

Jesus Forgives Sins!

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Date: 06 July 2014

[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Well, praise the Lord that Jesus did die for us. Amen? And we can be saved because of that.

Today we're going to find out that Jesus forgives sins. Hanging above every person is this big cloud. Even if He wants to admit it or not, we know that until you're born again, there's something not quite right with God in all of us.

We know that in our hearts, there's this emptiness inside of us. We're realizing something's missing. We need forgiveness of sins. We need our relationship made right with God.

And so we're going to see today that Jesus forgives sins. Take your Bible, go with me to Matthew chapter 9 and verse 2 is where we'll start reading here in just a second. Let's have prayer and ask that God would deal with your heart if you're not born again.

If you do not know that you'd go to heaven, if your sins have not been forgiven, I have good news for you today. He loves you. Jesus died on a cross. You can be saved. All your sins are paid for.

[1 : 0 1] It's ready. All you've got to do is accept the gift. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. God stands ready, offering you a gift today if you believe Him.

Father, work in our lives today. Make the Bible come alive to their hearts, Lord. Those who have not heard and understood the truth, I pray that they would be saved. For those of us who are saved, I pray you'd give us a burden to bring our friends to you, and I pray, God, you'd use us to share your word, to carry the gospel to the world.

I'll give you great praise for all of it. In Jesus' precious name, amen. Matthew chapter 9 and verse 2, if you would. Matthew chapter 9 and verse 2. You know the story, and you know it very well.

There are four guys that have gotten their friend. They put him on the bed. The bed he's in, he's paralyzed. They take him to Jesus. They get to the building. They can't get in the building. They have to go up on the roof. The roofs are flat, and they break open the roof.

They lower him down to Jesus in front of him. And Jesus says to him in Matthew chapter 9, Your sins are forgiven. You can probably imagine with me just a little bit, it's possible that they were slightly disappointed.

[2 : 0 8] You know, they take him to Jesus hoping he will be healed. And Jesus said, Your sins are forgiven. They don't know that his biggest problem is that the sin is in his life.

He needs to be saved. He will be healed. He will arise. He will walk out. But this story is to make a big point to you, that Jesus forgives sin. When you go home today, you should know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus is the God-man.

And he came to earth, and he lived among us, and he died on a cross, and he paid our sin debt, and he forgives sins. So if you would, read with me chapter 9, verse 2. The Bible says, And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, paralyzed in other words, lying on a bed.

And Jesus, seeing their face, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer. Thy sins be forgiven thee. Thy sins be forgiven thee. So the first thing you might write down somewhere is, they brought him to Jesus.

They brought him to Jesus. If you've got your Bible open in verse 2, it says, They brought to him a man sick of the palsy. And that shows a lot about what I ought to be doing and what you ought to be doing.

[3 : 16] We need to go get people and bring them to Jesus. We need to take the gospel message, and we need to get it to the world. We need people to know. I want my friends to know what Jesus did on the cross.

I want family to know what Jesus did on the cross. I want to get the message to them. And so there's a lot of little lessons right here. One lesson was cooperation. There were four guys working together carrying a bed.

And it took a lot of cooperation. They had to work together. They picked that bed up, and they carried that bed all the way to Jesus, climbed up the steps, got on the roof, opened the roof, and let him down. They worked together to get this man to Jesus.

They were determined. It says in Mark chapter 2 and verse 4, When they could not come nigh to him for the press, for all the crowd that was there, they uncovered the roof where he was, and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed where the sick of the palsy laid where the man was laying.

They determined. They said, Man, I've got to get my friend to Jesus. It doesn't matter what kind of obstacles are in the way. It doesn't matter what I've got to go through. I've got to get him to Jesus so something can be done.

[4 : 18] They were men of compassion. They saw a sick man. They saw their friend laying there paralyzed, and they wanted him to get help. And so they said, Man, we know we can get him help.

We care. We hurt. We understand. This man was sick. They wanted to help him. They didn't understand that the big problem of all problems is a spiritual problem.

You know, I lived on the mission field for 18 years, 19 years, counting to Mexico. We were in Mexico, and everybody would come to the mission field. They always wanted to give them shirts, coats, shoes, food.

Everybody wants to help them, and they're always worried about physical temporary needs, but what they needed was somebody to care about their eternal soul. You could fill their belly, and they'll die with a full belly and go to hell.

They need Jesus. You could give them clothes, but they need Jesus. These guys felt compassion. They brought him to Jesus. They probably didn't understand. They probably believed Jesus would heal him, and they came believing that he would.

[5 : 20] They might have been just a tad discouraged when they heard, Your sins are forgiven, and they wanted him to be able to walk out of there. But they are men of faith. They brought him to Jesus.

They were men of faith in Jesus. You do not expend the kind of effort they did to get someone to Jesus if you don't believe that he could truly make a difference in his life. So these guys believed Jesus enough to get up, to go to their friend, to say to their friend, We know where you can get help.

We know where your life can be changed. And they picked him up, put him on the bed, and they carried it. These guys have been used to being carried around, but it's probably a little embarrassing to be carried all the way there, climbed up the steps, get on the roof, open the roof, and let him down.

They were getting him to Jesus. And Jesus tells the man, Be of good cheer. I don't know exactly what that indicates, but it might be that his faith was a tad weak.

Maybe he thought to himself, I'm not sure. I've been paralyzed all my life. I've been carried around. My problems are so big, nobody is ever going to really be able to help me. And so Jesus said, That's all right, buddy.

[6 : 22] Be of good cheer. Get happy. Something great is about to happen in your life. Jesus encouraged him. Their faith was so strong, they would go above and beyond what might normally be expected.

They are going to do what it takes to get this guy to Jesus. Now, that's not the real point of the message. But I do think it is important that you consider they brought him to Jesus.

The message is that Jesus forgives sins. But I need to speak to you that are born again in this room. Because once you're born again, and once you know that Jesus changed his lives, once you know that you get help, you ought not stop trying to get people to Jesus.

You ought not be like, I got me saved, I got my wife saved, I got my children saved, I got my grandchildren saved. These guys brought him to Jesus. I'd like to ask you as a personal, I'm going to ask you several questions, but I'd like you to really consider this morning, what are you doing to bring people to Jesus?

What are you doing to bring people to Jesus? You ought to be working together as a church. You ought to be working together as a Sunday school class. You ought to be working together as a family. You ought to be determined, I'm going to get people to Jesus.

[7 : 32] Do we believe Jesus changes life? If you believe that, say amen. Then you've got to think about how you're going to talk about Jesus. You've got to really make it urgent in your life, I'm going to share the gospel.

I just had the privilege this past week, the reason I wasn't here, I was celebrating the 25th anniversary of organizing our first church in Adikipa. And there were pictures made with people that got saved 25, well, yeah, 25 years ago, 26 years ago.

They're kind of old now, they're kind of bent over, and they're kind of stooped. They were hugging me. The one man came up to me, he was there in the church, he'd already gotten saved before I got there, and he just looked at me, and he hugged me, and he said, I can't hear you.

He said, I don't hear anymore. I said, that's all right, I don't hear either. And we hugged, but together, God's made a difference. And you know, you've got to realize, boy, God's making a difference, and I can bring people to Jesus.

So I've got some questions for you. Are we working together to get people to Jesus? To get them to faith in Him, and to get them to salvation? So here's some pointers for our church, for you as an individual.

[8 : 36] I challenge you to always pray in every service that God would work. If you're a born-again believer, you know this moment comes. It's a pretty intense moment for me. It's pretty intense because I know that I've got a few minutes of people's time.

I've got to share the gospel. I've got to try to make it as clear as I possibly can. I've got to try to be as interesting as I possibly can, say the truth, and as loving as I can, and be as direct as I can without being too direct.

I feel quite a bit of pressure. Usually, I'm pretty intense and pretty nervous about it. I need you to pray. You ought to be praying. This is not a one guy doing this thing. We're bringing them to Jesus.

They knew. They knew Jesus was going to be the one that did the healing. They knew Jesus was the one that had the answer. I know Jesus is the one that has the answer. You know Jesus has the answer. So when you bring people here, you ought to be begging God, Oh God, help Austin not mess up today.

Oh God, help Austin preach well. Help them be clear. God, help them to listen. We ought to be a praying church. You should be on pins and needles like I am every service.

[9 : 39] You should come in here like, man, today's the day. The moment's now. I want God to work. I'm going to pray for the preacher. I'm going to pray for the ushers. I'm going to pray for the deacons. I'm going to pray for the music. We've got to have God do something here.

We need to be a praying people. Can you say amen right there? That's a good, bring them to Jesus. Bring them to Jesus. You can't change them. I can't change them. I'm not that good a preacher. I can't make that difference.

But Jesus can do all of it. Let's ask him in prayer. Second thing I'd like to challenge you with is to invite people. Invite people. Invite people to come. Invite them to hear the gospel and pray for them when you get them here.

Invite them or all your friends. These guys went and they got a guy, put him on a bed. He was already on the bed. They put him on the bed, brought him to Jesus, climbed up the roof, opened the roof, lowered the body down, lowered the man down in the bed.

And they were wanting him to get to Jesus. Invite people. It's easy for you to get to the point where you say, I've already invited everybody I know. I remember the very first church I worked in was a little Southern Baptist church.

[10 : 38] Good people. Good people. Love God. I was in the class of the young couples. And I said to the teacher, I said, we need to do something. There was the teacher and his wife and me and my wife and maybe one other couple.

And I said, we need to do something to get some people in this class. And she said, the lady was kind of running the show. And she said, they've been invited. The sign's out there. They know where we are. If they want to come, they'll come.

And I said, I don't think it said anywhere in the Bible, tell them to come. I think it said in the Bible for us to go. So could we go? And so over the next few months, dozens of couples came in because we went out and we invited and tried to get people to come.

Invite people to come. Challenge you to always talk to visitors. You do real well at that. But always talk to visitors. Make them feel welcome. Make them know that they have somebody that shook their hand, made them feel welcome, answered their questions, and were kind to them.

Because we have this moment. I know it's God that does the saving, but it ought to be important to us. Because everything we're doing here is to get people to know Jesus. Can you say amen? They come through the door.

[11 : 42] We're going to be as nice to them as we can. We're going to shake their hand. We're going to be friendly. We're going to show them where the bathrooms are and the long line to get in. We're going to show them where the classrooms are. There aren't very many. We're going to show them their corner, their nook that they can go to.

But we want to be friendly to them. Can I just say this? Wherever you live and wherever you work, if you're going to bring people to Jesus, be careful how you talk about Jesus. Be careful how you talk about God, your church, your faith.

Because you're impacting lives with the gospel one way or another. So wherever you are, wherever you work, whatever you do, you've got to be real careful. Because you are a preacher of the gospel.

You are a witness about Jesus. You're working with them. And if you're negative, and if you're questioning God, and if you've got all these problems, whatever you're saying, you're witnessing. Whatever you're saying, you're testifying.

So when you're at work, if you've got a bad attitude, they're like, hey, it must not be going too good for him. That guy's a Christian. Whatever's going on, they're watching you. Remember, our job, we want to bring people to Jesus.

[12 : 43] We want to bring people to Jesus. So I ask you a question. How hard do you work on getting people to Jesus? How hard do you work at it? Do you invite them one time and forget it? Do you pray for them that God will deal with them about their faith?

You know, there's a person in my family that hasn't yet believed. And I witnessed to him as clearly as I could. And I got told no. And my son, David, preached the gospel straight to him.

Another person in the family witnessed to him. Everybody's doing everything. Man, I'm concerned. I do not want my grandson to die and go to hell. I want him to know Jesus. And I'm going to work at it.

I'm going to pray for him. I'm going to think about him. I'm going to do everything I can. I'm going to spend money. I don't care what it takes. On my part, I'm going to do all in my power to get the gospel to him. Do you really believe that you have been determined to get people to faith in Christ?

Have you personally been determined that you'll get people to faith in Christ? It doesn't take long while you're serving Jesus before you get to a point of, I go to church. I keep my pew from floating away.

[13 : 46] I keep my chair from just floating out of the building. I hold it down well. I'm in my place. I'm doing my job. But you're not bringing people to Jesus. They brought him to Jesus. They brought him to Jesus.

Do you really believe? Do you hurt for those who are lost and on their way to hell? I don't know how to say this to you. I don't know how to get it across to you. But you should hurt. We were riding down the road in Mexico in 1987.

We were riding down the road in Mexico. And we saw a guy who was dead. And in those days, when he'd been hit by a car or something, they'd laid newspapers over him. And there was a pool of blood that come out of his body.

And he's laying there. And everybody in the car was like, Oh, poor guy. Look what happened to him. And I said, Poor guy. Where is he now? Dying was the easy part. Eternity will be the hard part.

Dying was the easy part. Eternity will be the hard part. I challenge you to realize there is a real hell. People really need salvation. Jesus will save. Let's carry the gospel to them.

[14 : 46] Do you ever consider their lost condition? Do you hurt because sin is destroying their present and their future? Do you really believe that Jesus could make a difference in their lives?

Do you believe that Jesus has the power to heal and to save from sin and make a difference in the lives of your friends? I challenge you. Please, church. Let's never get tired of it.

I know some of you knock on doors, tag doors, give out invitations, do question and answer time with people on the street. I know you're working in your Sunday school class, but here's a big lesson in Matthew chapter 9 and verse 2.

They brought him to Jesus. They brought him to Jesus. Our church is famous for taking the gospel to the world. We are concerned about India. We're concerned about China.

We're concerned about Indonesia. We're concerned about all these other countries, but we cannot forget all the people around here. They need Jesus too. Let's invite them. Let's knock on doors.

[15 : 46] Let's expend some effort. Let's do what it takes to bring them to Jesus. Now go with me to Matthew chapter 9 and verse 3 and 4, if you would. 3, 4, and 5. That's the next thing I want you to look at.

Jesus understands man's condition. Jesus understands man's condition. Chapter 9 verse 3, the Bible says, And behold, certain of the scribes within themselves said within themselves, This man blasphemes.

See, what happened was Jesus said, Your sins are forgiven. And they said, Whoa, whoa, nobody can say that. Nobody can say that. No man can say that. No human being can forgive sins.

But Jesus is making a point here. He's making a point. I am God and I can forgive sin. And he's making that point. By the way, if you're here this morning and you've been told maybe that Jesus isn't God, all 100% God, maybe you've been told that Jesus is a little bit less, maybe you've had some Jehovah's Witnesses indoctrination and you believe Jesus is like a God or some Mormon junk, a God, and you've had some of that.

Let me explain something until you know Jesus is God. Jesus is God in human flesh. That's why he looked at him and said, Your sins are forgiven. You know why he said that? He's like, Just be real clear about something.

[16 : 57] You're right, no man can say that. But I am no man. I am God. Amen. That's powerful stuff. He did it on purpose. And those guys go, I can't believe he said that.

And here's what they said. They were talking to themselves. Look at the verse. Behold, certainly the scribes said, within themselves. They said out loud, they're all going to, inside.

Inside, man, they're arguing with Jesus. He goes, I'm God, I know what you're thinking. I'm God, I know what you're thinking. Look at verse 4. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think you evil in your hearts?

Why are you guys thinking bad junk in your hearts? Why you got a bad attitude? What do you think would have been easier, verse 5, for me to say, thy sins be forgiven, or say, get up and walk? Either one of them would be pretty tough.

I mean, how many human beings look at a guy who's been paralyzed all of his life and say, hey buddy, get up and walk? Nobody could do that either. They said, well that would have been a lot easier than it would to say your sins are forgiven. He said, what's the big deal here? You don't understand who I am.

[17 : 56] I can say it either way I want to say it because I'm God. That's the point. It was one thing to heal a person, but it was another thing to forgive sins. They were offended that any human could believe that he was able to forgive sin.

They knew that in essence, Jesus was putting himself in the place of God. They were like, you are saying you're God. And Jesus is like, duh.

Yeah, that's what I'm saying because that's who I am. I don't mind you thinking that's what I was trying to do because you got it. That's exactly what I was trying to do. I'm God in human form in the person of Jesus.

Notice in the verse that Jesus knew what they were thinking. In verse 4, Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore, think ye evil in your hearts. You do know that the Jews knew that God knew their thoughts.

You see, God knows what you're thinking. God knows where you live. God knows what's going on inside of you. There's not a place you can go to ever get away from Him. You can't go too high. You can't go too low.

[19 : 00] You can't go too far. You can't hide. You can't even hide your own thoughts. He's God. And He knows. The Bible says in 1 Chronicles 28, verse 9, 1 Chronicles 28, 9, And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father and serve Him with a perfect heart and a willing mind.

For the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. He understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou wilt seek Him, He will be found of thee.

But if thou forsake Him, He will be cast thee off forever. David says to Solomon, Buddy, you're going to be building a temple and God's going to work. But let me explain something to you, son. God knows what's going on in your heart.

God knows exactly what you're thinking. He understands your imaginations. He's God and God knows. God is not a, He's not one of us. He is so far a big and above us.

His thoughts are our thoughts. His ways are our ways. He is eternal. He has no beginning. He has no end. He's everywhere at the same time. He's everywhere at the same time. He's completely all powerful and He knows everything.

[20 : 05] You understand? They knew that. And who is this Jesus saying? I know what y'all thinking. I know what y'all thinking. That's not just a human thing. Look what the Bible says in Psalm 139 in verse 2.

Thou knowest my down-setting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. As far away as God is, He understands what I'm thinking.

Knowing their thoughts was showing who He was in human flesh. God knows what you're thinking. Even when no one else does.

You know, I've been married over 40 years. We're coming up on 41. And Betty knows me like nobody's business. I mean, she can read me like an open book.

But there are some things Betty doesn't know. There's some deep down thoughts inside that I would never say to anybody. I've never said to anybody. I don't say everything. I'm not very talkative. To be honest, get me out of a pulpit. I'm not that talkative.

[21 : 01] Get me out of a teaching or a sopping place and Betty will tell you I just don't talk. Some of y'all say my husband don't talk. Well, somebody actually said to Betty one time, would you help my husband learn how to talk? Would you get your husband to help my husband learn how to talk?

Betty said, not going to work. He don't talk himself. So, I don't talk. But you know, Betty doesn't know everything but God does. I don't have a thought he doesn't know. I don't have an imagination he doesn't know.

He is God. God knows what you're thinking. This is God who knows everything. And Jesus was God in human flesh. The people in Jesus' day often as, let me just stop here a second.

I want to say something. He's God. Now you came here this morning and you're thinking to yourself, you know, you're thinking to yourself, I just don't think I'm worthy to be saved. I just don't think God would love me. I just don't know what, I don't know what to think about.

Did you know he knows what you're thinking right now? He knows where you came from and he knows what you're dealing with. He knows what the issues are in your life. He cares about you. He's been working in your life.

[22 : 00] He brought you in a great sense. He brought you into this place today so the gospel could be presented to you. He knows you. He loves you. And he wants to save you. Now in Jesus' day, the people associated sickness with sin.

They believed that if you were sick, it was because of your sin or someone else's sin. Could have been yours or your family's. They knew that it was very powerful that Jesus could heal, but they didn't want him to go so far as to say that he could forgive sin.

They were like, we don't mind you healing people. We don't mind you healing the guy that's got a messed up arm. We don't even mind you telling the winds the winds and the waves have become, but don't say you can forgive sin.

Don't go that far. Don't go that far. I don't know if you've noticed what Matthew's been doing as you've come through it, but in the book of Matthew, we've seen him heal the sick. We've seen him calm storms.

And in this, he's going to heal a sick guy, but on purpose, use it as a term to show them, look, I can heal people. I can calm storms. Nature's under my control because I'm God, but I'm fixing to say something to blow all your minds.

[23 : 11] Your sins are forgiven. That was radical. Hey, it might be one thing to be out in a boat and tell the wind to stop and the waves to stop and to calm down.

That's one thing. That's really powerful. Not many people like that. It might be one thing to heal a guy. Not many people can do that, but nobody can forgive sin. But Matthew said, let me write this down in order so y'all get it.

He's God. He's over by nature. He's God. He can heal people. He's God. He forgives sin. Jesus is God. Jesus is God.

So here's some lessons for you to consider on this thing this morning. Jesus understands you. He knows where you live. He knows what's happened in your life.

He knows that you're unable on your own to change. He knows maybe today you want to change. Maybe today you want new life and maybe you wish somebody would help you get up off that bed of paralysis and walk again.

[24 : 06] He knows that. He knows exactly where you are. You didn't come into a place where other people understand you, though I think we would try, but you did come into a place where there's a God who understands you.

You came into a place where there's a God that says, I know you. I know where you came from. I know what's going on in your life and I love you. But God commended His love. God showed His love and while we were still yet sinners, Christ died for us.

We love Him because He first loved us. He loves you. You can be saved. He knows that your greatest need is to have your sins forgiven. It's not to be able to walk. It's to have your sins forgiven.

It's not just to get through today. It's to live eternally. He knows exactly what's going on in your heart and mind right now and He stands ready to help you.

You have nothing to hide because He already knows. You have nothing to hide because He already knows and He still loves you. You have nothing to hide.

[25 : 05] You came in and you said, I'd get saved but man, if these people knew who I was, no matter what these people think, that God of Heaven already knows you. He understands what's in your heart and He already loves you. He went to die on a cross for you.

He paid your sin debt. He's a great God and a great Savior. So they brought Him to Jesus. The people got all upset. And Jesus said, I know what you're thinking because I'm God.

And then I want you to see the last thing and you ought to write this down. Jesus forgives sin. Jesus forgives sin. Look at verse 6. But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.

Then it said to you to the sick of the palsy, arise, take up your bed and go to your house. But I want you to put a circle around that ye may know. Matthew said, let me tell you why we're writing this in the story.

Let me tell you why we're saying that. Let me tell you why Jesus is doing that. Jesus actually says to them, guys, I could have said it either way. I know who I am.

[26 : 08] I could say, get up and walk. Or I could say, forgive sins. But let me just tell you why I said, I forgive your sins. Let me tell you why I said that. So you'd know I can. So you know who I am. So you'd realize you're dealing with Jesus.

You're dealing with God. You're dealing with God and human flesh. And so you'd know that. That's why I did that. The greatest need any of us have is forgiveness of sins.

So real quick, can I show you what sin is in the Bible? I'll just give you three examples of sin in the Bible. Now I want you to understand something real quickly because you're probably thinking, I'm not a prostitute.

I haven't killed anybody. I'm a good neighbor and I'm a pretty good guy. But let me explain to you real quickly that the Bible makes it very clear what sin is. And there's a ton of verses I could have chosen.

I'm just going to show you three of them. Number one, it's when you break God's rules. When you break God's laws. When you transgress. The Bible says in 1 John 3 and verse 4, Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth all through the law.

[27 : 10] For sin is a transgression of the law. So, God gave ten commandments. And God gave all the commandments in the Old Testament. He gave every one of those commandments to us so we know we sinned.

So he got them up there. And he says, let's look this over and let's see if you are a sinner. And none of us passed the test. None of us.

He said, have you ever killed anybody? No, I haven't. Have you ever even thought about it? Have you ever even thought how you wish you could do somebody really big damage? Okay, you're guilty. Have you ever committed adultery or fornication?

No. Have you ever thought about it? You're guilty. I mean, his whole point was you're guilty. Years ago, our oldest son, who's a diabetic, was in, he'd gone to the doctor many times. I had turned 40-something years old.

I was at the doctor with him. And I walked in and the doctor looked at me and said, hey, buddy, you need to be careful about getting diabetes. And I said, why? She said, there's three main things and you got two of them.

[28 : 08] Fat, female, and 40. The only one you're missing is female. You got problems. I was like, excuse me, ma'am, you're not a very nice doctor. But that's the way it is, isn't it?

The law is not the nicest thing in the world. You go in, I go to the doctor all the time now because of the cancer and I go in and I'm always getting examined and I go in and I stand on that scale and you can hear them go, right down my weight.

You know, in other words, the law is to say, you messed up. You need a savior. You need somebody to save you. Have you transgressed the law? You see, sin's not what you think is wrong.

Sin is not what Americans think is wrong. Sin's not what our society says is wrong. Sin's breaking God's rules. You can't keep the law. The law was to drive us to Jesus. Sin is rebellion against God.

In 1 Timothy chapter 1 and verse 8, the Bible says, we know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully, knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man killers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves of mankind, for men sealers, for liars, for perjured persons or liars, another kind of lying, lying in a court, if there be any other thing that's contrary to sound doctrine.

[29 : 28] So the law was given for rebellion, which there's an element of that in all of us that says, look God, I know you don't like this, but I kind of do.

And in fact, I've had people say it to me so many times, when you're the preacher man, they always think you're like a representative of God or something. They think you're the priest and you'll be sitting there talking to somebody and they'll say, I know this ain't right, but I like it. I'm like, I'm not the guy that made the rules.

I'm not, and they'll go, I know this ain't right, but I like it. I'm like, no problem. What does God say about it? I say, do you want to know? You already told me you like it. You see, it's breaking God's rules. It's been rebellious against God.

But I think maybe for us, one of the clearest ways of understanding what sin is, is this. You took your own path. You went your own way.

You did your own thing. One of the famous singers said, I live life my way. I live life my way. Well, that's the whole problem.

[30 : 30] Almost all of us live life our way. So let me read to you what the Bible says in Romans 3.12. Romans 3.12. You always hear Romans 3.10, for all of sin comes short of the glory of God.

That's 3.12. There's none righteous, no not one. 3.10. 3.12 says, they are all gone out of the way. They are together becoming profitable. There's none that doeth good, no not one.

So what man does is God says, this is the way I want you to walk. And we say, hey, that's a good suggestion, but it's not really my choice. I prefer this way. So we just pick our own way. We just go our own way.

See, that really throws it to this. You could be a very good person. You could honestly be Mother Teresa, and you could be doing all the good in the world and thinking this is good. What I'm doing is good.

And God's like, well, I don't go for that. You could even say, I cast out demons and I call Him Lord and I do mighty works in His name. And He would say, I never knew you. That was Matthew 7.

[31 : 25] You went through that. See, going your own way is you choose to do what you feel like is best. I just do what I think is right. Well, that's not what the Bible tells you to do. You're not allowed to just do what you think is right.

It's what God thinks is right. It's what God thinks is right. So that's who you're turning to. That's who you're looking to. The Bible says in Isaiah 53.6, All we like sheep have gone astray.

We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. And I've got to rush, but let me just show you this. I really wish you'd understand this. Most of us would say, now this is the sin path.

All these people down this road, they're all liars, cheaters, cussers, murderers, everything that they do. They're just really bad people here. But I'm not like that. I'm a good person. I chose this way.

I always go to church. I always do good. I treat my neighbors right. I do real good stuff. I just don't want to be called a believer. Don't call me a brother. Don't make me one of them Christians.

[32 : 24] I don't want to be a fanatic about Jesus. I don't want to say I'm a sinner. I don't want to admit that because just to be honest, I'm not like one of those people. Those guys are sinners. But here's what God's saying. You picked your own way, didn't you? You picked your own way.

There's my way or the highway. There's my way, the right way, or everything else is the wrong way. But Jesus said he forgave sin. What's that mean?

The most wonderful truths in the world. In Psalm 103 verse 12, it says, As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins from us.

In salvation, he takes my sin and he separates it from my person. He puts on the east and on the west and I'm totally separated. He looks at me. My sin is behind him. And when he looks at me, no matter where he can, my sin and I never get back together, he separated my sin.

I've told the story many times, but a young guy in Peru was a terrorist and he'd been a terrorist. Been in prison for six months from being a terrorist and he got saved. And he said, I feel really dirty even when I talk to God. He said, because I know God knows what I did.

[33 : 28] And I said, no he doesn't. He doesn't remember you're the terrorist. Because he chose to forget it. He chose to separate it. He chose to erase it. He chose to bear it in the deepest part of the sea.

He chose to never ever bring it up again. That's forgiveness of sin. That is, God takes all your mess and separates it from you and says, I throw your sin away. I take you.

That's pretty good stuff. Amen? That's pretty good stuff. The Bible says, in 1 Timothy 1.13, Paul said, he showed me mercy. That's what forgiveness is. In Colossians 2.14, I'm just choosing this one because I like it so much.

But in Colossians 2.14, the Bible says, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us which was contrary to us, he took it out of the way and he nailed it to the cross. So I just want you to imagine that God's got this thing here and he's got there and he says, all right, Austin, you're a liar.

I've told you, you tell a lot of lies. You're a thief. I have been a thief many times. I stole candy as an 8-year-old. I mean, I've been, I mean, I stole answers on tests when I was in school.

[34 : 29] I used to even steal the answers from a teacher and sell them to my students. I'm a really bad guy. And so, so I got all these sins and he looks at those sins and he says, Austin, this is what's going to send you to hell, buddy.

You have sinned. You have failed. You have chosen your own way. But this is what he does when he forgives me. He took my sins and everything against me and he walked over to the cross and he knelt on the cross. He said, Austin, I erase it.

I erase it. I blot it out. I separate it from. And if anybody ever comes calling and says, what about all the sins you committed? Tell them I nailed it to the cross. Paid in full. Jesus paid it all.

He paid it all for us. The main point of the story is found in verse 6. Matthew chapter 9 and verse 6. The Bible says, that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.

Then he told the guy, get up and walk. And he sent him home. All the world is seeking the same thing. We all want to fix our relationship with God. Everybody knows something's wrong inside.

[35 : 30] Way down in the depths of their heart, they know something's missing. Now, they never admit it. But way down deep inside, when they're alone at home, they know that things aren't quite what they ought to be. So they come up with all kind of philosophies and all kind of things to do to kind of cover it up.

But they know down deep inside. But there is one that's able to change you and give your life real purpose. It's not religion. It's not self-help.

It's not psychology. It's not anything else. It is God in Jesus. God in Jesus. Ready to save you from your sin and yourself.

And what all that's doing to you, He loves you. So here's the story. And I close. Four guys go pick up their buddy. They take him to Jesus to get healing.

And they go walk and they climb up the stairs, break the roof open, let him down, expect Jesus to tell them to get up and walk. He's going to. But the first thing He said is your sins are forgiven because He wanted us all to know there is a God who cared enough to leave heaven and come to earth.

[36 : 30] He created us and He made us and He did not spin the world out and let it do its own thing. He came to us. He came to us and He did everything that we could be saved. He came to bring salvation to us.

And He told them that day your sins are forgiven. He told them that day your sins are forgiven to tell us something. Jesus has the power to forgive sin.

So this morning you're here just like that. Somebody brought you. The Holy Spirit directed you here. You came to church but you've never been saved. You might be a member of every kind of church on the planet but you've never come to the point in your life where you said I know I have failed a holy God.

I know I'm not who I'm supposed to be. I know I'm a fake. Nobody else knows it but He knows. You can look good, talk good, and act good but He knows. He knows what's in your heart. He said that in the story.

Today's the day. Today is the day. Today is your time to say I trust Jesus. I want to be a believer. I want to believe that I have sinned against the holy God.

[37 : 32] I want to believe that I deserve to go to hell but that God loves me and sent Jesus to pay my sin debt and it's all paid and all I need to do is receive that free gift. I invite you today to be saved, to be born again, to have new life that comes through what Jesus did.

If you're here, you cannot go home today without saying this, I don't want it. If you're not saved, I am putting it to you as plainly as I can.

If you go home, you will be saying, I know God's good, I know all God's done but I don't want it. I don't want it. The gift is here. He stands ready to save. He says, Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I'll give you rest.

He is here to save you. Your choice, will you trust Jesus? Father in heaven, I love you. I thank you for the chance to share your glorious news and I pray that you'd help your people this morning to pray for their friends and to pray for people they've invited and I pray God that you'd help people to get their lives really right with you and I pray God that your name would be glorified and magnified and I just pray for your great power in this service for your honor and your glory.

God, work. Save somebody today and convict some Christians of the need to bring people to you and I'll give you praise. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia.

[38 : 51] For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.