

WHAT GOD WANTS TO DO TO EVERY SINNER

God has no desire to punish a single person. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezekiel 33:11). He wants to have mercy upon all (Romans 11:32) and sent His Son to “taste of death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). God has no desire to send a single sinner to the place of punishment. He “is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

So if God does not want to punish sinners, what does He want to do to them?

He wants to hug them. The first thing the loving father did to the prodigal boy was to hug him; he “fell on his neck, and kissed¹ him” (Luke 15:20). That father represents God and that boy represents a sinner returning from the devil’s far country, so a fair deduction is that God longs to—spiritually speaking—wrap His omnipotent arms around each sinner who turns to Him.

He wants to take them home with Him. The second thing the loving father did was to restore the boy to his former position as a son in the family (Luke 15:22—24). Sleep in the servant’s quarters? The father wouldn’t hear of it. His son would get back his old room at the big house. When God forgives, He restores the offender to his former position of love and grace.

As the Civil War neared its conclusion, the war hawks of the North asked Abraham Lincoln what he would do with the rebellious southerners. He replied, “I’ll treat them as if they had not gone away.”² That’s what God longs to do, and ultimately He wants all of us to live with Him in the “big house” (many mansions) of heaven (John 14:1-2).

He wants to adopt them (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5-7). The devil is the father of sinners (John 8:44), but God longs to adopt each person into His eternal family. One concept tied to forgiveness is reconciliation, which is a social

concept. With sin, we are estranged (separated) from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). In forgiveness, Jesus’ blood satisfies God’s justice and allows us to draw near to Him as He draws near to us (Romans 3:23-26; Ephesians 2:13; James 4:8). He wants to give us a new name (Isaiah 62:2; Acts 11:26), new standing, new brothers and sisters (1 Timothy 3:15), and an inheritance (1 Peter 1:4).

He wants to heal them. Sin renders our souls sick, cut, and diseased (Isaiah 1:5-6; Matthew 9:12; 1 Corinthians 11:30), but the Great Physician longs to bind every wound, pouring in oil and wine (Matthew 13:15; Mark 4:12). He wants to make us “sound” (2 Timothy 1:7; Titus 2:2).

He wants to pay their bills. Most of us dread the monthly debits and bills that have become a part of most Americans’ lives. But there are debts that we incur for which there are no monthly reminders. Our sins have racked up quite a debt in God’s court. (The word *sin*, in its various forms, occurs 825 times in the Bible, and many more times than this in our lives.) Just as violations of civil laws (speeding, fishing out of season, failure to pay taxes) have fines assigned to them, so violations of God’s laws get us “fines” with God (Matthew 6:12). These debts will come due on Judgment Day. When God forgives, however, He removes the notation of the offense from His record, (Acts 3:19) and He grants remission of the sin debt (Matthew 26:28; Acts 2:38). When God forgives, He remembers the sin no more forever (Hebrews 8:12). God blots out the knowledge and history of sin (Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34).

He wants to give them a good night’s sleep. Oh the agony that many feel in the quiet of the night! They desire to relive life and not make the same mistakes, to be a better person, to fix the hurt they’ve done to others ... on and on the mind runs. This longing for release for many manifests itself in seeking to forget with alcohol and drugs, come-and-go sexual experiences, extra hours, work, and the vain pursuit of power, money, and things.

God has a better way to get a good night’s sleep. Sin does render us guilty (Exodus 34:7; Romans 3:19; 1 John 3:4) and punishable (Matthew 25:46; Mark 16:16), but forgiveness

“justifies” (Romans 3:24-25; Acts 13:38-39). God grants us a full pardon (Psalm 25:11; Numbers 14:19-20). This means that God no longer holds us accountable for the offenses—the guilt is gone!

The New Testament word *forgiveness* (*apo*, “from,” and *hiemi* “to send”) literally means, “letting go; forgetting—as though it never happened; loosing from a debt; to send away (as from a debt); to bestow a favor unconditionally.”³ Every bad thought we ever thought is as if we had not thought it; every bad deed we ever did is as if we had not done it; every bad word we ever said is as if we had not said it; and every good deed we should have done, but did not, is as if we had done it.⁴

Jesus never met a man He would not save. Look through the Gospel records and see for yourself. You will never find Him saying, “I wish I could help you, but there’s nothing I can do.” You will never hear Him say, “Your case is too difficult for me.” He doesn’t leave any inkling of unwillingness or inability. He died for the sins of the world—all of them. He shed His blood for “the remission of sins”—all sins.⁵

Every accountable person has sinned and therefore is eligible for this treatment from God (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10-23; Galatians 3:22; 1 John 1:8). Many Christians have become weak and fallen back into sin (1 John 1:7-9) and are thus again eligible for these blessings (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 2:1; 3:5).

¹ **Kissed** (*katephileisen*). Note perfective use of *kata* kissed him much, kissed him again and again (Robertson’s Word Pictures, E-sword version).

² Mary Todd Lincoln was a fierce supporter of her husband, but her brothers fought for the Confederacy. After her sister lost her husband fighting for the South, she came and spent time at the White House with the Lincolns during the war. So Lincoln could see the struggle in personal, as well as in national, terms.

³ Our word *charity* comes from this idea.

⁴ Winkler, Wendell. *Studying Sin Seriously*. Winkler Publications. Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This relates to the guilt of sin and not the consequences, which may continue after forgiveness (e.g., if one committed a murder, he will still have to answer for his deeds in man’s court, but not in God’s).

⁵ John Gipson. *The Keynote*. Little Rock, AR.

ANNIVERSARIES

John and Janice Carter, 05-31;
Bo and Tammy Marcum, 06-02.

ILL

Sunday: Millie Robertson (PM).

Dudley Morton's daughter, Shauna had several diagnostic tests on Friday. Please remember her and her family in your prayers.

Those battling cancer: Ledgia Campbell, Vic Cuney; Betty James and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers.

HOME BOUND

Kathleen Camp is in Room 101 at the Royal Terrace Nursing Home in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Barbara James' Aunt, Evelyn Marquardt is at the Sweet Life of Rosehill in Shawnee. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

Robin Brown and Monica Nemechek were away on business on Wednesday night. Chris Edwards was away on business last week. Wilba Hopkins was in Springfield and Neosho, MO last weekend to attend her grandson's wedding.

POT LUCK DINNER

Our monthly Pot Luck Dinner will be held on Sunday, June 7th following our AM worship. Plan to bring a dish and enjoy the good food and good company!

GOSPEL MEETINGS

There are a couple of area Gospel Meetings taking place on June 7-10. See the flyers in the foyer for details.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 52; Sunday PM, 34; Wednesday PM, 32.

Words are best kept sweet and soft because someday you may have to eat them.

Those To Serve

May 31, 2009

BUILDING AND COMMUNION.....Thomas

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Joel Nelson
SONG LEADER..... George Thomas
OPENING PRAYER Chris Edwards
PRESIDE.....Steve Brown
ASSIST.....Jared Nelson
ASSIST.....John James
CLOSING PRAYER..... Jeff Nemechek

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER John Cody Carter
CLOSING PRAYER..... Trent Thrasher
LORD'S SUPPER.....Steve Brown

WEDNESDAY June 3rd

SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter
INVITATIONSteve Brown

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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