a cable today and resign, and follow me to Europe. I'll take care of you. I sent that cable, but I didn't know what else to do.

So all day I began to figure, how am I going to live? Now I've resigned from a very good position with a tremendous future. I have a nice home, mortgage, stove. And I began to figure, if I rent that home, I might get a little more rent than the mortgage is, and that'll give me a little income.

Oh, I began to figure out where it's going to come from. Nobody asked me, nobody gave me any assignment. How am I going to live? Now I've got a wife and five children, and they've got to be brought to Europe now.

Next morning, four o'clock, I woke again. And the Lord says, sell the house you have. Sell everything and move.

I'll take care of you. That day I sent my wife a cable. Sell the house.

She thought the cable came in reply to her letter. Two days later I got a letter from her. She used to say to me, you can travel all you want, and the Lord can do all he told Brother Wigglesworth, but I stay home in South Africa.

Don't ever ask me to travel. I'm not moving. She writes to me, she says the Lord's been speaking to me and asked, and said to me, that I am to go with you and never refuse.

So now I'm willing to go. From your letters it seems God is giving you great favor in other countries, and perhaps this is the time when the Lord is going to send you all over the world. Now I want to let you know I'm willing to move, but we sell everything so that there are no bridges to get back on.

She thought that was answer to her letter. I didn't know the Lord had spoken to her. She sold everything.

I never went back to South Africa. She sold everything, took the money that was left over after the mortgage was paid, paid their fares, came to Europe, and I lived in Switzerland. And from there on I began, by faith.

The brethren in Switzerland were very upset when they heard I brought my family. They said, don't you know the housing situation here? He says, here are two American missionaries, they've been living in a hotel for twelve months. We cannot find a residence anywhere.

Well, I said, the Lord knows that, I'm sure. He said, do you realize what it will cost for you and your wife and five children in a hotel? Man, that's a fortune. I said, the Lord knows that too.

But the next morning I looked in the paper, I can read German well, and speak a little, and in the paper I saw an apartment advertised. I went to the telephone, called up, the lady said, yes, the ad has just come out first, and you're the first one to call. Come over.

I came over there, saw the apartment, then realized they were remodeling a house, there were three apartments, and I said to her, can I have all three? She said, what do you want to do with them? I said, I've got two friends staying in hotels, they can't get apartments. Oh, she says, if all you Americans want to live together, good with me. So I got three apartments.

And we lived happily together in an old castle, and how the Lord blessed. But I still had ambition for only one thing, and I began to figure out, Brother Wigglesworth didn't really understand the Lord. The Lord didn't mean the dead, old, historic churches.

The Lord really meant he's going to put the Pentecostal churches together, and he's going to unite us, and we would be an invincible force, we'll walk across the world, we'll shake it up, we will blanket the world with Pentecost. And I began to work to that end, and did I slave for that Pentecostal world conference, trying to get the saints together, the Pentecostal saints, and I was sure the Holy Ghost is on my side. I haven't got them together yet.

Not yet. Because we have developed traditions that we think are very sacred, and we've become attached to these. So I went on condemning the churches, and the Lord just let me go and see how much I can do.

1949, we had a conference in Paris, and thank God that saved the world conference. We ended up good. But I was on crutches because of an automobile accident.

Funny, when I lay in hospital with that automobile accident, I said, Lord, what have I done now? Brother Wigglesworth said, I must never get sick, and here I am in hospital. He said, but you're not sick, you're only broken. And that was true, for I had no temperature, no infection, and no pain.

My left leg was broken, compound, complicated, fractured. I had 37 stitches in my face. They wouldn't even let me see a mirror.

I must have looked terrible. And the Lord said, you're not sick, you're only broken. And he brought me out there, and I don't think I look bad after an accident like that.

My face, the doctor that stitched my face together, when he saw me ten months later, boy, he says, they did a good job. I said, oh. He says, haven't you had plastic surgery? I said, my dear sir, all that happened to my face is what you did, and what the Lord did.

He said, you'd better thank the Lord, because I only stitched it together temporarily. But the Lord healed it up permanently. Oh, yes.

But what about this prophecy? It bothers me sometimes. Until in 1950, the Lord said to me, in Stamford, Connecticut, where I was living, stop condemning the churches. Stop judging the churches.

You will not get the Pentecostal movements united in opposition to those councils. If you form a society or an organization with the intention of combating the others, you're not getting anywhere. God doesn't react.

He acts. He creates. And we must not react.

It bothers me so when people say, the communists give half of their income. Surely we should give a tithe. If you give a tithe because the communist gives half, I think it's no use giving.

You give it to the Lord, not because you want to compete with a communist or anybody else. The Lord said, stop condemning, start blessing. Go to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches.

Go to their offices. And there was trouble with our Pentecostal missionaries in East Africa. Now, Brother Spencer and these brethren, Dodds-Whiteson, Bud Sigler, they didn't tell you of the revivals.

But there were other missionaries there, in Kenya. And the Kenya government would not give them liberty for schools and such like things because there was a Council of Churches in Kenya and the Council of Churches sort of controlled the field. And the colonial office, the government office in London, would not recognize missionaries and give them privileges, except this Council approves.

And Bill Wilson from Zion, Mrs. Gibson was still alive, came to me one morning and he said, David, I have slept little. Last night in a prophecy in Rhode Island, the Lord said, we have to come to you. You have an answer to our problem.

We have tried to join the NAE. We made application because we thought they would help us. But now our application has been rejected.

And now we are stuck. The Lord said we must come to you. I said, Bill, if the Lord wants me to do anything, he must know where my contacts are.

My contacts are with the National Council and the World Council and these liberals. I said, and you know we don't want to get mixed up with that bunch. I was still willing to witness to them, but I wouldn't have anything more to do with them.

I didn't want any favors from them. Bill said, I don't care what you do. The Lord said, you can do it.

And so I was compelled. In my heart the Lord said, yes, you can do it. So I said, all right, Lord, then I'm going to the Secretary or to the Chairman of the International Missionary Council, which happened to be John Alexander Mackay.

Well, the outcome was they told me to write a letter recommending this little body as a good, sound Pentecostal work and confidence in their work and their missionary. They took my letter, sent it to London. Their London office put it before the Downing Street and the government, the colonial office, officially.

They recommended on my recommendation those brethren. And the consequence was that the Pentecostal brethren in Kenya, up to that time the Canadians were the only ones that had privileges, they were given privileges equal to anybody else. And things began to happen.

I'm not surprised at what the Lord did later on and the tremendous revival that has come in recent years. But that all couldn't have happened if there wasn't the previous preparations for it. Well, I was in Kenya last February and what do I find? The president of the Council of Churches in Kenya is a Pentecostal African brother.

He had his training in Canada. Wonderful man. And so I ministered in Kenya under the auspices of the Council in some places, met all the ministers.

To me it is an amazing thing how that little mustard seeds that were planted ten, fifteen years ago has become great trees. So big that even crows can nest in it. Not all doves, mind you.

But I see the hand of the Lord. Now, we have said this morning that we must hear what the Lord says to us. Jesus said, therefore, Matthew 7, 24, Therefore, whosoever hear of these sayings of mine, and do of them, I will liken unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock.

The rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. That's what it means to do what the Lord says. You simply become invincible even

against the elements of nature.

But what did he say? He says in Matthew 7, Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged. And with what measure ye meet, it shall be measured to you again.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. For this is the law and the prophets.

This is what Jesus said. Jesus told them in chapter 6, Matthew's Gospel, After this manner therefore shall ye pray, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Jesus says, The kingdom of heaven, He speaks here clearly in Matthew 18, Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents, a couple of million dollars. But for as much as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold his wife and his children and all that he had in payment had to be made. The servant fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, I will pay thee all.

Then the Lord of the servant was moved with compassion and loosed him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant went and found one of his fellow servants which owed him a hundred pence, just a few dollars. And he laid hands on him, took him by the throat, saying, Pay me all thou owest.

And his fellow servant fell down at his feet and sought him, saying, Have patience, and I will pay thee all. And he would not, but cast him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry and came and told unto their Lord all that was done.

Then his Lord after the air called him and said unto him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desirest me. Should not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant even as I have pity on thee? And his Lord was rapt and delivered him to the tormentors, that he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.

I like some of these words. It says here, He worshipped him and prayed, and when the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, he loosed him. He loosed him and forgave him all that debt.

We preach so much about deliverance, loosening. R. Roberts is fond of saying, Loosen your faith. Brother Willisworth used to say that too.

Loosen your faith. And so I thought, that if only we could have more faith, and reading about faith, and what Jesus would say, for I believe if he speaks, that must be obeyed. Those are the words, if we obey them, that will center us upon the rock.

And I read then, in Mark chapter 11, that Jesus said, Have faith in God. I wish some of these translators were baptized in the Holy Ghost. They would have done a much better job.

But these poor old King James translators were just clever men. I trust some of them were saved. But they didn't have the baptism in the Holy Ghost, and they understood very little about the manifestations of the Spirit.

And they translated it, Have faith in God. It would have been more correct to say, Have the faith of God. For that is the only faith, and that's the fruit of the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit can give you, can be in your life, the faith of God. Why? For verily I say unto you, that whatsoever, whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he said shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he said. And how I used to love to hear Smith Wigglesworth preach this.

For he said, It isn't what you pray, it's what you say. He said, We do too much praying and too little saying. We're asking the Lord to do things, and we're saying nothing, Why? Because we haven't got the faith to say it.

Whatsoever ye say, and there is where I began to learn. But now, it isn't too long ago, but a few years, I went back to all this. Therefore say I unto you, and here's a blank check for you.

Therefore say I unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Whatsoever things, anything. What can you want for the Lord? Some of us need, want things that he must do for our children.

We have domestic needs, troubles. We have things in the church, pastors need so much, or the church needs so much. But he says, You ask and you'll have them.

Pray. Oh, I always thought, if I could only get that faith of God. But I never knew what it was that hindered the faith of God.

Why didn't I have that faith of God? Faith is, as I pointed out, the fruit of the Spirit. And the fruit of the Spirit is clearly stated in Galatians 5, and we read here that the fruit of the Spirit is love to begin with. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law.

But I know this today, that if you haven't got that first one, love, the others won't last. Love is the all. Love is like that peel of the apple, that beautiful, shiny red peel that holds the apple together.

And the rest is on the inside. And if you start off with that love, yes, the rest will be there. And faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and I lack faith.

And because I lack faith, things are not happening. I pray, but they don't happen. So I read the next verse.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any. Ought against any, that your Father, which also which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. Now in Matthew 6, after the Lord's Prayer, he said, you must forgive your brother.

But he draws a narrow line here, and he says, forgive ought against any. After the meeting, a brother came to me, and he said, how long are you going to stay in England? I said, five weeks. He said, that's fine, you never stayed that long before.

I said, I've never had my wife with me, so I always wanted to go home. But now I've got home with me, I can stay longer. He said, well, we'll hear you some more.

I was interested in what you said last night, and I'd like to hear more about it. I said, where will you hear me? He says, aren't you going to preach? I said, three times a day, but only in Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian, and Baptist churches. He says, all five weeks? I said, yes, sir.

He said, David, do you mean to tell me you can stay in those dead old churches in England for five weeks? I said, yes, what would you suggest? Well, he says, I think you could go around and wake up the Pentecostals. I said, no, brother, it's far more exciting to raise the dead than to heal the sick. Please turn the tape over for the remainder of the message.

My wife heard this, and she said, you know, that wasn't very nice to say. I said, well, it was out before I got time to think about it. But it was true.

For the very next Sunday, I preached in an old Anglican church, and the pastor said to me, that was Pentecost Sunday. And he said to me, oh, how wonderful to have a Pentecostal brother preach for us on Pentecost Sunday. I said, I hope I don't disappoint you.

He says, no, we've heard all about you, and we are sure you'll bless us. By the way, he says, you won't be disappointed either, for up to Friday night, up to Friday night, eighty-four members of this church has received the baptism in the Holy Ghost speaking in tongues. And he says, this morning we had such a good service, I wish you were here for this morning.

But we had such a good service, the young people at the close asked if they could go into the parish hall and carry on. Well, the service was too short. They get too short when you get filled with the Holy Ghost.

So they went into the parish hall, and he says, I've just been informed that seven more received the baptism. That makes it ninety-one. And he says, now it depends on you what will happen tonight.

Well, I'm glad. That night the Lord baptized twelve more. So they had over a hundred baptized in the Holy Ghost, and there are not many churches in England that have got that many in Pentecostal church.

And then I said to my wife, do you see what I meant? How exciting to see this dead old English church. Do you know how old it is? That year when I was there, that church was exactly one thousand and three years old. That's how long it had existed.

The real wall of the building was a thousand years old. And the Pope that I preached in was seven hundred years old. I wasn't afraid he's made of steel.

So it could very well. This is the kind of thing I've seen. I began, instead of complaining about their deadness, I began to preach the life and the resurrection that there is in Christ.

And it worked. Preaching death only brings death. But preaching life produces life.

And then I found the Holy Ghost is with me. He was with me. But I had more complaints.

I said, Lord, how can I preach to them and love them and justify all the things they do that is contrary to scripture? He said, but I never asked anybody to justify anybody. I asked you to forgive everybody. If you forgive, you will love.

If you love, you'll forgive. Don't judge. Forgive, forgive, forgive.

Do you think when Jesus on the cross asked those that crucified Him, when He prayed for them and said, forgive them, that He justified them? He forgave them. They were as guilty as ever. To forgive people does not mean that you say, you never did anything wrong.

You're just saying you can be as wrong as you are or you can be as wrong as black as night. I forgive. For I don't live in the night.

I have light. And my light will drive out the darkness. Let your light shine.

And the light doesn't have a hard time to shine. It just shines in darkness. The darker it gets, the brighter the light is.

I can show you some lights that would look pretty feeble in this kind of place. But tonight you put out all those bright lights and light a candle and you'll think that's the brightest thing in the place. Therefore, don't tell me that darkness of the world, religious darkness, will put out light.

Our light may be very feeble at times, but in the darkness it will shine bright. Just keep shining. I must hurry on for I must help you.

You cannot this morning understand this matter of forgiveness. If you make it a matter of the mind, if you decide with your intellect I am going to do this, only people that know the love of God, only people that are full of the Holy Ghost, can really and truly forgive. Otherwise, you just try to settle it.

But, you have power and authority to forgive and loosen the other fellow from judgment, from condemnation. And so I had my problems about this. And I wish I was taught different in my boyhood days when I got saved.

I wish I had never heard some of the things that I had learned, but we learned it from people who were not always spiritual or people. A lot of our doctrines come from people good brethren, call them fundamentalists sometimes, that I still hope the Lord will give us, if there's time, give us a Bible translated by spirit-filled men. There are some of them working on it now.

For if they know the Greek and the Hebrew and the Armenian, no, what is it, the Aramaic, if they know all that, plus a knowledge of the real work of the Spirit, they won't have a speculative theology, they'll have a practical theology. And they will translate it to mean what God means. But a lot of it is speculation.

And some of these speculations have led us astray. And I had a rough time at first. I was against these churches, because I cannot accept what they teach.

And when I began to forgive them what they teach, I began to understand their problems. I didn't judge their teaching anymore, I didn't try and persuade them anymore, I just witnessed to the Lord Jesus Christ. And in witnessing, they, for instance, one of them said, if I can have the experience that you talk about, he had none, but he says, if I can experience an encounter with Jesus the Savior as the Savior and the Lamb of God that takes away my sin, if I can have an encounter with him as the baptizer, if I have those two things that you witness about, I'll pitch this theology out the window.

Because, you see, the experience was there before theology. God didn't first give them the doctrine, he first gave them the experience. Then the doctrine developed.

Today, many of us think if we've got the doctrine we've got the whole business. Any doctrine that you have that isn't practical in your life doesn't mean a thing. It must lead us to the practical experience.

And so here we have the doctrine of forgiveness. But I asked the Lord, how am I going to get this? Imagine, here is a man that's a preacher, been a Pentecostal preacher for a long time. I hadn't forgiven.

I had so many oughts against so many anys that I never got out of it. Peter one day got worried too and he said, Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother? Seven times? No, he said, Peter, not seven times, seventy times seven. Four hundred and ninety times.

And one of the gospels speaks of a day. And I said, dear Lord, four hundred and ninety times, one man, in a day, he must be a rascal to do so many things wrong. Four hundred and ninety times in sixteen hours, the other time I'm sleeping, then I am quite happy.

But in sixteen hours forgive four hundred and ninety times, that's thirty times an hour. That's once every two minutes. That's a full-time job.

Do you really think there's anybody so wicked that I have to forgive him thirty times an hour? Yes, your husband. Your wife. Your children.

We've got to practice this at home. Your prayers are not answered. Try this.

Next time you stand to pray, forgive if you have ought against any. And I don't care who that any is. I've had to learn, in South Africa, not only to forgive, but to ask the forgiveness of my servants.

I don't care who it is. When Jesus says that, he doesn't qualify anybody if you've ought against any. Oh, I have had to forgive people that I don't know who they are, where they come from, what they are.

I just have to forgive them. Well, not very long ago, I was sitting in a plane. I got the center seat of those three seats.

That's a bad seat, if you have a smoker to your right and a smoker to your left and you don't smoke. I saw a little girl sit to my right. I thought, well, she's too young to smoke.

She's all right. Next one came, sat down, another woman. I thought, well, I hope she looks nice, girl.

Hope she doesn't smoke. But before the plane got airborne, both of them had their cigarettes out. And I was unhappy.

I was miserable. I was mad. I wished I could, oh, I'm going to tell the stewardess to get me out here.

I can't stand this. And suddenly the Lord said to me now, why don't you practice some forgiveness? Why are you so bitter against these poor sinners? That's all the pleasure they got. I said, dear Lord, forgive me.

And Lord, if that's all they've got, bless them. Let them enjoy it. And I fell asleep.

The smoke didn't bother me one little bit anymore. I fell asleep. I don't know how long I slept.

It was clear to New York, and I looked to my right and to my left. They'd stopped smoking and they never smoked again. All my troubles were over.

I said, Lord, now I know how to stop smoke or smoking. Just forgive them and love them. It works.

But the greatest blessing was that I had peace. I enjoyed the peace that passes understanding. And I had rest.

Oh, if I kept that up, I would have been dead tired by the time I got to New York. But, oh, I had such peace and I slept so comfortably I wasn't a bit tired. Why are we so foolish to make life so difficult when God chose us a way to make it so simple and so easy? Now, Jesus died, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

And on the day of His resurrection, early that morning, Mary Magdalene, the one armoured of whom He cast, seven devils, one of the worst characters. She was there. She told the disciples, they came, saw an empty tomb, went away, Mary stood.

She had been forgiven much, and she loved much. Love kept her there. And then she heard, saw someone, she heard someone, it was Jesus.

And He said to her that morning, touch me not, for I'm not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father. What a change! Before His death on Calvary, He said, so will my Father do unto you.

Now He says, my Father is your Father, my God and your God. Hallelujah. What made the difference? Calvary, the Lamb of God that swept away the sin of the world, and forgiveness is offered to all generations, whether they accept it or not.

It has done. My Father and your Father, my God and your God. Tell them.

Mary came and she told them that she had seen the Lord. But all she could tell them, He's gone. He went to glory.

He went to His Father. And they thought they had missed Him completely. But that night He was back.

And remember, He had been to glory. He had presented His credentials, the wounds in His hands and His feet and His side. The blood was shed and the work is done.

And now, He says, all power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. And that evening He's back and He comes in and He stands among His disciples and He says to them, Peace be unto you. What lovely words to people who had run away and forsaken Him.

That's forgiven, too. Peter had denied Him. That's forgiven, too.

Peace. And they were at first scared and dubious. But, we read, they saw when He said, He showed them the wounds in His hands and His side.

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then Jesus said to them again, Peace be unto you. As My Father sent Me, so send I you.

How did His Father send Him? He tells so graciously to one of the scribes of His time and He says to Nicodemus, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus said that, you know. It isn't John that said it.

This is what Jesus Himself said. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved. That's how God sent His Son.

Now as My Father sent Me, so send I you. The other thought is, how did His Father send Him? First, by a miracle, natural birth. He came out of eternity to time.

He came from heaven to earth, born Son of God to become Son of Man so that the sons of men could become sons of God. He made the way. And so we read that John said He's the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

John said He shall baptize in the Holy Ghost. And here the Lamb had died. The Lamb rose again and He stood before His disciples.

How could He say to them, peace be unto you, how could He say to them, as My Father sent Me, so send I you? How? Why? They also died, didn't they? Christ died for them. He had taken all their judgment and so in Christ we all died. That was our death.

And once you've died, the law has no more hold on you. You're free! Now you can have peace of mind. The law has judged you.

Under the law you were condemned, but condemnation is gone. All your sins are forgiven. You are completely another person.

You were a sinner, now you're a son of God. And Jesus here introduced the very first human beings into the body, the church. The first people that ever was born again.

Where did regeneration begin? That night when Jesus met his disciples. Oh, you say they were not sinners. No, according to the law they did all right, but they did not know the power of regeneration.

But now the lamb had died, the blood was shed, the blood on the doorpost means emancipation. Now you can walk out of Egypt. And let me remind you in Israel, there wasn't only the blood in the door, but there wasn't a Jew without the lamb in his stomach.

Every Jew had the lamb in his stomach. The lamb didn't stay in Egypt, the lamb went out with them. And those Jews so full of the lamb, there wasn't a feeble one amongst them.

Why don't we live like that? Because we do not pay attention to the word of the Lord. Or as he says to them, as my father sent me, so send I you. Now the first thing that's happened to you must happen to you that happened to me.

I was the Son of God, born to become the Son of Man. The Son of Man had died for men. Now you sons of men can become sons of God.

And he breathed on them and said, receive ye the Spirit, and become sons of God. What a transformation. Sons of God, what are you to do now? You have died and now you're resurrected.

The resurrected Christ took them clear through Calvary, his sufferings for them, gave them credit for his death, and gave them divine resurrection life. It was not the Christ of Galilee that breathed on them, it is the resurrected Christ that now breathes on them. It is now he who had come from the Father with all power and imparted to them the Holy Ghost.

So you're new creatures. I got up out of death this morning, you just got up out of it now. What are we to do now, Lord? Listen.

With one breath, one sentence he said, receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins he remit, they are remitted unto them. Whosoever sins he retain, they are retained.

You have now authority. You now have a privilege. You now can act like sons of God.

You can now do what I did. You can now forgive like your Father forgives. And your Father doesn't forgive because you ask for it, your Father forgives because He loves you.

So you go out and love Him and forgive everybody. The first commandment that Jesus ever gave to a regenerated soul was only one, forgive. There is no other way.

Forgiveness is a one-way traffic. And the moment you stop forgiving, you have an accident. One-way streets are very dangerous.

If you don't go the right direction and keep going too. And our great highways here are all one direction. Have you noticed that? They make a good division in between.

And, there's a great difference between forgiving and judging and condemning. So He gave them a commandment and a assignment, authority, if you like. The miserable thing that I was taught is the Lord only gave it to these eleven disciples.

They are the only people that ever got it. Roman Catholic nonsense. It isn't true.

He gives that same authority to every born-again man, woman, and child. That's His assignment to you. This morning, I must confess to you, because of my ignorance, and the Lord forgave my ignorance, but because of my ignorance, I never did that.

And I had to learn in later years to forgive. And it wasn't easy. Not long ago, just a year or more now, one of my boys one morning came into the kitchen early before breakfast.

His mother asked him a question. I was sitting there having a cup of coffee. His mother asked him a question, and he gave her a sassy answer.

And I looked at him, and I said, Young fellow, you can't talk to your mother like that, and if this is the way you treat mommy when I'm gone, I want to lay down the law right now. And he gave me a sassy answer. And that's when the old man got up.

I didn't lose my temper, I got it. And I decided I'll have to do my duty. I'm the father, and I have to at last, that young fellow, he's six feet tall, I couldn't hold him over my knees, but if I couldn't do it with a whip, I'd use my tongue.

I judged him, I condemned him, I punished him, I humiliated him, I told him off thoroughly. Oh, I didn't use bad language, I used Scripture too. But I was in a terrible spirit.

And when he left, he walked out, he saw that no use, and he had learned at least. My wife had taught these children wonderful. Every room in that house has got a picture of mine.

And she has taught them that I want you never to forget your daddy. He works for the Lord, and you've got to live so that people will respect him. And so they have a very high regard.

I've never had trouble with the children. Daughter and five boys. Well, the daughter always worshipped her father, but the boys were a little different proposition.

And now the boy went upstairs, and I sat down. And I began to think of what's just happened. And all of a sudden I discovered I wasn't sixty years old, I felt seventy years old.

And I got older and feeble and miserable. And I said, Dear Lord, I'm ready for the funeral. How is it that I'm so sick when I do my duty? The Lord said, You didn't do your duty.

You never forgave your son. You judged him, you condemned him, you punished him. If I was to treat you like your son, you pray, forgive me as I forgive those that trespass against me.

You pray, forgive me, Lord, as I forgive my children. How would you like it? I shuddered. I trembled.

And I wept. And I said, Oh God, don't, please don't. If you were to talk to me like I spoke to my son, Lord, I perish.

He said, Then forgive him. First forgive him, then correct him. And let me warn you this morning, if God forgives you your sin, make sure you accept his correction afterwards.

If you're forgiven, it doesn't mean don't do it again. It means you stop doing it because you've been forgiven. And I forgave him.

And I felt good. I immediately became rejuvenated. This spirit began to well up within me.

And I began to see that I just learned another lesson right here in my family. And then the Lord said, But now he's miserable. Oh, I said, I don't want him.

Suddenly I love the boy so I don't want him to be miserable. So I went up out of the kitchen wall, and as I came up the stairs, a very naughty thought came to me. I thought he'll hear me coming up the stairs and I guess he'll say, Ah, here's the old man coming.

He's going to give it me. No, now I'll get it. He's going to give me some more of that stuff.

And when I came to his bedroom door, I saw him sort of stand up and ready to take it. And I smiled and I said, Maddy, how about our conversation last night? Do you remember? I said, You know, you wanted me to pick up some thoughts for your scooter today. He says, Daddy, that's what I came down for.

And then started this terrible argument. I said, Now, your daddy did something just now that he's ashamed of. Will you forgive me for the way I talked to you? He said, You had every right to talk like that.

No, I said, I didn't. I should have talked to you lovingly, kindly. And I didn't.

I'm sorry. He says, Dad, forgive me. I knew I was wrong the moment I spoke to Mommy.

And when things were chipped in, that made me mad because I was already wrong. This period had already convicted him. And so we forgave one another.

I sat at my breakfast table a little later. He came down and he came and put his arm around me and he says, Daddy, you're a great man. That's the best compliment I've ever had from one of my sons.

You're a great man. And I said, Thank you, son. That's encouraging, very encouraging.

He went to school. Lunchtime he was back. We were sitting down at the table when I heard the scooter.

I said to my wife, I wonder what's the matter with him? She says, I see he's got his lunch with him. Maybe he's sick. He came in with his lunch, put it on the table, big smile.

Give me some coffee, Mom. I said, what's the matter? Don't you have lunch at school? Ah, he says, today I wanted to have lunch with my dad. His heart at school began to long for a dad that will forgive and humble.

My brothers and sisters, my family life has been more glorious since I learned to practice forgiveness and nothing else but forgiveness. My ministry has become amazing. If not to you, then to me.

Since I learned to forgive, forgive the Protestant church, forgive the Christian, forgive the Mohammedan, forgive the Buddhist, forgive everybody. Don't start out with judgment, begin with forgiveness. Before those apostles ever preached a sermon, they were told to forgive the whole world, to forgive everybody.

And so, I believe this morning the Holy Ghost is saying to this camp, whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven. And if you begin to forgive others, you yourself will immediately find a liberation that you never knew before. You will liberate those that are under bondage of your judgment.

I believe if in the world we forgive sinners and let them feel that we have forgiven them, we will sweep thousands of them into the kingdom. They believe that God loves them. If we can show a little of that love, but how quick we are, how ready we are, to judge and to condemn.

Forgive me, another incident, I was speaking in this direction back in Boston at a banquet. In that meeting sat a dear old mother and dad, and they listened to this. God sent them there, I believe.

The story was that these two old folks quarreled so much at home that afternoon, they were at each other all the time, that finally he said to her, oh, let's get out of this house, there's a banquet down there and Du Plessis is going to talk, let's go to the banquet, then at least we'll have to behave ourselves while we sit there. Here they came to the banquet, and I began to speak like this. Do you know what they were quarreling about? They had an only son, only one son, and he was mother's pet, mother's darling.

There wasn't a girl in the world good enough for him. So they would never approve of any girl. At last he married one that they disliked immensely, and so he was driven out.

But he began to long for home. And that day, that Saturday, they had received a letter which he says on Sunday morning, I'm coming home and I'll bring my wife with me. I long to see you and I want you to see her.

And so when they read the letter, the old lady said, well, let that little vixen get here. I'll give her my mind. I'll tell her this and I'll tell her that.

And the old man said, you can't treat the girl like that. It's not her fault. But I'll tell John a bit of my mind and I'll tell him this.

She says, no, no, don't you touch my boy. Don't you touch my boy. And so they were quarreling.

He wanted to fix the boy. She wanted to fix the girl. And they had a battle.

And that night in the meeting, he looked at her, the old brother, and he said to her, dear, you know, we, we ought to do some forgiving. He said, will you forgive me if I forgive you? She said, yes. If you forgive me, I'll forgive you.

And so they forgave each other. And then he said, all right, now how about the kids? We forgive them too? She said, yes. If you promise you'll forgive Johnny, I'll forgive Susan.

And so they forgave And when the meeting was over, I saw something going on, and it was exciting. These two old people were now discussing with their friends about the reception. Oh, they were going to roll out the red carpet.

They were going to welcome that young couple. It's exciting. When you learn to liberate others, you suddenly are free yourself.

Your father will forgive you as you forgive those that trespass against you. Is there anybody in this meeting this morning that could tell me you really don't owe forgiveness to anybody? You don't have ought against any? I doubt it. For forgiveness isn't once.

It isn't seven times. It's four hundred and ninety times. And I want to warn you.

You never get through with it. And I am forgiving and forgiving and forgiving forever. I don't know where it comes from, but I find there's always oughts coming up.

And I've got to forgive. Would you like to stand with me and tell Jesus that you forgive? If the foregoing message has been a blessing, we urge you to share it with your pastor, your prayer group, your neighbor, or someone in spiritual need. Additional copies of this tape or a free tape catalog may be obtained by writing to World Map Tape Outreach, 900 North Glen Oaks Boulevard, Burbank, California, ZIP 91502.

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