

The Transformative Power of Forgiveness and Redemption

forgiveness redemption transformation

Basic Information

- Date & Time: 2024-04-11 18:12:23
- Location: [Oasis Bible Training Center]
- Instructor: [Steve Jones]
- Title: Coming Home: Dwelling in the Father's Presence Class 2: "The Ways of God"

Summary

This teaching explores the profound impact of forgiveness and redemption through the parable of the prodigal son, emphasizing themes of unconditional love and spiritual renewal. The speaker shares personal experiences of divine intervention and the importance of a personal relationship with God, inviting listeners to accept Christ and experience their own transformation. Through reflections on faith practices, worship, and prayer, the teaching highlights the lifelong journey of spiritual growth and ministry, underscoring the universal love of God and the transformative power of faith.

Knowledge Points

1. The transformative and lifelong journey of spiritual growth and ministry, underscored by personal experiences of preaching, worship, and divine guidance.

- **Initial preaching experience** The speaker recalls their first preaching experience at Pinecrest Bible Training Center 35 years ago, highlighting the nervousness and reliance on prayer.
- **Importance of personal message** The speaker emphasizes the importance of delivering a personal and divinely inspired message rather than merely repeating others' words.
- **Impact of Bible school** The speaker describes the life-changing impact of attending Bible school, which includes daily chapel services and exposure to various pastoral perspectives.
- **Role of worship in spiritual growth** Worship is portrayed as a crucial element of the speaker's spiritual development, with specific mention of influential worship leaders and the emotional response it elicited.
- **Transformative power of music** A specific incident is recounted where a song written by a Bible school student profoundly affected uninterested teenagers at a youth retreat.
- **Challenges in ministry** The speaker shares experiences of initial resistance and hostility encountered while ministering in different settings, such as a girls' home in Jamaica.
- **Personal inadequacy and divine assistance** The speaker discusses feeling unqualified and inadequate but trusts in divine assistance to deliver messages that resonate and impact others.
- **Continuous learning and preparation** Despite years of experience, the speaker continues to dedicate significant time to study and preparation, emphasizing the ongoing nature of learning in ministry.

- **Seeking God's guidance in speech** The speaker seeks to convey not just any message, but specifically what God would have them say, highlighting a reliance on spiritual guidance over personal capability.
- **Flexibility and openness to God's direction** There is an expressed willingness to deviate from prepared notes to follow God's leading during speaking engagements, symbolized by the metaphor of a willow tree.

2. The transformative power of faith and the importance of personal relationships with God.

- **Personal transformation through faith** The speaker shares a personal story of transformation from a life of substance abuse to becoming a born-again Christian, emphasizing the impact of faith on personal change.
- **Importance of forgiveness** The narrative highlights the crucial role of seeking forgiveness from others for past wrongs as a step towards healing and reconciliation.
- **Power of prayer** The speaker underscores the effectiveness of prayer, as illustrated by his ex-wife and daughter praying for him, which he believes contributed to his eventual conversion.
- **Role of divine intervention** The speaker attributes his and his daughter's reconciliation and his personal transformation to the intervention of God, suggesting a divine plan at work.
- **Impact of sharing testimonies** The speaker discusses the profound impact of sharing his testimony with others, particularly how it moved a group of wayward girls to seek a similar transformation.
- **Encouragement to spend time with God** The speaker encourages the audience to spend time in prayer and

reflection, emphasizing the importance of a personal relationship with God.

- **Concept of the 'secret place'** The speaker talks about the 'secret place' as a metaphor for a personal space of communion with God, where individuals can experience peace and revelation.
- **Biblical references to support faith practices** Throughout the teaching, the speaker uses various Bible verses to underline his points, showing the scriptural basis for his faith practices.
- **Restoration through Christ** The speaker emphasizes the theme of restoration, both personally and spiritually, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- **Invitation to accept Christ** At the conclusion of his testimony, the speaker extends an invitation to the listeners to accept Christ, aiming to facilitate their own experiences of transformation.

3. The transformative power of divine love and redemption as illustrated through the story of the prodigal son.

- **Reflection on a powerful message** The speaker reflects on a powerful message that moved them emotionally during preparation.
- **Reference to the prodigal son** The story of the prodigal son is used to illustrate a point about redemption and transformation.
- **Universal love of God** The speaker emphasizes that God loves everyone, including the most lost and evil people.
- **Christian transformation** Christians are described as having been transformed from a lost state to walking with God.

- **New Year's Day symbolism** New Year's Day is symbolically compared to the 'pig pen' experience, representing a point of realization and change.
- **Revelation of Jesus** Jesus is said to reveal himself to individuals in their own circumstances.

4. The theme of the teaching is the transformative power of forgiveness and acceptance as demonstrated in the parable of the prodigal son, and its application in the life of a Christian.

- **Prodigal Son Parable** The speaker discusses the parable of the prodigal son, emphasizing the moment the father sees his returning son and runs to embrace him, highlighting themes of forgiveness and unconditional love.
- **Father's Reaction** The father's reaction in the parable is highlighted as unusual for the cultural context, as he runs to meet his son, which is not customary due to the wearing of robes.
- **Forgiveness and Acceptance** The father in the parable demonstrates immediate forgiveness and acceptance, symbolized by the act of giving his son a ring, a robe, and sandals, restoring his position in the family.
- **Spiritual Renewal** The speaker connects the story to spiritual renewal, emphasizing the theme of being reborn and filled with the spirit as a Christian.
- **Imaginative Meditation** The speaker encourages the use of sanctified imagination to meditate on biblical stories and principles, suggesting that this practice can lead to personal prosperity and success.
- **Role of Jesus** Jesus is portrayed as the exclusive pathway to the Father, emphasizing the Christian belief in Jesus as the

mediator who prepares a place for believers in the Father's house.

- **Celebration of Return** The teaching imagines the day after the celebration of the son's return, picturing a continued expression of love and acceptance at the family breakfast table.

? Questions

1. How can spending time in God's presence at a Bible school or class profoundly impact one's life and ministry?
2. In what ways does regularly worshipping God and being immersed in His Word transform a person from the inside out?
3. How does going into your "secret place" or "prayer closet" to pour your heart out to God deepen intimacy with Him as a Father?
4. What are the keys to accessing and dwelling in God's manifest presence on a daily basis, even outside of church services?
5. How can we cultivate childlike faith to believe God wants a close, face-to-face relationship with us just as a father desires with his children?
6. In what ways does the cross of Christ completely remove the barriers between us and God, making us "holy, flawless and restored" in His sight?

7. How does meditating on scriptures like 2 Corinthians 5:17 strengthen our identity as a “new creation in Christ” and help us overcome the enemy's accusations about our past?
8. What does it look like practically to “wait upon the Lord” and draw supernatural strength from His presence?
9. How can we, like eagles, learn to spread our spiritual wings and soar in the realities of the spirit realm?
10. In what ways does Holy Spirit empower us to be Christ's representatives on earth, walking in His image and likeness?
11. How does knowing we are at the center of the greatest love story ever told, between God and mankind, reframe our perspective on life?
12. What does it mean that through the cross, we have been restored back to God's “original intent” for relationship with Him?
13. How does the story of the prodigal son illustrate the Father's unconditional love and acceptance towards us when we turn back to Him?
14. In what ways can we cultivate a lifestyle of dwelling in God's presence, not just in set-aside times but as we go about our day?
15. How would a revelation of being fully reconciled to God as a beloved child impact the way we approach Him and live our lives?

Quotes

1. "When you wait upon the Lord, you draw from His strength. You can't out-give God. If you sow sparingly, you'll experience a little bit. I encourage you to spend an hour every morning in His presence."
2. "There is nothing now between you and your Father God. He sees you as holy, flawless, and restored."
3. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."
4. "The Father had been waiting for his prodigal son for years. When he saw him a long way off, he ran to him, embraced him, and kissed him fervently. The son's past was forgiven and forgotten."
5. "Because of the cross and the grace of God, we have come home to the Father. We're back in the garden, dwelling in His presence."

Assignments

- Read your assigned 2 books
- Read and study your notes and answer the study questions