

The Grace of God

by J. Wilbur Chapman

God's gracious offer of forgiveness assures us that our sins are blotted out and forgotten, and that we can have a new life in Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 43:25, Micah 7:19, John 5:24, Acts 3:19, Romans 8:38, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:7, Hebrews 8:12, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Divine Forgiveness", "Eternal Salvation"

Description

J. Wilbur Chapman preaches on the powerful message from Isaiah 43:25 about God blotting out our transgressions for His own sake and not remembering our sins. He emphasizes how our sins are blotted out from God's Book, with His hand, for His sake, and from His memory, offering hope for forgiveness and redemption. Chapman delves into the significance of God's forgiveness, the impact of our actions and thoughts, and the assurance of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

TEXT: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."--Isaiah 43:25.

In looking over an old volume of Sermons preached by H. Grattan Guinness, forty-five years ago, I came across the message which he delivered with this text as a basis. So deep was the impression made upon me by my first reading of the sermon that I have taken Mr. Guinness' outline and ask your careful attention to its development.

If one should enter a jewelry store and ask to see a diamond, or any other precious stone, the jeweler would first spread upon his show case a black cloth and then place the diamonds upon it, not only for protection but also in order that the black background might bring out distinctly the brilliancy and worth of the gems. So God gives this best of all his promises with the dark picture of sin clearly and thoughtfully portrayed. In verses twenty-second to the twenty-fourth we read, "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honored me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities."

In these verses God says that his people have not called upon him in prayer, they have not presented their offerings, neither have they presented unto him themselves. He also affirms that they have wearied of him, and that they have also wearied him with their iniquities, and then he exclaims, "I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense," and with these clear statements he gives us the gracious statement of the text, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

Mr. Guinness gives us four beautiful thoughts in this text concerning our sins.

First: They are blotted out from God's Book.

Second: They are blotted out with God's hand.

Third: They are blotted out for his sake.

Fourth: They are blotted from his memory.

A more admirable outline of a text of Scripture I do not know, a more cheering message to a child of God I have never found.

I

Not long ago, in Chicago, a young man was induced to confess to one whom he thought was his friend the killing of his father and mother. As the confession was being made, as he supposed to but one person, it was all being taken down by those who were near enough to hear him speak, and when he appeared before the court his own confession was used against him and sent him to a life imprisonment in the penitentiary. What was true of this young man is true of us. Every sermon the minister preaches is recorded, every word an individual speaks is put down. It is a solemn thought to realize, that at the judgment we shall give account for even our idle words.

Science has proven that our acts, our words and even our thoughts make their indelible record.

Not long ago in our home we came across a long-unused phonograph. We started it going, placing upon it one of the cylinders which had been packed away with the phonograph, and were startled to hear the voice of one who had been dead for years. We heard the message he dictated, the song in which he joined and the laugh with which he closed it, and yet his voice has long been silent in death. There is not a sin of your youth which has not made its record, not a passion of your mature years that does not stand somewhere against you, not an act, a feeling or an imagination that has not been indelibly written; not all the changes of time, not all the efforts of man, can wipe these things out.

In the British Museum there is a piece of stone not larger than the average Bible at least four thousand years old, and in the center of the stone there is a mark of a bird's foot; four thousand years ago the track was made, and for four thousand years the record has stood. If these things are true of us--and they are, according to the Word of God--then what prospect is there for us but that of eternal punishment? For when we stand at the judgment there shall appear before us the sins of omission and the sins of commission, the sins we have forgotten and the sins we have but recently committed against ourselves, against our fellow men, and against God.

It is indeed a black picture, and with whitened faces and rapidly beating hearts we ask, Is there any hope? I bring you God's gracious answer to this important question: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Notice, it is the voice of God speaking. "I, even I," he exclaims, "will blot out your transgressions."

It is, first of all, a commercial term. We were in debt to God, hopelessly in debt, and our obligation has been canceled; over against our sin is placed the righteousness of the Son of God, and we are free.

"Jesus paid it all, All to him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow."

It is also a chemical expression, for it is a picture of God applying the blood of Jesus Christ to every page of the written record. The sins of our youth long ago passed out of mind; the sins of our manhood, which have taken up every part of our being, the sins of to-day--all have gone, for he himself has blotted them out. When we realize that we are forgiven of God it means more than if we were forgiven of men, for in the might of his forgiveness our past sins are gone, they shall not even be mentioned against us; the fear of judgment is taken away, for Jesus himself says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). It is the Passover story over again, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Thus are our sins blotted out.

II

It is with God's hand that the work is done; and for very many reasons this is a great comfort to us.

First: Because it was God's hand that made the record, he it was who put down all your sins. He never rested in his work; week after week, month after month, year after year, the recording work was being done until your record became blacker than the blackest midnight; and behold the hand that made the record blots it out.

Second: It was his hand against which you offended. Your sin was against yourself. It is true it hurt your character, lowered your self-respect; but more especially was it against God, for you despised his authority, forsook his service, broke his laws, defied his justice; you grieved his spirit, and you crucified his Son. And behold it is the hand against which you committed all these offenses which blotted out your transgressions.

Third: It is the offended hand which blots them out. It was the hand that opened the fountains of the deep, and behold the floods came, the waters above and the waters below clasped their hands and destruction was everywhere save in the Ark. It was his hand that brought destruction upon the cities of the plain, consuming them with a mighty flame, and it was his hand that opened the sea for the children of Israel and then closed the sea over the pursuing Egyptians. The very thought of the offended hand makes us tremble, but behold, it is this hand that blots out all our transgressions.

Fourth: It is the hand of justice that does the work. The same hand wrote, "The wicked shall not go unpunished," and wrote again, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and wrote yet again, "The wages of sin is death." This hand is stretched forth in our behalf.

I doubt not the question has often come to us, "How can God be just and be the justifier of them that believe?" In the light of such statements as these just quoted I am sure it is for this reason--it is for the offering of the just for the unjust. He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made

the righteousness of God in him. A man was needed for such an offering, and Christ became man. The man required must be born under the law, so Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh. The man born under the law must be without sin, so he was born pure. The man born under the law and without sin must be willing to die, and so he came saying, "I delight to do thy will, O God." And the man born under the law, without sin and willing to die must be able to provide an atonement which would make the wandering sinner and the love of God one, and so Christ at the command of God was thus furnished a sacrifice of sufficient power and magnitude to save the whole world. It is this hand of God that blots out our transgressions.

Fifth: It is the hand of the Supreme Being that does the work. What a word of encouragement this is. It was this hand that made the worlds and hurled them off into space. It was this hand that created man and made him in the likeness of God. It was this hand that formed the countless number of angels, and has ever directed their heavenly movements. It was this hand that wrote the law upon Sinai. And it was this hand that holds the keys of the kingdoms of heaven and hell. He blots out our transgressions. From his decision there can be no appeal. With such a work as this, who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Would God that justifieth do it, or Christ that died consent to it? In the light of such a thought the Apostle Paul says, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

III

Our sins are blotted out for his sake. God saves the sinner not alone because of pity for the sinner, and certainly not simply because he is in danger of hell, but in order that he may glorify himself; and this is no selfish glorification, but rather in order that he may show to us now and throughout all the ages what he really is. God has made different revelations of himself. We have beheld his wisdom in creation, in his providences and in his word. We have seen his justice in that he gave his only begotten Son to die for poor lost men. We have seen his power in the working of miracles and the transforming effect of his grace. It remains for us to see his love in the story of salvation, for until we behold him as the Savior of the sinner we do not know him. It is this that shall make us not only rejoice here in time but rejoice with joy unspeakable in eternity. The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 2:7-8, "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

IV

Our sins are blotted out from God's memory. The last of this wonderful text is the best. When we detect a failure of memory here in this world among our friends it is an evidence of weakness, but it is no weakness in God to forget. This is but another one of those expressions descriptive of God in which human language is used to describe a thought and in which human language is too poor an agency to convey all the depth of the meaning. It is just another picture of God stooping down to meet our weakness and it is God assuring us that our sins are gone completely. It is as if they never had existed, for they shall never stand against us and in the day of judgment they shall not even be mentioned. Our sins must have been a grief to him, just as the sin of an earthly child is the source of sorrow to an earthly parent; but they are so no longer, for he has forgotten. The Bible represents God as being angry because of our transgressions, but if ever there was anger with him it is so no longer, for you cannot be angry with a person whose injury against you you have forgotten entirely. We do not in this world speak of what we have forgotten, nor will

God speak of our sins. We do not punish what we have forgotten, nor will God permit us to be punished, for he has blotted out our transgressions and will remember them no more. There is no awaiting penalty for your sin, there is no judgment to meet at the great white throne, there is no hell for you at the last, for your sins, for Christ's sake, have been forgotten.

If you cast a stone into the water and it sinks away there is for a time a ripple, where the stone has gone down; but in a moment it has gone forever, you can see it no more. So God has cast our sins into the sea and the place where they have gone cannot even be found.

V

But what must I do to take advantage of all this gracious offer of God? I answer according to the Scripture. There must be true repentance; repentance is a change of mind, it is having a new mind for God. There must be regeneration; regeneration is a change of nature, it is a new heart for God. There must be conversion; conversion is a change of living and a new life for God. If we would be born from above we must accept God's word.

Two friends were conversing one evening. One of them with a skeptical mind had just rejected the Bible because it did not tell him the things that he would know. He insisted on knowing how the worlds were made, and demanded that he should be told concerning the origin of heaven and why God permitted it, and because the Bible failed here he would have none of it. Just as his friend was leaving the skeptic said to him, "Here is my lantern. I want you to take it and it will light you home." But the lantern was refused by the Christian man, "for," said he, "this lantern will not light up the mountains in the distance, nor the valley stretching away at my feet." His friend was amazed. "Man," said he, "take the lantern; it will make a road for you across the moor and light up your pathway home." "Oh," said his friend, "if that is true I will take it; but listen to me. So is the Bible not for distant paths of investigation; it is not so much to tell us concerning creation and existence--we shall know these things by and by. It is for the path at your feet and it will light you home a space at a time." The skeptical man saw it in an instant, he took God's word and came back again to the faith of his childhood.

So I offer it to you with its promises as of lanterns, if its commands are carefully received and followed out. You, too, may pass from darkness into light and you may claim from God this text of mine which says, "I even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-wilbur-chapman/the-grace-of-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net