

THE RICHES OF FORGIVENESS

I John 1:9

INTRODUCTION:

Last week on Sunday Evening I used the text from Eph. 3:8 - The Unsearchable Riches. The riches of our Lord coming in like the waves of the ocean.

Among the treasures we find forgiveness -- one of the riches every man from Adam's time until this hour needed.

Text opens with a pointed -- "If we confess our sins". Is this for you or just the neighbor?

Does he mean crimes - not like you have committed a crime, but all are sinners "For all have sinned and fallen short".

Sin is everywhere - crime is governed by human law. Sin is Spiritual and belongs to God's jurisdiction.

Sin is evil doing on God's scales. Sin is transgression of the law. Who's law?

"Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned".

✓ Sin is against His Maker.

✓ Sin is against his body - Temple of Holy Spirit. We offend man, but we sin against God.

Can we see it -- (great self-illusion) It is the thing that haunted Paul.

Jesus used withering words to describe sin, to him it was ugly, ungodliness, rebellion, final failure, darkness, doom.

To Paul it was the same black bankruptcy. The tragedy of the soul.

A blot on the world beauty.

Source of moaning, groanings, and misfortune.

"The whole creation travaileth in pain".

There are those who make light of sin. They call it a mistake, a cinder in the eye, a splinter in the flesh, a dark spot in the stream, the shadow on

on the wall. To them sin is simply immaturity, imperfection, error, tuneless-
lessness - a misfortune.

Matthew Arnold, "Sin is not a monster but an infirmity".

These folks are deaf to the discord
blind to the danger
ignore the riot raging within
put a veil over a sore.

Paul - sin is made to look like what it is. It loses the glitter - it
is grim, ghastly, godless.

It is a reality.

It leads a soul to where the grave is dug -- "For the wages of sin is
death".

Scripture says it is black and bitter and leaves sorrow. Confine our
exposition to three things in ~~the~~ context of this Scripture. These are easy
to remember conviction, confession, and cleansing.

I. Conviction

A must for every soul!

Deny it, is to hoodwink ourselves, give falsehood to God.

V. (10) - Language clear - unmistakable -- "If we say we have not sinned, we
make Him a liar and his word is not in us". "His Message is not in our Hearts".

This will wake you up! Strong - stern.

English lit. Shakespeare, in MacBeth introduces a (knocking at the gate)

It is the middle of the night. Duncan is asleep in slumber. After the work
of extermination, there is heard a sharp knocking at the gate.

Dr. Quincey makes this the subject of an essay. In the murderer was
raging passion, in the castle quietness. Things change - there is a loud
(hammering at the gate)

In the (sphere) of the spirit we call this conviction.

Canon Farrar called it literature's classic illustration of conviction of sin.

It is the pain of resuscitation in a drowning man. The pulses of life are beginning to beat normally again.

Peter preached Acts 2:37 "When they heard this they were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles.

Men and brethern, "what shall we do?"

This is conviction!

He had preached of Jesus crucified at the hands of sinners - their sins responsible - conviction came.

Prodigal Son - sinned against his father - God in Heaven. Luke 15:17.
"And when he came to himself" - conviction.

Mystery of the cross - supreme shock.

Conviction is reviving the conscience.

When we stand before the cross, we are struck with the desperate villainy of our hearts.

Sin has done this - my sin has done this.

Cross is a mirror - brings home to conscience a distinct indictment.

It is a conflict of wills.

Calvary is a window through which we gaze and witness the revelation of conscience.

Through it we see the wounds as old as humanity which need healing.

See stains as old as sin which need cleansing.

The great transaction stirs our sense of guilt. Sin at the cross is revealed as black as hell.

Spectacle of one who was truth, purity, beauty, love, humbling himself and becoming obedient to death. This provokes conviction and sorrow.

Sin thereby becomes exceeding sinful.

We realize the breach when we pull against sin and its mighty current.

Cross enlightens and convicts - enormity of sin.

II. Confession

Conviction must be acted upon. Many are convicted, who never confess!

God brings conviction. Man takes initiative in confession.

N. T. tells of three things -- kinds of confession.

- 1. Confession of sin - confess sin to God.
- 2. Confession of faults - confess faults to one another.
- 3. Confession of Christ - confess our Saviour to the world.

We must confess our sins and our Saviour - a man that is ashamed of his physician is hardly worth healing.

If we confess our sins - sincere conviction will be followed by true confession and a God directed cry for pardon.

Sad feature of this age - we are losing our sin consciousness.

This is because we are losing our God consciousness.

Higher we are - better see the depth.

V. 6 - Only as we sit in Heavenly places - "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."

When God consciousness goes, sin consciousness will soon follow.

For sin is rebellion, running away from home, it is wilfulness, it is a blow against God.

Confession is coming back with your guilty burden to the Father.

"Father I have sinned and am not worthy to be called Thy son. Make me a hired servant".

This is true confession.

Confession asks for the privilege of suffering.

Confession brings us back to Calvary and to the fellowship of the crucified.

"Just as I am, without one plea

But that Thy blood was shed for me,

And that Thou bidst me come to Thee;

Oh, Lamb of God, I come".

Sin - as a rule does not trouble us much today. It only worries us when wedded to its wages. Sin brings suffering and suffering is unwelcome, unlovely.

Average criminal fears exposure of his crime. Penalty he dreads is discovery.

Scripture - real ravage of wrong doing is not without but within!

"He that sinneth against me sinneth against his own soul". It is not the outward consequence that is serious but the inward scar.

The consciousness of being self condemned is the real tragedy - the guilt is in the deed, not in the fact that it becomes unveiled.

No man can forgive you for what you have done to yourself. This is significance of confession.

We confess our unworthiness -- "I am not worthy to be call Thy son".

The consciousness of having missed the mark is soul-subduing and humbling.

(Confession) is accepting God's evaluation of our misdeeds.

When a man confesses to the state, he puts himself in the hands of the state.

When we acknowledge our transgressions to God, we are subscribing and surrendering to His judgment.

All sin, note is against God and must be confessed. When a man is wronged, that too must be confessed.

(Arthur Dimmesdale) carried his guilty secret with him for 7 years. Strain unbearable and confessed his shame in the public square of the town and found sweet tranquil relief.

(Balzac's story) of a mother, placed the blame of her babe on an innocent man. Confessed her guilty blight to the Bishop -- "You must take the brand

off as publicly as you put it on".

N. T. Verdict - there can be no forgiveness til there is unreserved, wholehearted confession.

If we confess he is faithful and righteous to forgive.

V.8 (Refusal) to recognize our inherent depravity. We insist that our errors are not sins, merely mistakes, frailties of the flesh.

Are we not good - no says John - we have not touched the realm of truth - we are deceived ourselves.

Gospel announces that such deceived people may be cleansed.

Bring your sins to light - confess, yield to the Saviour.

Humanist does not need anyone, or anybody to make him what he should be.

Within himself are all the resources needed for a full and successful life.

I do not need to repent.

God is wrong charging me with sin.

Ridiculous to say I need a Saviour.

There is help for this man if he turns to Jesus for help. John is not using an imaginary case. Gnostics and men and women of his day actually were saying they were not sinners.

John says no man can truthfully say this - Christian revelation based on man as sinner.

If man is not a sinner - Christ death and resurrection is without meaning.

III. [Cleansing]

V.9 "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Question - why does God not forgive all men and put an end to all of it?

Why the O. T. sacrifices?

Why the death of Jesus.

Man does not understand the Father seeking his child. What good is forgiveness, if the one forgiven is not affected by it?

Forgiveness is not possible until there has first been repentance and desire.

If your child commits a wrong and says excuse me, I am sorry, I did not mean to do that.

You forgive.

Forgiveness is a simple matter.

But if child comes in and tells you a deliberate untruth - that is not a simple matter - very serious - it hurts because of his danger.

It calls for atonement - the parents love suffers.

Heart of Redemption - When God forgives - He heals.

Problem of forgiveness is to forgive and at the same time be made whole.

"Who forgiveth all Thine iniquities, who healeth all Thy diseases".

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

Change the sinner so that he aspires to the purity - this is the problem.

To accept pardon, and forgiveness is to pledge ourselves to the pursuit of holiness.

May have Theories about the atonement - but the fact is "I gave my life for Thee
I give my life to Thee."

When Prodigal Son returned - he was kissed, there was reconciliation - that was forgiveness. Then he was clothed - that was imputed righteousness. Then he was fed - that was strength to overcome.

The first essential is to receive the kiss. God is not reconciled (to us.)

Forgiveness is restoration of the human spirit to fellowship with the Father, the connection between the human Spirit and God had been broken by sin.

Final test of our religion is its power to make men whole. Holiness goes

down deep.

Doctrine of forgiveness being exploded - (Socrates) said, "Plato, perhaps God can forgive deliberate sin, but I don't see how he can". This is same message of (Geo. Eliot), she makes poor Hetty Sorrel suffer, there was no hope for her. She must take her punishment and bear it. "You have sinned". Cry of fatalism. Pay your debt like a man.

How are some debts going to be paid like a man? How the debt of murder? Children out of wedlock? There is a cross they have placed on some one else. Innocent person.

Story by (Joseph Conrad) - abandonment at sea. The mast of the vessel and officers forsook the ship, Patna in mid-ocean with her cargo of helpless pilgrims.

The captain is condemned by the court, his certificate cancelled.

That is a small matter. The real punishment is inflicted within. Go where he would that abandoned schooner swam into vision. It tortured him by day, and filled his dreams by night.

In the morning a cold sweat of anguish would be on his brow. How, pray, is that debt going to be paid?

Only one way. Some higher power must pay it.

(Old Hymn) - "Jesus paid it all".

(Forgiveness) is a personal act.

(Forgiveness) never gives back what we have forfeited. As the Prodigal - he was restored - some of the losses and limitations he will carry with him.

Cleansing will be complete - eternal mystery of the cross.

V. 6 - If we say - walk in darkness.

Clear test - how does the man who claims fellowship with God live?

What is his life?

Does his conduct justify his claim?

V. (7) - Beautiful figure - course or character of conduct.

Even the lying hypocrite may be cleansed of all his sin. Rev. 21:8.

simple
woman ~~was~~ -
"go & sin no more" - "