

# TRUTH & RIGHT

the bulletin of the Wellsburg church of Christ

 WELLSBURG  
CHURCH OF CHRIST



[www.wellsburgchurchofchrist.com](http://www.wellsburgchurchofchrist.com)

Volume 12 Issue 19

May 7, 2017

## Precious Forgiveness

We all know the feeling. You've said or done something hurtful to someone you love dearly. The words echo in your mind; you would do almost anything to be able to reach back and snatch them from the air. The image of the deed haunts your every waking moment; you see yourself committing the act again every time you close your eyes, and nothing you do will erase the picture. Finally, you go to that loved one and speak those words that come sometimes so hard: *"I was wrong. I'm sorry."*

And then you hear that precious reply: *"I forgive you."* What joy! What a

burden lifted! To be forgiven means to be made whole and right again in the sight of the one we have offended. We no longer need fear their anger, their rejection. The relationship that had been broken is restored; two parties that had been separated by a wrong done are reunited. Until we have been forgiven, we simply cannot rest.

A loving God created us with this deep-rooted desire to be forgiven when we do wrong. Without such a desire, we would not seek out God's forgiveness, which He has made freely available in His Son. Without this need to rectify our situation, we

could not have a relationship with God, for all have sinned (Romans 3:23). Nor could we have any form of relationship with one another, for we would routinely injure and shame each other with impunity.

This eager craving for redemption from wrong is what we sometimes call “conscience.” It was that portion of the character of Adam and Eve that awakened in the garden when *“the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked”* (Genesis 3:7). It was not their physical nakedness of which they were ashamed, but rather their nakedness in sin, being exposed in their transgression before the all-seeing eye of the Creator. Their consciences were offended by their violation of God’s command, and they sought to hide themselves behind aprons of leaves.

The wail of a shattered conscience can be bitter

indeed. Think, for example, of Esau who, having foolishly sold his birthright for a bowl of soup, realized only afterward the shamefulness of what he had done: *“He found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears”* (Hebrews 12:16-17). Esau’s conscience cried out to be restored to his position as the firstborn of his father. How miserable he must have been to come to recognize at last that the deed could not be undone!

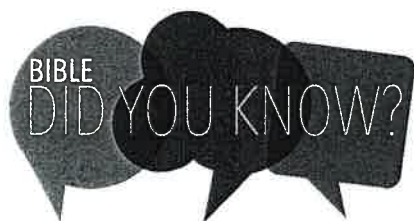
We might also call to mind Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Son of God into the hands of lawless men for thirty pieces of silver. Judas, upon seeing that Jesus had been condemned to death, cast the wretched ransom at the feet of the chief priests, saying, *“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”* After this, he went out and hanged himself (Matthew 27:3-5). Judas could find no way to remedy his crime, no means for rejoining himself with the

One with whom he had often shared bread.

And consider Simon Peter, who boldly scoffed at Jesus' prophecy that he would deny his Master, yet did indeed deny Him even with cursing. When the rooster crowed and *"the Lord turned and looked at Peter"* (Luke 22:61), how Peter's conscience must have howled in anguish within him at the knowledge that he had indeed denied Christ! How tormented his soul must have been when he wandered off by himself, weeping bitterly!

Oh, but how sweet for Peter to know at last that his sin had been forgiven him! Doubtless these things were in his heart when he wrote by inspiration: *"And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins"* (1 Peter 4:8). Once separated from his Lord and Savior, Peter found forgiveness. His conscience was at peace.

Peter stated, *"There is also an antitype which now saves us — baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 3:21). If you are not a child of God, surely you recognize that you stand condemned to death because of sin (Romans 5:12). Won't you consider accepting his forgiveness, humbly obeying His Son's command to believe and be baptized for the salvation of your soul (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)?  
— Michael Rankins



***Michael the angel is way too strong for Satan! "And there was war in heaven...The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough," Rev. 12:7, 8***



# MONTHLY CHALLENGE

**DIRECTIONS:** Each first Sunday of the month, we will have challenges that you should attempt to complete by the end of the month. If we all, as members, complete these challenges, our church will grow in spirit and in number.

## 1) MEMORIZE A SHORT PSALM

*Psalm 119:11 "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."*

In order for God's word to be stored in our hearts, we first need to commit it to our minds and memories. Jesus had God's word well hidden in His heart as He quoted passages of Deuteronomy to guard against the temptations of the devil (Mt. 4:1-11). Peter, before he became an inspired Apostle, was well versed in many of the Psalms to quote them from memory. "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it'; and 'Let another take his office,'" Acts 1:20. There are several very short Psalms no more than 5 or 6 verses that would be great to commit to memory and give us practice as we seek to store up God's word in our hearts. Psalm 15 would be a great one as it is only 5 verses and answers the question, "Who will dwell with God?" How many can you commit to memory this month?

## 2) USING YOUR BIBLE IN THE WORLD

Share the following verses with someone who does not attend this congregation at least twice this month:

### *Psalm 111*

"Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them. Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever. He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful. He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations. The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy; they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name! The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!" Psalm 111:1-10.