

# FORGIVENESS IS THE KEY



Desmond Ford

Generations ago, children were raised on porridge and the Bible, but today they are raised on cornflakes and comic strips, and that's why it is that in our world, more people kill themselves, than kill others. That's why half of all marriages now end in divorce. That's why suicide has multiplied fourfold in the last fifteen years among teenagers. Life has lost its meaning. Human beings are poor grovelers between faith and doubt. They don't know what to think, what to believe, what to do, what to love. We have pointed out that the only answer to life's riddle is the Christ of Scripture. . . .

. . . Unless we accept the forgiveness offered in Scripture, we cannot have lasting health and happiness. Consider the story in Matthew 9:1-2. Here was a man who was sick, and it was his guilt that had made him sick. That is not true of every sick person. Some of God's greatest saints have endured more sickness than all the rest of us. The great reformers had their share of sickness. Calvin had every disease in the book! Luther, too, was troubled by recurring maladies. It is wrong to say that ALL disease is a result of that individual's sin, but it is true that, in many cases, people are diseased because of their guilt. And it's true for all of us — we cannot have lasting health, and lasting happiness, unless we accept the forgiveness of Christ.

Then Peter came to him and said, 'Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?' Jesus saith unto him, 'I say not, unto thee Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven (Matthew 18:21+22).

Scripture lays on us the duty of forgiving seventy times seven, and will not God, who urges upon us that duty, do likewise? Is not this passage saying that we have such a God who is infinite in mercy as well as infinite in wisdom? Infinite in his forgiving power as well as infinite in wisdom?

We have a God who delights in mercy. He is more willing to

forgive us than we are to ask forgiveness. He is more willing to forgive our sins than a mother is willing to pluck her child out of the fire. His mercy, compared to our sin, is a mountain compared to a grain of dust. Does your unbelief hinder you in coming? Look at the cross and the unbelief will melt. Behold Christ stripped naked and flogged for your sins and mine, and your unbelief will melt. It was he who told us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses." We need forgiveness as much as we need daily bread, even more so. And God offers to forgive us daily. Daily!

For lasting health, for lasting happiness, believe that Christ's forgiveness is free, available, and continual. Take it. Claim it. Confess and believe you're forgiven. The word of God is the guarantee. Don't wait for feelings. He said it, it is so. In Romans 4:5, God is called the one that "justifies the ungodly." It doesn't say that he justifies the 'godly,' but rather, the 'ungodly!' That's the meaning of Luke 15:2 where it says: "this man

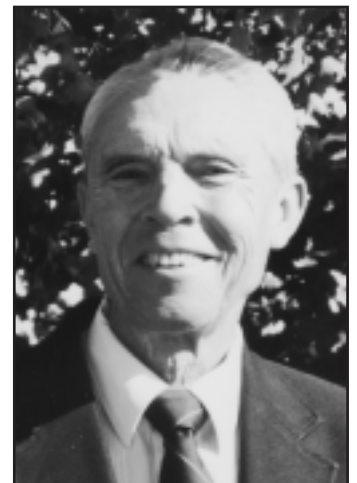
receiveth sinners."

That's the meaning of Luke 19:7 where it says: "He's gone to be guest with him that is a sinner."

Friend, are you a sinner? He wants to be a guest with you. He will receive you. He will justify you. You may claim it today. Make Christ your savior and your sins are forgiven.

-Desmond Ford. *Worth More Than a Million.* pp 583-586.

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