

Learning to Forgive Ourselves

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson teaches that forgiving ourselves is not about earning God's forgiveness, but about receiving it by resting on His promises.

Scripture: Psalm 51:8, Psalm 51:12, Isaiah 43:25, Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 8:1, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 1:7, Philippians 4:6-7, Hebrews 10:17, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Self-Compassion"

Description

David Wilkerson emphasizes the challenge of self-forgiveness, illustrating this struggle through the life of King David, who, despite being forgiven by God, grappled with guilt and lost his joy. Wilkerson highlights that even when sins are forgiven, the burden of self-condemnation can persist, leading to a loss of joy in one's spiritual life. He also shares the transformative experience of Hudson Taylor, who learned that true faith and joy come from resting in God's promises rather than striving for them. Ultimately, the sermon encourages believers to accept God's forgiveness and extend that grace to themselves, allowing the joy of the Lord to flourish in their lives.

Transcript

To me, this is the most difficult part of forgiveness. As Christians, we are quick to offer the grace of our Lord to the world, but we often parcel it out meagerly to ourselves.

Consider King David, who committed adultery and then murdered the husband to cover up his offense. When his sin was exposed, David repented, and the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to tell him, "Your sin has been pardoned." Yet, even though David knew he was forgiven, he had lost his joy. He prayed, "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice...Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit" (Psalm 51:8,12).

Why was David so disturbed? This man had been justified before the Lord, and he had peace through God's promise of forgiveness. Yet, it's possible to have your sins blotted out of God's Book but not out of your conscience. David wrote this Psalm because he wanted his conscience to stop condemning him for his sins. And David couldn't forgive himself. Now he was enduring the penalty for holding onto unforgiveness--an unforgiveness directed toward himself--and that is a loss of joy. The joy of the Lord comes to us as a fruit of accepting his forgiveness.

I have been greatly impacted by the biography of Hudson Taylor. Taylor was one of the most effective missionaries in history, a godly man of prayer who established churches throughout China's vast interior. Yet he ministered for years without joy. He was downcast over his struggles, agonizing over secret longings and thoughts of unbelief.

In 1869 Taylor experienced a revolutionary change. He saw that Christ had all he needed, yet none of his own tears or repenting could release those blessings in him. Taylor recognized there was only one way to Christ's fullness: through faith. Every promise God had made with man required faith. So Taylor determined to stir up his faith, yet even that effort proved vain. Finally, in his darkest hour, the Holy Spirit gave him a revelation: faith comes not by striving, but by resting on the promises of God. That is the secret of tapping into all of Christ's blessings.

Taylor forgave himself for the sins that Christ had said were already cast into the sea. And because he rested on God's promises, he was able to become a joyous servant, continually casting all his cares on the Lord.

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