

I CAN'T FORGIVE

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32

Now some people find it easier to forgive than others, but it shouldn't come as any great shock to us that we can't or won't forgive, because the Bible says that's exactly who we are and what we will be like even though we may be saved.

Most people think that when you trust Jesus Christ for your salvation, then everything will be rosy and God'll give you the ability to be "light and love" to all you meet.

No, my friend, when you are saved, you are saved - of that there is no question or doubt and you can't lose your salvation. However God then sets about exposing our nature to ourselves and others. The purpose is to reveal to us what His unfathomable love at the cross was, when Jesus died for you and me.

It is God's purpose to place unmovable blocks in our pathway (such as unforgiveness) to show us how great was His forgiveness toward you and me and to give us tender hearts.

"...while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

WELL, JUST WHAT ARE WE LIKE?

Lets have a brief little trip through the Bible and find out who we really are. Let's look at who God says we are and what we are made up of and what really rests in our hearts.

"As it is written, There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace they have not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

(Romans 3:10-18)

You might be thinking, "Man! this sounds a bit rough. I wonder who God is referring to here - these must be dreadful criminals of the highest order?"

No my friend, this is God's description of you and me (saved or unsaved). But wait, there's more!

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:" (Mark 7: 21-22)

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17: 9)

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings.." Gal 5:19-21 Now

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don't get upset, this is what the Bible says that you and I are like. The picture is not flattering - and it gets worse.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6) "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7: 20)

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalm 14:1,3)

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. " (Romans 3:23)

"Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Psalm 39:5)

READING ABOUT OURSELVES SHOULD MAKE US READY TO VOMIT - we aren't good, never were and never will be!

WE ARE BY NATURE - SINNERS!

We are not sinners because we sin, but we sin because we are sinners - we aren't good people who sin, but we sin because we are sinners. Our very nature is sin, we are inherently sinful.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners... " Romans 5:19

We didn't have any choice in the matter - when Adam sinned, his sin was put to everyone's account. It's similar to a 'virus' that can spread to all computers in the world. That's how Adam's sin was placed to your account and mine and from that day forward we were classed as sinners - not just a people who sin.

It's like the problem with nut grass and trying to get it out of the soil. It just seems to

keep popping up out of the ground. Why? The very nature of the soil is riddled with seeds despite our best efforts to get rid of them. Now we are like the soil with nut grass in it. The grass is our sins but the very nature of who we are is corrupt as well. **WE ARE**

CORRUPT SOIL.

WHO DID CHRIST DIE FOR?

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

"...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29

So we can see that Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for everyone's sin and sins. While we were all those things that were mentioned on the other page - absolute "sewers of filth and sin" and that's at our best, Jesus died for you and me!

Contrary to popular belief that God loved you so much because you were something special and a possession of great value, we see that how much more was God's love for us that while we were "sewers of sin" (not worthwhile people) Christ died for us.

DID JESUS CHRIST DESERVE TO BE CRUCIFIED ON THE CROSS?

The Bible says that Jesus was without sin and was blameless.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Cor 5:21 Jesus didn't ask to be put on the cross for us, but He went willingly to the cross that you and I might have a way to be put right with God. A perfect and holy God required the blood of His sinless Son (who in actual fact is God - one God but three Persons). God Himself was sending Himself to the cross for sinful man.

CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW GOD FELT WHEN HIS LAWS REQUIRED HIM TO DO THAT?

Would you or I send our son to die for someone we love, let alone someone who was antagonistic to us or some one who hated us and wanted to kill us?

Absolutely not! We might turn on our heels and say “Good riddance to bad rubbish!”

The Bible says: *“For scarcely for a righteous (that's self-righteous) man will one die: yet peradventure (perhaps) for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:7-8*

We have God's love toward us and He commands that we forgive others. Why can't we? Perhaps we should say: 'Why won't we?'

HOW MUCH DO WE LOVE GOD?

We sing about it in church, we say we love God, we adore Him and worship Him and Jesus, but do we really?

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments...” 1 John 5:3

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:3-4

That's pretty clear - if we say we love God and won't keep His commandments, we don't love God at all and in fact he says we are liars! God commands us to forgive others.

If we don't we are liars if we say we love God. The first commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and strength. Do we?

BUT I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT, I'VE BEEN HURT TOO MUCH!

God doesn't say, “if you feel like it, I want you to forgive others.” The reason we won't is that our flesh is very much alive - Oh yes, we are saved but our flesh still wars against God's Holy Spirit within us.

“Put on therefore as the elect of God.. bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another...”

Col 3:12-13

I CAN'T OR I WON'T?

You see, our reactions only point to show us that we really are as described earlier in the brochure - hardhearted, cold, unforgiving, vengeful sinners. Our flesh is very much alive. We won't forgive others because we don't see ourselves as bad at all. In fact we see ourselves as good and worthwhile, and being badly treated with something that we didn't deserve! That's exactly how God felt when He sent Jesus to the cross for you and me - but He did!

Now God says, I **COMMAND** you to forgive - not if you feel like it, not if you want to & not after you've been justified or recompensed. You've never been hurt like God has been with our sin and sins, so let's not get on our 'high horses' and say we've been unjustly treated. We haven't!

We deserve everything that people dish up to us because of who the Bible says we are.

STILL CAN'T FORGIVE?

Dwell on how Jesus sacrificed Himself for you and then go to God and tell Him you won't forgive someone else for what they've done. **MAKE THE DECISION TO FORGIVE, THEN ASK GOD TO ENABLE YOU TO DO IT.**

If you won't, you can say you love God but you won't trust Him.

By Harley Hitchcock.