

# Good News

*From Getwell*

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#### SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY ACTIVITY

##### SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.  
Worship.....10:20 a.m.  
Worship.....5:00 p.m.

##### WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

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## ON THE HOME FRONT

Sunday was a good day. The morning services were uplifting and edifying. We had good singing led so ably by Bro. Pat Phillips and a good class followed by a powerful sermon by Bro. Michael Wyatt. We remembered our savior's sacrifice and gave of our means. Good prayers were offered.

We feel God was pleased and we know we were very blessed and strengthened.

You are invited to come and worship with us.

Remember us in your prayers, we appreciate you all.

God's will be done.

Dewey Murray



## Can God Really Forgive Me?

### 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 the far 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, incomprehensible 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 and to spare" (Luke 15:17). *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 and to spare." God has never been stingy with His blessings. He "giveth to all men liberally. and upbraideth not" (James 1:5; cc. 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 (1 Kings 17:15-16). When Jesus fed 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 extra (Matthew 15:37).

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 loves 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 I-le 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 difficult one? Have your sins been shocking and frequent? Ace 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.<sup>1</sup> 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? If I-le made you (Genesis 1:27), He can remake you (2 Corinthians 5: 17). If He claims you (2 Corinthians 6: 18), He can cleanse you (Acts 22:16). His "hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isaiah 59: 1).

After all these years, is there still bread enough on God's table of grace? Isaiah issued this invitation twenty-seven centuries ago: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).



*It still stands.* God offers "abundant grace" (2 Corinthians 4:15) and "abundant mercy" (1 Peter 1:3; cf. Titus 2:4, "exceeding abundant" (1 Timothy 1:14). He is able "to save them *to the uttermost*" that come to Him (Hebrews 7:25). Peter said, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you **abundantly** into the everlasting kingdom" (2 Peter 1:11). Paul concluded: "Where sin abounded, grace cloth much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

Let's put this plenteous grace to the test in a real world of really bad sinners. Did God live up to His promises?

- Those on whose **hands God saw crimson stains** that matched His Son's blood type were told, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Three thousand of them washed their hands "in the fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins" that very day (2:41; cf. Zechariah 13:1), and many others took Him up on His offer in coming weeks (Acts 2:47). It would be hard to imagine a case today that could be the equal or the Pentecost sinners.
- 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 (1 Corinthians 6:9–10). By God's grace, they had been washed, sanctified, and justified (6:11). No one has gotten up from God's table still needing a snack of grace.
- **Saul Of Tarsus**, who was public enemy number one in the kingdom of heaven at the time, tested the grace-enough-and-to-spare-principle as perhaps no other individual has. He was a blasphemer of God and murderer of innocent Christians. It seems he organized and supervised the mob killing of Stephen, instance, who likely left wife and child on earth<sup>2</sup> when the fatal rock prematurely sent him into eternity (Acts 7).

### **NO one has gotten up from God's table still needing a snack of grace.**

Surely, Saul would find that grace could cover only so that he had long ago crossed that line. No, he also found bread enough and to spare. Years later he wrote of himself (still calling himself the chief of sinners) as one "who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, . . . and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant" (1 Timothy 1:13-14). Is it tiny wonder that Paul wrote more or grace than any other New Testament writer—in fact, more than all the others combined!

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 (1 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!

#### Endnotes:

Charles H. Spurgeon, *Miracles and Parables of our Lord*. Most commentators believe that the men selected in Acts (among whom was Stephen) were deacons and thus would have met the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3, among which are a wife and child.