



Life Lines

Dover Church of Christ
Dover, Arkansas 72837-0299
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Can God Really Forgive Me?

By Allen Webster

From House to House, Heart to Heart

"God could never forgive me. I've done some awful things."

How many times has that thought passed through the synapses of human brains? Does it frequently lodge in your gray matter? When you are alone at night with just your thoughts, are they thoughts of despair, hopelessness and frustration?

The private thoughts of a prodigal boy in a pigpen in a far off country give us some hope (Luke 15:11-32). That boy was an invention of the Master storyteller to share a message about forgiveness . . . about a Father's all-encompassing, in comprehensible love . . . heaven's sermon of hope when the devil preaches despair.

That hungry prodigal knew his rich father would not go to bed without supper that night. *But the son would.* Pondering this thought, he realized that nobody on his father's farm would fall asleep with a growling stomach. *But he would.* Even his father's servants had "bread enough to spare" (Luke 17:17). *But he didn't.* Since the father in the parable represents the Father in the Bible, we can draw some interesting conclusions from the phrase "bread enough to spare." God has never been stingy with His blessings. He "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not" (James 1:5; cf. 1:17)

Take bread for instance. When Israel needed some in the wilderness, they had all the manna they wanted. "Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man" (Exodus 16:16) When a widow shared with Elijah what she thought was her last meal, God refilled her meal barrel, and no matter how much she dipped out, it stayed full until the famine ended (I Kings 17:15-

16). When Jesus fed the five thousand men (besides women and children) the famished people ate all they wanted and still had twelve baskets left (Matthew 14:20). When He "opened His buffet" to four thousand another day, they, too, ate their fill and had seven baskets left (Matthew 15:27).

When we think of man and see the magnitude of his sin, we can hardly understand how a single sinner can be saved; but when we think of God and see the magnitude of His love, we can hardly understand how a single one could be lost.

Have you considered that God loved sinners better than He loved His own Son? *How can you say that,* you ask? He "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32), but He spares sinners. He poured His wrath upon His Son and made Him (the innocent) the substitute for sinners, that He might lavish love upon us (the guilty) who deserved His anger.

Since God freely gives us all things (Romans 8:32) and withholds "no good thing . . . from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11), what can we count on when we make the journey back to our Father from the far country?

With God there is grace enough and to spare. No one has gotten up from God's table still needing a snack of grace. Is your case a different one? Have your sins been shocking and frequent? Are your spiritual diseases strange and complex?

Consider that He who made the earth and stretched out the heavens like a tent has no bound to His strength nor limit to His might. In six thousand years, He has never failed at anything – will His first failure be saving you? Will you prove too strong for omnipotence, too clever for omniscience or too unlovable for omni-benevolence?

He made you (II Genesis 1:27), He can remake you (II Corinthians 5:17). If He claims you (II Corinthians 6:18), He can cleanse you (Acts 22:16). His "hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isaiah 59:1)

It still stands. God offers "abundant grace" (II Corinthians 4:15) and "abundant mercy" (I Peter 1:3; cf. Titus 3:5-6), yea, "exceeding abundant" (I Timothy 1:14). He is able "to save them **to the uttermost**" that comes to Him (Hebrews 7:25). Peter said, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you **abundantly** into the everlasting kingdom" (II Peter 1:11). Paul concluded "Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound" (Romans 5:20)

What about **moral delinquents**? Doubtless the immoral and swindlers and drunks are not welcome at the Father's banquet. Right? Again, we find they are – provided they are penitent. Paul wrote of some who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers and extortioners (I Corinthians 6:9-19). By God's grace, they had been washed, sanctified and justified (6:11).

Can God forgive you? *Yes!* Will God forgive you? *Yes.* The question really is, "Do you really want to be forgiven? Are you willing to take God on His terms? What are His terms?"

Learning of Christ (John 6:44-45); faith in Christ (Acts 16:31); repentance of sins (Luke 13:3); confession of Christ (Romans 10:10); baptism into Christ (I Peter 3:21); and then faithful living for Christ (Revelation 2:10)

Take God at His word.

Trust in Him.

Obey Him.

Live with Him forever!

Lines for Ladies

By Pat McAlister

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(I John 1:9 NKJV)

God is quick to forgive our sins. A good example of this is the parable of the lost son in Luke. The younger son chose to take his inheritance and go into the world. Into the world did not mean that he was going to seek a fortune and do well for mankind. He chose to go into a world of sin and riotous living, having a good time for himself. Like so many of us would do today. And just as today, this good time did not last very long. His friends lasted as long as his money.

This son was allowed to squander his inheritance, repent and return to his home. Even though the older brother did not accept him, the father did. Jesus told this parable to the multitude to give them an example of our Father's forgiveness. The son repented. He was sorry for what he had done. The father realized this and forgave him, just as our Father forgives us when we repent. He accepts us back into the family of saints.

Perhaps you have thought the same. I'll do my thing, go out into the world and do my thing. Then later I will return and change my life. But what happens if you do not return in time? Some lifestyles cause us to lose our lives. Some cause such irreparable damage that we can't overcome it.

This son was very fortunate in that he woke up in time. He understood his predicament. He was lower than he wanted to be. He would take a chance on his father's forgiveness. The result was good.

Not all stories are like this. All of us know personally of some souls who wait too long. The timing is not good and they lose their soul. Many think their sin is too great. Some are afraid, embarrassed or just stubborn.

John says we must confess our sins. Then he says that God is faithful and just to forgive our sins. And then last, but not least, he tells us that God will cleanse us from **ALL** unrighteousness!

Remember Our Sick

Bob Bennett – serious health problems.

Tom Cloud – in Heart Hospital, L R, problems with his defibrillator, blockage and kidney problems.

Jessalyn Davis – home, condition not good.

Troy Curtis – hip replacement surgery February 12th.

Amanda Dodson – Freida Arnold's niece, seizures. If medication fails, possible brain surgery.

J. R. Hale – had elbow surgery.

Leota Hickey – cataract surgery Feb. 27th.

Annette Hull – thyroid cancer cells, started treatments Feb. 5th.

Cleon Johnson – Paul Helton's mother, surgery Jan. 28, Doctors hopeful.

Ray King – serious health problems.

Pat McAlister – lower back surgery scheduled March 12.

Jannie Myers – first cataract surgery February 6th, second one February 20th.

Tom Williams – had surgery, doing better.

J.D. Whiteside – Dennis Whiteside's father improving from his stroke.

Shut-ins – need prayers and visits:

Dover Area: **Evelyn Burton**
Bernice Brown

Russellville Nursing & Rehab Center:
Evelyn Driver
Melba Hodges

Stella Manor: **Pauline Dale**
Louise Killer
Mae Vanzandt

Tobin Health Care, LR:

Charles Hickey

Others Who Need Our Prayers:

Amie Barkley, A. G. Barton, Carolyn Bennett, Lloyd Boley, Lois Boley, Wm. and Susie Boley, James Chadwick, Jeff Davis, Barbara Dawson, Charles Ensey, Hoyt and Sarah Ensey, Jeania Griffin, Paul and Sue Griffin, Dorothy King, Jim Lackey, Robert and Rose Lee, Liliya McDaniel, Linda Melton, Charles Proctor, Don Sheeran, Reddie Smith, Tanya Smith and Judy Will.

Special Children: Elysia Lee, Emmy May, Keith Martin and Noah Williams.

Expectant Mothers: Kelly Chance, Beckie Clark, Amy Johnson, and Kristen Nordin.

Our Military: Greg Davis, Cole Wetzel and Rudy Will.

It Was God's Doing

What must it have been like for Joseph during all those years in Egypt when he thought his father knew what his brothers had done, but still didn't come to rescue him? What must it have been like to have been lied about by Potiphar's wife and have spent years in an Egyptian prison for crimes he didn't commit. What must it have been like to be forgotten by the king's servant for whom he had interpreted a dream? We don't know what his prayers were like. But we do know he remained faithful to God during the whole time.

Finally that day came that his brothers who had sold him stood before him, begging for food and Joseph decided it was time to open up to them and tell them who he was. He poured out his heart to them, embracing them, kissing them. But the most moving thing of all, to me, is when he said, don't feel guilty for what you did, it was God's doing that I was brought here so I might be a savior to my father's family.

Later when Jacob died and his brothers were afraid he would now take revenge on them, they made up a letter from Jacob asking Joseph to forgive his brothers. He said to them, *"Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."* (Genesis 50:19-20)

Do you feel like you are caught in a whirlwind of trouble? Does it ever seem that everyone has turned on you? What if you looked at the problems and challenges you face and declared to yourself and all who could hear you that it was all God's doing?

God is constantly preparing each of us for some service or opportunity that will come our way. If we can recognize His hand and trust in Him daily, it will change our whole outlook on life.

By: *Leon Barnes*
From: *The Voice*
Russellville, Arkansas

Events

Dover Church of Christ
Children's Church

Every Sunday
11:15 - 12:00 Noon

Ages 4 thru 8
Bible Story and
Activities

Ages 1 thru 3
Nursery Class

TEA PARTY!!!

February 23, 2008
Saturday, 11:30 AM

For All the Ladies of the
Dover Church of Christ.

Fellowship Hall
Hosted by the
Leaderettes

Door Prizes and
Entertainment

Please RSVP to:
Shirlie Chadwick

Dover Ladies' Devo

Thursday, 7PM
February 21st

Hostess: Pat McAlister

Mark Your Calendars

Lads/Leaderettes Leaders
Dover Church of Christ
Meet every Sunday, 5PM
Song leading
Bible Reading
Advanced Bible Reading

Lads to Leaders' Convention
March 20 thru 23
Nashville, Tennessee

CHRISTEENS 2008

February 22 thru 24th

West Side Church
Of Christ
2300 West "C" Street
Russellville, Arkansas

Conway County

Ladies Day

Saturday

March 8, 2008

Hosted by the Downtown
Church of Christ
100 W. Church Street
Conway Arkansas

Breakfast 8:30 AM

Lunch: 12:00 PM

Theme: "Facing Your Fears"
Including the dramatic
monologue "Save Momma"
and keynote address by:
Lynne Gentry, Dallas, Texas

February Birthdays

- 03** Mildred Turner
Jon David Vance
08 Mary McAlister
09 Juanita Whitted
11 Kristen Nordin
12 Shawn Bates
Emily Straight
15 Zackary Shelton
16 Rachel Curtis
19 Carolyn Bennett
Tyler Mullins
20 Kaci Statler
21 Julie Moss
22 Eugene Davis
Keri Letson
Troy Meadows
23 Bernice Brown
Pat McAlister
Linda Herron
24 Earl Kennedy
27 Caleb Chance
28 Theresa Motley

If we missed your birthday,
please let us know so it won't
happen again.

Dover Church of Christ
Ladies Day

Saturday, April 26th

Theme: "He is the potter,
We are the clay."

More info to follow!

THOSE TO SERVE

February 17, 2008

Sunday A.M.

Announcer: Randall Walters
Song Leader: Merrell Shoptaw

Prayers

Marion Helton
Joe Miller

Communion

Podium: Allen Veasman
Serve: Donny Forehand
Drew Walters
Earl Whitted
Gary Williams

Scripture Reading

Jim Killer

**Sunday P.M.
Prayers**

Jim Killer
Jeff Myers

SPEAKER

Sunday A.M.
Micah Williams

Sunday P.M.
Micah Williams

Prepare Table for Communion

Alan and Sandra Boatright

Communion to Shut-Ins

Marion Helton
Merrell Shoptaw

Greeters

Jim and JoAnn Killer

Wednesday Night Devotional

February 20, 2008

Tommy Oakes

Meeting Times

Sunday Morning Bible Classes
9:45 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship
10:45 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship
6:00 P.M.
Ladies Tuesday Bible Class
10:00 A.M.
Wednesday Bible Classes
7:00 P.M.

Minister: Micah Williams
Church Office: 479-331-3428
Or Cell: 479-264-9244

Elders:

William Boley 858-7131
Jim Killer 331-2802
Allen Veasman 331-2156
Sid Womack 967-2367

Deacons:

Chris Besterfeldt
Donny Forehand
Brent Hottinger
Chris Loper
Rex McDaniel
Joe Miller
Chris Moss

Nursery Attendants:

Sunday Class: JoAnn Killer
Sunday Church: Pat McAlister
Kaeli Miller

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Dover Church of Christ
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