

He is faithful and just

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[0 : 00] And part of verse 9, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And what we are going to deal with this evening is the phrase, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

For the benefit of those who are visiting us, who do not attend the prayer meeting regularly like our own people, I might tell them that we dealt with part of this Veshobeti, dealing first of all with the confession of sin.

If we confess our sins. And we also dealt in a subsequent prayer meeting with what God does to us if we confess our sins to him.

He cleanses us, he forgives us our sins and he cleanses us from all righteousness. Now tonight we come to the ground on which God does this, or the reason for which we are certain that if we confess our sins, they will be forgiven us.

[1 : 48] First of all then, you will notice that John is addressing these words to believers, not to the word.

And these words are not to be taken indiscriminately, as the very often are, but wrongly so.

The words don't apply, and I emphasize this, they don't apply to those who are not Christians.

They apply to believers only. That, of course, doesn't mean that if a sinner comes to Christ, God will not forgive him.

Of course he will. But John is speaking to those who have exercises of grace in their heart.

[2 : 50] And nobody confesses his sins to God, but a true Christian. Nobody's sins are forgiven in this sense when it comes to confess, but those of a Christian.

Now, last week, I tried to find out as best as I could, why a believer needs forgiveness. After having been completely forgiven in the day of justification.

Now, just to refresh your memories, and in order that you might think and speak of these things later on, I did say that when a sinner is justified the day he receives Christ by faith, then all his sins are forgiven.

The past, the present, and the future, they are all forgiven. Now, remember this. God does not forgive the sinner in the day of justification.

Only up to the moment when he is justified, he forgives him up to the moment when he shall be glorified. Now, I try to point this out to you.

[4 : 17] And then to explain why it is necessary that those people who are thus justified and completely forgiven, should have further forgiveness.

If we confess, our sins will be forgiven and we shall be cleansed. What this means is that believers have sin in them as long as they are in this world.

They confess their sin and God applies to them anew the blood of Christ in all its efficacy. God is angry with our sins and he removes his anger when they make confession and are frank to him about them.

Well now, I think I also said that this should be emphasized that not only are we forgiven, but we are also cleansed from all unrighteousness.

[5 : 29] There is forgiveness and cleansing. And you can easily discover if you have been forgiven. That's no problem at all. If you discover that you want to be cleansed as well as given.

Now that's a mark of this if you want one. And make sure if you have it or not. It's a very simple one. Very easy really to arrive at a conclusion.

If you really honestly before God who knows your heart. If you want to be cleansed from unrighteousness.

You do this because you have been forgiven. Otherwise you couldn't do it. It's as simple as that. Well now nobody can tell you or me if we want to be cleansed from all unrighteousness or not.

And that word all is very significant. There are unrighteousnesses from which we might want to be cleansed. At least we think so. We are cleansed from all unrighteousness.

[6 : 48] God knows you and I want that. Well if we do, it is because we have been forgiven. Well now when we come with our sins to God.

The sins are troubled us day by day. The sin into which we fall. The evil that we didn't want to do but which we did.

What happens then? We come to God and we pray for forgiveness. Now listen very carefully when I say this.

If you come to God doubting that you will be forgiven. Then you are casting a slur on the cross. That is not the prayer of faith.

That is unbelief. When you come asking forgiveness. You come with certainty that you are going to be forgiven.

[7 : 51] Never forget that. You don't come doubting. You come believing. You come sure that you will be forgiven.

How then can you be so sure? Well here we have the ground or the reason for which we are sure. And again let me remind you that John is addressing these words to believing people.

People just like you and me. Who tried to do good but they are not afraid. People who have the corruption of their own hearts. The thoughts and evil of their own minds.

These were the kind of people that he was writing to. So we are sure because God is faithful and just to forgive us.

Now there is a lot of theology contained in that statement. God is faithful and God is just. The terms don't mean the same.

[8 : 57] Both things are true of God. They are two different things. And as I said there is a lot of theology in these words. But after all my friends you can't comfort a Christian apart from theology.

A Christian can't have any certainty if he doesn't know anything. Your certainty is grounded on your knowledge of the scripture.

You are sure because you know what is in the word of God. God is faithful. Now this is theology. And it is by such theology that comfort comes to the heart of a believing soul.

Let us examine it then for a minute or two. God is faithful. Now faithfulness is one of the qualities or of the perfections or of the attributes of the deity.

He is faithful to forgive us our sins. You know what faithfulness means? Faithfulness means being true to one's word.

[10 : 14] Very often to one's word of promise. And that is exactly the meaning that he does here with regard to God. Now what does God say?

He has made trust. He has made trust to Christians in the Bible. Promises that if they return to him, he will receive them favorably and graciously. Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of thy birth?

Thou dost not retain thine anger forever, because thou delightest in mercy. That's one thing he says. Let him return unto our Lord, and he will abundantly pardon.

As far as the east is from the west, so far have he removed our transgressions from us. All these are statements or ten promises of the deity of the deity.

Well now, God made these promises. God made these promises. And why did he make a promise? He made a promise because he decreed to forgive you.

[11 : 32] The promise of God is only the outward expression of what he has predetermined to do. The outward expression did to us publicly in the world, in the infallible world, of what was ever in the mind of the Most High.

Now remember this. You had this in the psalm, Psalm 31. How great the goodness thou for them that fear thee, keep'st in store.

You see that's hidden, not kept in store, is something, as it were, behind the veil, something that you don't see. But rot'st for them that trust in thee.

He rot it publicly. You have the secret and the public. Now, be hidden and revealed. Now, in the decrees of God that are hidden, except as he reveals them in the world, there is this, that you will be forgiven.

And he has given expression to his decrees, or to his foreordination, to his determination to forgive, in the promises.

[12 : 52] And God is faithful to what he has said. This is what it means. But now, sometimes, people make promises that they cannot fulfill.

And there are very often three reasons on the part of good meaning people for which they can't fulfill the promises that they make. There are, of course, bad reasons.

I'm not going to refer to them. But there are reasons which a person cannot help. And one of them is this.

That something might come the way in providence which will prevent a person from fulfilling the promise that he made. Although he intended to fulfill it.

Although he intended to fulfill it. Something comes the way. And he just can't do what he thought and intended doing. Why, now, this cannot come between God and a soul.

[13 : 59] He is the all-wise God. As you heard of one of our brethren saying tonight in prayer, they all see the omniscient one.

And he knows all things from the beginning. And he knew that nothing would come the way which would prevent him from fulfilling the promise that he has made that he will forgive you sins.

And the second thing is, sometimes a person will not be able to implement his promise because he won't be able to.

He might have had money when he made the promise. He promised to give money, but then he lost it. He might have had strength, but then he lost his strength.

Though that will never happen here between God and the soul. He is the all-powerful God. Who is able to effect his promises and bring to pass every word that he has spoken.

[15 : 08] And the third thing I would notice is, that he is the all-faithful God. His mind doesn't change as the mind of a human promiser might do.

Now these are the three things which are contained in this, that God is faithful to forgive us our sins.

And you make use of this in prayer. When you have sin upon your heart and mind and you are burdened, you go to God. And you will tell him that he has promised to forgive you.

This is in his word. And you will tell him this. Oh, he knows it. But you know the manner of the saints in scripture. As if it were, remind God of his own word.

And then believe. Believe because he is all-wise, because he is all-powerful, because he is all-faithful. That the word which he spake will be made good.

[16 : 14] And that will be the prayer of faith. And so you come with certainty to him then, as you asked him before he then. And there is another thing that I would like you to notice here.

Before a person makes a promise, he is free to make it or not, just as he pleases. But after a person makes a promise, he is not free to keep it or break it.

He is given his word. Do you follow what I say? If you haven't made a promise, you don't need to make one. You are quite free to make it or not to make it as you like.

But once you make it, then you are not free. Your character depends upon it. Your whole integrity is built up with your word. Then you are not free to break it.

Or not to break it as you like. You must not break it. Now this also is true of God.

[17 : 24] God made the promise in his own free willity that he would forgive you sins. He was free to make it or not to make it. But he made it. And having made it, with all due reverence friends, let us say, he is not free to break it.

He will not break it. He will not break it. The word that has gone out of his mouth, he will not change. Now God is not only faithful to forgive us, faithful to his own word of promise.

But he is also just to forgive us. Now what does this mean? Well, there is a timely experience of, I suppose, every Christian.

There is nothing in God that they are more afraid of than his justice. There is a benefit of his justice. A holy and unjust God.

And when they realize that their sins deserve eternal wrath. And that there is nothing between them and God's anger as far as they can see.

[18 : 31] They would go into the bosom of the earth. They would rather be buried alive than they faced the justice of God. Just as without a view of mediation is a terrible thing.

And this is what I suppose every one of you here tonight, at least every person who is a Christian, every one of you knows something about. Now, look at the change that comes.

Instead of being afraid of justice, the believing person comes to God, supported by justice. God is faithful and just.

Before, he might have said, that he was converted. I'd have some hope for forgiveness if God were so just.

Well, that's a wrong interpretation of God. But this is the way we think. But now we come and we say, I have every hope of forgiveness because God is just.

[19 : 40] Just in what sense? Well, of course it's not. As the past we've been served, it has about to do with us. God was just to us. Nothing but just. He weren't merciful as well.

Then there would be no hope for us. But it says that God is just. How then? Well, in this way. That, I'm putting it very briefly.

Christ, your Savior, has undergone the penalty which your sins deserve. He has undergone it all.

He took all the punishment that was due to you for all your sins. And having done so, God received the satisfaction which Christ gave.

And what I mean by that is this. You see, we use illustrations. And they're never really very adequate.

[20 : 43] However good they are, they always seem to be defective. Take this situation for example. Supposing that our passion was, and we use the Dover.

Suppose that our passion was in terrible debt, which he had no hope of paying. And the Lord demanded it so, and justly so.

Then he comes before the judge, with someone else with it, who is willing to pay the debt. And the passion puts out the money on the counter, every penny, before the judge.

I put the small amount to it. The judge is not obliged to accept that money. He can take it and credit it to the guilty one.

Or he can't. It's all up to the judge to say what he's going to do. Now here, in this case, Christ gave satisfaction.

[21 : 49] He interwrote the penalty of death. And it was part of the free will of God to accept this on your behalf.

But the problem you have to emphasize is that he did accept it on your behalf. This is what we're sure about. He did. There's no doubt about that.

There is no room for asking. When Jesus presented his own efficacy, the satisfaction of his own work to the Father, to my judge, for me.

Did the judge accept it? You have no room to ask that. The Bible has already answered your question. And we know that he said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The resurrection is proof of this fact, that he accepted the satisfaction which Christ rendered for his judge. And so then, because he did, he is just to forgive us of sins.

[22 : 53] You see, it was an infinite satisfaction that justice required. And Christ couldn't give less, since he gave any satisfaction at all.

He couldn't give less than an infinite satisfaction. You ponder this lesson. I say these things to God. The satisfaction, I say, that the justice of God required for you, as an individual, and I am not talking just now about the Mass.

I am not talking about the whole Church. But everyone individually, worthy of the satisfaction that justice required for you, singly, was an infinite satisfaction.

And you could never give it. You could never give it. You could never give it. You could never give it. You could never give it. It's an infinite satisfaction. And you are a finite person.

And you couldn't do it. But Christ came to give satisfaction. And since Christ gave any satisfaction at all, being the person he was, God, man, in one, He couldn't give us satisfaction less than an infinite satisfaction.

[24 : 10] See, now where you stand. God is faithful and just. And you come in prayer to God and you say, Lord, I have sinned against thee.

And I confess my sin. But I know that I shall be forgiven. Because thy word says so, and thou art faithful to thy word.

And because Jesus died for me and rendered satisfaction, He drank the penalty for my sin. And He rendered an infinite satisfaction to the demands of justice in my behalf.

See how you make justice your hope? Now, see how it supports you rather than terrifies you. God is faithful and just to forgive us of sins.

Well, now, friends, there is much more that could be said when the time is up. And I just want to say this much before we leave.

[25 : 13] No one has the prerogative to forgive sins but God. If we confess, He is faithful and just to forgive.

He is. Now, why do I say that? You see, everybody knows that. Everybody knows that nobody can forgive sins but God.

Well, I say it, friends, because one of the things we give to you very often is that we put ourselves in the place and room of the deity and we try to forgive ourselves our own sins.

This is why I say it. Oh, friends, beware of this pitfall which the devil places before you. You go to God and you say, Oh, Lord, I wish I had a better heart.

I wish my heart were not so hard as it is. And then there would be hope. See, what you're doing, friends, all the time is you defy yourself.

[26 : 22] If only you could have a better heart. That would be the means. That would be a help for your forgiveness. It wouldn't be then.

It wouldn't be. If you sin, God is faithful and just to forgive your sin. He does it. And He alone does it.

Against Him you have sinned. And He does it because He is faithful. And He does it because He is just. Not because your heart is bleeding.

Not because your eyes are running. Not because your prayer is fervent. But because He is faithful and He is just. He is.

And all your hope is in you alone. Now perhaps you are here tonight. And you may have sinned on your conscience.

[27 : 19] Or perhaps you have sinned in your consciousness. And you are burdened before God. And you say, Alas, alas, miserable man that I am.

What am I going to do? I have put a barrier between me and thee. Well, friend, this is your answer. This is the answer that John gave those people in days of old.

If you confess, God is faithful and just to forgive you your sins. And to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

That is what you are going to do. This is the answer of the scriptures to you. So I have been trying my very best to explain these words for your direction and comfort.

So that if you are in this case, you will come tonight. Not wondering and questioning if you are to be forgiven. But knowing for sure that you are.

[28 : 23] Because his promise is that. And his justice demands your forgiveness. Not prevents it. Amen. Let us pray.

Healthy conversation.

We have celebrated years later. our sins and what we confess tonight above every other sin is the sin of unbelief