

“God Does Not Care About Your Sins”

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Introduction

A Priest And A Rabbi Are Friends

A priest and a rabbi are friends. Their church and synagogue are right across the street from each other. The priest is hearing confessions when he's called away for an emergency. Not wanting to leave the confessional unattended, he calls his rabbi friend and asks him to cover for him. The rabbi says, "I don't know what to say." The priest tells him to come over and he'll show him. So the rabbi comes over and sits in the confessional with the priest. A woman enters the confessional and says, "Father, forgive me for I have sinned. I took the Lord's name in vain five times." The priest says, "Say five Hail Mary's, put \$5 in the donation box, and go and sin no more." A few minutes later a man enters the confessional. He says, "Father, forgive me for I have sinned. I took the Lord's name in vain five times." The priest says, "Say five Hail Mary's, put \$5 in the donation box and go and sin no more." The rabbi tells the priest, "Okay, I got it." So the priest leaves. A few minutes later a woman enters the confessional and says, "Father, forgive me for I have sinned. I took the Lord's name in vain three times." The rabbi says, "Go and do it two more times. We have a special this week, five sins for \$5."

What Is Sin?

What is sin? Well, sin is missing the mark. Sin is making a mistake. And sin is engaging in error. Christian theology tells us that Jesus died for our sins. And because of that our sins – past, present, and future – are all forgiven by God. But do Christians really believe that?

A Biblical Example

The Parable Of The Prodigal Son

The parable of the Prodigal Son, found in Luke, Chapter 15, may give us some insight into how God forgives our sins – unconditionally. You may be familiar with the parable. A father has two sons. The younger son says: Dad, I don't want to wait until you die to get my inheritance. I want my inheritance now, so I can go and enjoy it. So the father gives the younger son half of his money. The younger son takes the money and goes off to Vegas and gambles it all away. I'd give you more details, but what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. So after the money is gone, the son decides to go back to his father, confess his sins, and ask for his father's forgiveness. But before the son can even confess his sins, his father sees him off in the distance, runs to him, hugs him, and kisses him. Before the son can even repent, the father has forgiven him for all of his sins, without the son even saying a word. The father does not care about his son's sins. The father gives the son unconditional love. The father loves the son no matter what.

This Parable Is About Unconditional Love

This parable is about unconditional love. I know many preachers preach that this parable is about repentance. But I believe that this parable is about the father's unconditional love for the son. And I believe that this parable is about God's unconditional love for us. Before we can even confess our sins, God sees us off in the distance, runs to us, hugs us, and kisses us. Before we can even repent,

God has forgiven us for all of our sins, without us even saying a word. God does not care about our sins. God gives us unconditional love. God loves us no matter what.

Another Biblical Example

It's Like Paul Writes In Second Corinthians

It's like Paul writes in Second Corinthians. Paul writes: If we're Christians, we're "a new creation," "everything old has passed away," and "everything has become new!" Paul writes: God has "reconciled us" to God "through Christ," "not counting" our "trespasses against" us. And Paul writes: God made Christ, "who knew no sin," to take on our sin, so that in Christ "we might become the righteousness of God." Now, many Christians, including me, have difficulty understanding that theology. Why would God have Jesus take on our sins and be killed? Why wouldn't we just die for our own sins? Does it have something to do with the way, in ancient Jewish times, a sacrificial lamb was said to take on the sins of the tribe and was then killed? Probably. Maybe it was told in this way because that's what people of Jesus's time could understand. But the bottom line is: God forgives us for all of our sins. And God does not care about our sins.

Some People Can't Accept God's Forgiveness

Some people can't accept God's forgiveness. "But you don't understand, Pastor, many years ago I committed some sins." God does not care about your sins. "But you don't understand, Pastor, just a few years ago I committed some sins." God does not care about your sins. "But you don't understand, Pastor, just yesterday I committed some sins." God does not care about your sins. Look: Either we believe that Jesus died for all of our sins or we don't. Either we believe that Jesus's death wiped out all of our sins - past, present, and future - or we don't. And: Either we believe that Jesus meant what he said when he said, "Forgive and you will be forgiven," or we don't. And I do. And I hope you do, too.

A Contemporary Christian Comment

William Sloane Coffin Knows That God Forgives Us

William Sloane Coffin knows that God forgives us. William Sloane Coffin knows that God does not want us to feel guilty about our sins. And William Sloane Coffin knows that God does not want us to be paralyzed by guilt for our sins. William Sloane Coffin talks about, "The banality of guilt," and says it's, "such a convenient substitute for responsibility," and declares, "It's so much easier to beat your breast than to stick your neck out." William Sloane Coffin, the chaplain at Yale in the '60s and the Senior Minister at Riverside Church in New York City in the '70s, spent his ministerial career sticking his neck out. For Civil Rights. Against the Vietnam War. William Sloane Coffin knows that God forgives us for our sins. Even for our societal sins. But I suspect it's a little more difficult for God to forgive us for our societal sins, like racism and an unjust war.

Don't Take God's Forgiveness The Wrong Way

Don't take God's forgiveness the wrong way. Don't think it's okay to go out and kill three people, because God does not care about your sins. And don't think it's okay for a country to unjustly invade another country, because God does not care about our sins. I just think rather than being negative, Jesus in the New Testament is being positive. Jesus essentially says: Your sins are forgiven, so love your neighbors. Jesus essentially says: Your sins are forgiven, so love your enemies. And Jesus essentially says: Your sins are forgiven, so love yourself.

A Modern-Day Example

Emo Phillips Is A Standup Comic

Emo Phillips is a standup comic. A strange standup comic to be sure. I saw him once at a comedy club years ago. Emo Phillips said that when he was a kid he prayed to God that God would give him a new bicycle. He prayed and prayed, but it didn't happen. Then Emo Phillips said he figured out Christian theology. So instead of praying to God to give him a new bicycle, Emo Phillips said he stole a new bicycle and prayed to God to forgive him. That's not exactly what I mean when I say God does not care about your sins.

God Does Care About Your Sins To This Extent

God does care about your sins to this extent. Sins take time. Sins waste time. And sometimes sins waste money. Even so called "victimless crime" sins take and waste time and money. God does not want to see us sin and take and waste time and money. God certainly does not want to see us hurt other people with our sins, directly or indirectly. And God does not want to see us paralyzed by guilt for our sins. That's why God forgives us for all of our sins. So that we'll move forward. That's why Jesus didn't kill the adulterous woman, even though the Hebrew scriptures say she should be stoned to death. But he does tell her to go and sin no more. Because God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit know that we were made for better things, for greater things, for higher things than for sinning or missing the mark or making mistakes or engaging in error. We were made to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.

Conclusion

"Amazing Grace" Is One Of My Favorite Hymns

"Amazing Grace" is one of my favorite hymns. "Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now I see." God's amazing grace means that God does not care about our sins. God's amazing grace means that God forgives us for all of our sins. And God's amazing grace means that God has forgotten about all of our sins. The hymn "Amazing Grace" tells me that God's grace is for everyone. God's grace is not just for one particular church. God's grace is not just for one particular denomination. And God's grace is not just for one particular religion. God's grace is for everyone. God's grace is for Christians and Jews. God's grace is for Buddhists and Hindus. God's grace is for Muslims and Sikhs. And God's grace is for everyone else. If Christ died for all of our sins, then Christ died for the sins of Christians and Jews, Buddhists and Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, and everyone else.

God's Grace Is Amazing

God's grace is amazing! God's grace is either amazing or it's nonexistent. You can't have a little bit of grace from God, anymore than you can be a little bit pregnant. God either forgives us for all of our sins, whatever they are, or God doesn't forgive us for any of our sins. But God does forgive us for all of our sins, because: God knows we miss the mark, God knows we make mistakes, and God knows we engage in error. And: Before we can even confess our sins, God sees us off in the distance, runs to us, hugs us, and kisses us. Before we can even repent, God has forgiven us for all of our sins, without us even saying a word. God does not care about our sins. God gives us unconditional love. God loves us no matter what.

Closing Prayer

Let us pray...

God of Love,
Help us to know that you don't care about our sins.
Help us to know that you give us unconditional love.
And help us to know that you love us no matter what.
Now and forevermore.
By the power of the Holy Spirit.
And in the name of Jesus.
Amen.