

Lesson 100 – God’s Forgiveness

1. What power does Jesus have? **Luke 5:24**

EGW: When Christ said to the sick of the palsy, "Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," He gave His enemies a sign which they could not set aside. "And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" Knowing their unspoken thoughts, Jesus said, "What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins (He said unto the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today." {RH, April 30, 1901 par. 6}

Did this evidence that Jesus was the Son of God cause the scribes and Pharisees to believe in Him?-- No; this demonstration of His power only exasperated them. It was not evidence that He was the teacher sent from God, that they wanted, but evidence that He was a deceiver. Their hearts were not open to conviction. They were filled with intense hatred and bitter prejudice, and they were ever seeking to find some occasion to manifest their wrath. {RH, April 30, 1901 par. 7}

2. What word reveals that God does not automatically forgive us of our sins, even if we believe we are saved? **Psalms 86:5**

EGW: Should you become alarmed for your own souls, should you seek God diligently, He will be found of you; but He will accept no halfhearted repentance. If you will forsake your sins, He is ever ready to forgive. Will you just now surrender to Him? Will you look to Calvary and inquire: "Did Jesus make this sacrifice for me? Did He endure humiliation, shame, and reproach, and suffer the cruel death of the cross because He desired to save me from the sufferings of guilt and the horror of despair, and make me unspeakably happy in His kingdom?" Look upon Him whom your sins have pierced, and resolve: "The Lord shall have the service of my life. I will no longer unite with His enemies; I will no longer lend my influence to the rebels against His government. All I have and am is too little to devote to Him who so loved me that He gave His life for me--His whole divine self for one so sinful and erring." Separate from the world, be wholly on the Lord's side, press the battle to the gates, and you will win glorious victories. {5T 438.2}

3. What is God waiting for us to do before we are forgiven? **1 John 1:9**

EGW: The Scripture bids us, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." James 5:16. To the one asking for prayer, let thoughts like these be presented: "We cannot read the heart, or know the secrets of your life. These are known only to yourself and to God. If you repent of your sins, it is your duty to make confession of them." Sin of a private character is to be confessed to Christ, the only mediator between God and man. For "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1. Every sin is an offense against God and is to be confessed to Him through Christ. Every open sin should be as openly confessed. Wrong done to a fellow being should be made right with the one who has been offended. If any who are seeking health have been guilty of evilspeaking, if they have sowed discord in the home, the neighborhood, or the church, and have stirred up alienation and dissension, if by any wrong practice they have led others into sin, these things should be confessed before God and before those who have been offended. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. {CCh 304.4}

4. What was forgiven and then unforgiven? **Matthew 18:23-34**

EGW: When the unjust steward whose great debt had been forgiven met another inferior to him in position, who owed him but a small sum, he was filled with anger, and with threats and violence claimed the money that was due him. When the poor debtor fell at his feet, and used the very same prayer which he himself had uttered before his lord, he was merciless. He accused the man of an intention of not paying him, and disregarded his prayers and tears. He who had been forgiven so much, would himself forgive nothing. He claimed his right, and, taking advantage of the law, afflicted the distressed debtor by casting him into prison. This conduct grieved those who witnessed it, for they knew the whole story of his pardon, and they carried a report of his doings to the king. Then the king's anger was stirred, and he ordered the man to come before him. "Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." {ST, February 14, 1895 par. 9}

5. When it comes to sins or trespasses, what will the Father do if we do not forgive others? **Beginning of Matthew 18:35**

EGW: "But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with

me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and 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 that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? and his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till 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 every one his brother their trespasses." {RH, January 3, 1899 par. 2}

This parable is designed to show the spirit of tenderness and compassion which man should manifest for his fellow man. The pardon of this king represents a pardon that is supernatural,--a divine forgiveness of all sin. Christ is represented by the king who, moved with compassion, forgave the debt of his servant. Man was under the condemnation of the broken law. He could not save himself; and for this reason, Christ came to this world, clothed his divinity with humanity, and gave his life, the Just for the unjust. He desired to give in his own life an example of the forbearance that man should exercise toward his fellow man. {RH, January 3, 1899 par. 3}

When the debtor pleaded for delay, with the promise, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all," the sentence was revoked; the whole debt was canceled; and he was soon given an opportunity to pattern after the master who had forgiven him. Going out, he met a fellow servant who owed him a hundred pence. But he who had been so mercifully treated dealt with his fellow laborer in an altogether different manner. His debtor made an appeal similar to that which he himself had made to the king, but without a similar result. He who had so recently been forgiven was not kind, and tender-hearted, and pitiful. The goodness, mercy, and love shown to him he did not exercise in dealing with his fellow servant. He heeded not the request to be patient. The goodness shown to him only hardened his heart. The small sum owed him was all that the ungrateful servant could keep in mind. He demanded all that he considered his due, and carried into effect the sentence which had been so graciously revoked for him. {RH, January 3, 1899 par. 4}

The lesson to be learned is that we must have the spirit of true forgiveness, even as Christ forgives the sinner, who can in no case pay his enormous debt. We are to bear in mind that Christ has paid an infinite price for the souls of men, and we are to treat them as Christ's purchased possession. {RH, January 3, 1899 par. 5}

6. If we do not forgive others, what will be the Father's reaction towards us? **Mark 11:26**

EGW: When preferring requests to God, confess your sins with sincere sorrow, and ask him to forgive them. Then if you have aught against your brother, go to him; and by the grace and strength which the Lord gives to all who ask him in faith, let all enmity, all malice, all hatred, be put away from you. Be reconciled to your brother. If you have not a tender, forgiving spirit toward others, your Heavenly Father will not forgive your trespasses. "When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have

ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." {RH, December 9, 1890 par. 13}

I have been shown that there has come into the hearts of the professed people of God, an unsympathetic, cold, loveless spirit; and many, having left their first love, are ignorant of their true standing before God. They cannot see that they are drawing away from Christ, instead of being laborers together with God. It is the absence of the love of Jesus in the heart that makes the church weak, and this absence is always evinced by a lack of love for brethren. If its members loved God supremely, they would love their brethren; but Satan has been sowing his tares. This cold, critical spirit has been taking up a larger and still larger place in all our religious associations, until the characteristics of Satan himself are plainly revealed. There is a separating of the soul from Christ, its first love. The Lord Jesus understands the situation of the church. He reads every heart. He is the heart-searching God, and he alone, with absolute certainty, knoweth them that are his. {RH, December 9, 1890 par. 14}

7. When we are completely forgiven, what will God do towards those sins? **Jeremiah 31:34**

EGW: Every Christian will have a hard battle to fight with wrong habits. He must overcome his unbelief, his deformity of character, his inclination to self-indulgence. His long resistance of light, warnings, and appeals has left its mark upon his life; and although God has forgiven him, he feels that he cannot forgive himself. He often thinks of what he might have been in physical and moral strength if it were not for that sinful past. But to him I say, "Look and live." The Lord declares, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." His promise is, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." {RH, January 13, 1891 par. 13}

8. How are we to be forgiven? **End of Matthew 6:12**

EGW: When we come to ask mercy and blessing from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our own hearts. How can we pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and yet indulge an unforgiving spirit? Matthew 6:12. If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent as we hope to be forgiven. {SC 97.1}

9. How deep into our sins will God be willing to forgive us? **Beginning of Colossians 2:13**

EGW: "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." As you openly renounced sin and Satan, the three great powers of heaven pledged themselves to help you to overcome. You were raised in newness of life by the power that raised Christ from the dead. You came forth from the watery grave pledged to devote your life to the Master's service. You are henceforth to live a new life, as if reason, knowledge, affection, speech, property, and all else you have, had been anew entrusted to you, with a distinct intimation from heaven that they are to be used for God. You are to live a life of cross-bearing and self-denial, a life bound up with the life of Christ. {ST, February 12, 1902 par. 9}

10. What provides the forgiveness of our sins? **Colossians 1:14, Ephesians 1:7**

EGW: As you read the promises, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. The great heart of Infinite Love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Ephesians 1:7. Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness. {SC 55.1}

11. What are we when we are forgiven? **Romans 4:7, Psalms 32:1**

EGW: Sinners are committed for trial. They must answer to the charge of transgressing God's law. Their only hope is to accept Christ, their Substitute. He has redeemed the fallen race from the curse of the law, having been made sin--a curse--for mankind. Nothing but his grace is sufficient to free the transgressor from bondage. And by the grace of Christ all who are obedient to God's commandments are made free. {AU Gleaner, August 19, 1903 par. 7}

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." {AU Gleaner, August 19, 1903 par. 8}

12. All should know that when a person commits a sin, they need to be forgiven, but where else do we need to be forgiven even if we do not carry it out? **Acts 8:22, Proverbs 24:9**

EGW: Among the converts in Samaria was one Simon, who, by the power of Satan through sorcerers, had gained great fame among the people. "To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries." But when he saw a greater power manifested by the apostles in healing the sick and in converting souls to the truth, he thought that by uniting with the believers in Christ he might do wonders equal to those accomplished by the apostles. He hoped thus to add greatly to his fame and wealth, for he made merchandise of his sorceries and Satanic arts, pretending to impart their secrets to others. {3SP 302.1}

His darkened mind could not distinguish between the power of the Holy Ghost and that of Satan. He went to Peter and offered him money if he would give him power to heal the sick, and impart to men the Holy Ghost, by laying his hands upon them. Peter was filled with horror at such a proposal, and severely rebuked the presumption of Simon. Said he, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." {3SP 302.2}

13. Why do we even need that location to be forgiven if we did not act upon it? **Beginning of Proverbs 23:7**

EGW: The influence of every man's thoughts and actions surrounds him like an invisible atmosphere, which is unconsciously breathed in by all who come in contact with him. This atmosphere is frequently charged with poisonous influences, and when these are inhaled, moral-degeneracy is the sure result.--Test., Vol. V, p. 111. {PH048 9.2}

Proverbs 23:7: As he thinketh in his heart, so is he. {PH048 9.3}

14. When every manner of speaking against a certain being occurs, what is He willing to do? **First half of Luke 12:10**

EGW: (no comment)

15. But towards whom will it not be forgiven? **Second half of Luke 12:10**

EGW: Korah would not have taken the course he did had he known that all the directions and reproofs communicated to Israel were from God. But he might have known this. God had given overwhelming evidence that he was leading Israel. But Korah and his companions rejected light until they became so blinded that the most striking manifestations of his power were not sufficient to convince them; they attributed them all to human or satanic agency. The same thing was done by the people, who the day after the destruction of Korah and his company came to Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord." Notwithstanding they had had the most convincing evidence of God's displeasure at their course, in the destruction of the men who had deceived them, they dared to attribute his judgments to Satan, declaring that through the power of the evil one, Moses and Aaron had caused the death of good and holy men. It was this act that sealed their doom. They had committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, a sin by which man's heart is effectually hardened against the influence of divine grace. "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man," said Christ, "it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him." These words were spoken by our Saviour when the gracious works which he had performed through the power of God were attributed by the Jews to Beelzebub. It is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that God communicated with man; and those who deliberately reject this agency as satanic, have cut off the channel of communication between the soul and Heaven. {RH, November 12, 1903 par. 40}

16. How much sin is Jesus willing to forgive? **Luke 7:47**

EGW: Christ might have extinguished every spark of hope in Mary's soul, but He did not. The Heart-searcher read the motives that led to her actions, and He also saw the spirit that prompted Simon's words. "Seest thou this woman?" He said to him; she is a sinner; "I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." {ST, May 9, 1900 par. 14}

Those present, thinking of Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead by Christ, and who was at this time a guest in his uncle's house, began to question, saying, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" But Christ continued, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." {ST, May 9, 1900 par. 15}

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite soul away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. He will not reject any who come to Him penitent and believing. Freely will He pardon all who come for forgiveness and restoration. {ST, May 9, 1900 par. 16}

17. How extensive is this forgiveness? **Mark 3:28, Psalms 103:3, Psalms 25:18**

EGW: We come unto God in the name of Jesus by special invitation, and he welcomes us to his audience chamber, and imparts to the humble and contrite heart that faith in Christ by which he is justified, and Jesus blots out as a thick cloud his transgressions by the bright sunshine of his love, and the comforted heart exclaims, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." [Isaiah 12:1.] He will understand in experience the words of Paul, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." [Romans 10:10.] He then becomes a sanctified agent that God can employ to work out his noble purposes. He then represents Christ, holding forth to the world his mercy and love. He has a testimony that he is desirous that others should hear, and in the language of the psalmist, he says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercy." [Psalm 103:1-4.] {CE 128.1}

18. How not extensive is forgiveness? **Numbers 14:18, Exodus 34:7**

EGW: Moses pleaded the words of God with an earnestness and sincerity which mortals have never equaled: "And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty. . . . Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now." And the Lord said, "I have pardoned according to thy word." {ST, August 14, 1884 par. 4}

Here is an example of intelligent prayer,—an appeal to the reason and the sympathy of Jehovah; and Moses' prayer was answered, because God is reasonable and compassionate. The sorrows of his people touch his heart of love; and will he not hear our prevailing prayer? Will not our very urgency be regarded? His loving-kindness faileth not. As a kind Father, he does not mock the miseries of his children. And will he not avenge his own, who cry day and night unto him? {ST, August 14, 1884 par. 5}

19. When we sin, what have we really done against God? **Daniel 9:9**

EGW: If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. Infidelity

and skepticism prevail. Iniquity abounds. Corruption flows in the vital currents of the soul, and rebellion against God breaks out in the life. Enslaved by sin, the moral powers are under the tyranny of Satan. The soul is made the sport of his temptations; and unless some mighty arm is stretched out to rescue him, man goes where the arch-rebel leads the way. {7T 42.1}

20. What four things are we to do to receive forgiveness? **2 Chronicles 7:14**

EGW: The king had done everything within his power to encourage the people to give themselves wholly to God and His service, and to magnify His holy name. And now once more, as at Gibeon early in his reign, Israel's ruler was given evidence of divine acceptance and blessing. In a night vision the Lord appeared to him with the message: "I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to Myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people; if My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now Mine eyes shall be open, and Mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever: and Mine eyes and Mine heart shall be there perpetually." Verses 12-16. {PK 45.3}

21. When we sin in ignorance, though we still need forgiveness, as acting priest now, what does Jesus do in the heavenly courts for us? **Numbers 15:28 [Not looking for the word "forgiven" but what He makes.]**

EGW: (no comment)