

## Ambassadors of Christ The Forgiveness of Sins Part 2

Studio Session 120

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The continuing discussion of being ambassadors of Christ, centering in particular on two scriptures; II Corinthians chapter 5 verse 20 that says, "You are therefore ambassadors of Christ, as though God were making His appeal through you." Setting forth the principle that God shows up in you and shows up through you, to will and to do what is His pleasure to accomplish.

Now to the commission that deploys the ambassador; cause no ambassador simply goes out on his own to try to do something for another, that person must first be received by the principle and sent as his agent and then the sending must be to accomplish what the principle would have done if the principle himself were to go. So in that framework, Jesus sends His disciples. He says to them in John 20:21 and following, "As the Father has sent Me, so I am sending you. Whosoever sins you forgive, will be forgiven; and whosoever sins you retain, will be retained."

In previous broadcasts we have looked at claims by historic church groups to being the ones with this authority. We spoke to the relevance of those claims and concluded that no, they do not have the right; the church does not have the right to claim that because Jesus sent out ambassadors, not institutions. And that a church institution because it has no capacity, no actual capability of receiving a commission from God in as much as the way the commissions are given is by the Holy Spirit revealing the mind of Christ. The Holy Spirit may only fellowship with a living being, for the Spirit fellowships Spirit to spirit.

Now we examined the question, "Whosoever sins you forgive, will be forgiven; whosoever sins you retain, will be retained." And we said that in this particular framework, what we are observing is that Jesus actually wants to forgive peoples sins. And so He sends you so that He may stand there in you and declare it so, declare a person's sins to be forgiven. Now what complicates the issue is that there appears to be, in the teaching of scripture, that there must be repentance as a precondition to being forgiven. And that actually is a statement that is found in Luke 24:47, another reading of the Great Commission in which

Jesus says, "And that repentance and the remission of sins should be preached in His name among all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem." So on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, in Jerusalem just like Jesus had said, beginning in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost they began to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins, the remission of sins.

Now the assumption is that repentance produces the remission of sins; that if you repent, Jesus forgives you of your sins. And to that end, scripture is quoted that says, "And if we will confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." You will note two things: First, it does not say, "If you REPENT of your sins He will forgive you," He says, "If you will CONFESS," and this is taken from Romans 8; Romans is written to Christians, not to unbelievers. So the admonition to confess, even though I will grant the concession that says that no one would confess his sins unless he has previously REPENTED of them, I will grant that concession even though I don't have to. And we may indeed want to look at that further because there are implications there that go further than that, but for the sake of this argument let us let it go. Yes he did in fact say that if you repent of your sins He will forgive them, although the language is specifically, "and if you will CONFESS your sins He is faithful and just..."

I am not quibbling over words, because there's a huge context implied here. He is not telling people that they should repent of their sins in order to be forgiven; He is telling them something else. When He says, "Repentance and the remission of sins should be preached in His name among all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem," in Acts 2 we see the result of that. And that is, on the day of Pentecost the people are told, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins."

Now what exactly is the remission of sins? He's already told us what the remission of sins is, and that is, "Whosoever sins you forgive," you remit. Whosoever sins you remit, will be remitted. How are sins remitted? You are sent to remit sins. So what then is repentance in that context? If repentance is not the confession of sin, what then is repentance? I've pointed out that even if we granted the concession that repentance and confession were one in the same thing, which they're not. The scripture that speaks to that is one that speaks to Christians. Christians who sin should confess their sins. Why? Because they already have a relationship with God, that's why they're Christians, that's why they're believers; they already have a relationship to God. So if you confess that the thing you have done is not consistent with who you are because you are a son of God, then God will forgive the sin and cleanse you so that the sin does not continue to define either you or your relationship to God; that's a different thing. And it's not the repentance spoken of in Matthew 28:18 and definitely not the repentance spoken of in Acts 2:38. What is the repentance spoken of? The answer is, you are going forth in the name of Jesus Christ who is the King, the Great and Sovereign King. This was the gospel of Acts 2 that

preceded the admonition to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. The gospel that preceded that was, "Behold, Jesus is the King." He meets the criteria set forth by David for the Messiah who is the King. That is, He was resurrected from the dead and He ascended to the right hand of God.

So what is the repentance that's being taught? The answer is very simple: The King is presented, and the invitation is to come under the rule of the King. Now, where are the people, until then? They're under the rule of the god of this world; they're under the rule of Satan. So the invitation to repent is not an invitation to repent of your sins; it's an invitation to repent for the ROOT cause of sin in anybody's life. The root cause is that you're under the rule and therefore you produce the result of sin, you're under the rule of the god of this world. And so, the scriptures say, "Tell them, go and tell them that there is a King who has defeated their enemy and has made it possible for them to be freed from being under the control of the devil."

This is the gospel, this is the substance of the gospel that Paul taught the Colossians. In Colossians 1:14 he said, "God has translated us from the control of the control of the powers of darkness into the kingdom of the Son whom He loves." Yes, God has picked us up from being under the control of the god of this world and deposits us, and has deposited us, into the kingdom of the Son whom He loves. This is a change of government, a change of government from being under the rule of your oppressor who robs from you, steals from you, kills you, and destroys you; that way of life invariably producing sin. The problem is, if you don't see it as a change of government, then you're always going to have to try to manage sin in people's lives. That is tantamount to cutting off the branches while leaving the trunk and the root systems intact. What do you think is going to be produced endlessly? More new branches. If you leave the trunk and the root system of being under the control of the god of this world intact, if you do that, then sin inevitably comes forth again and again.

So the Bible does not invite someone to become a believer on the basis of confessing his sin, that's for the believer who has already been delivered from the control of the god of this world and now is under the rule of Christ. When they sin, that's not a way of life consistent with being one who follows Jesus. So you repent of it, God removes it from your life and cleanses you from the consequence of it so that it doesn't build up in you. But to the person who is unsaved, you need to destroy the tree at the root system.

So His invitation to anyone who is lost is to come into the kingdom of God and to come under the rule of the King who has the capacity to liberate you from all of the incidences of control to which you are subject when you follow and walk under the rule of the god of this world. And as ambassadors of the King, we are sent to tell people that. And when they say, "OK. I would like to be under the rule of this King." As the ambassador of Christ, namely as the one who is there through whom Christ would make a declaration,

then Christ through you will declare to them, "Behold, your sins are forgiven." The first thing you get to say to someone who has appealed to Christ, to come under His rule to be part of His kingdom, the first thing you get to say to them is, "As the ambassador of Christ, I declare to you the intention of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning you, and that is, 'Your sins are forgiven.'"

We have concatenated every kind of silly scheme to substitute for this plain and simple gospel; the gospel of Jesus the King, the right of the ambassadors of Jesus the King to properly represent Him and His interests in the earth. So we've created legal arguments or we've created intellectual constructs and we make intellectual converts. It doesn't matter where a person is, we have to bring them into this system so we could close the sale. But by contrast, we note, in every case, people were set free because somebody simply declared it so.

Before we go on, why is there the requirement that they be baptized? Well, the scriptures say that baptism saves us. I Peter 3:21 says, "The like figure where unto baptism doth also now save us," you heard me correctly, baptism saves us. Now here is the mindset of people, every time they hear the word 'saved', they automatically infer going to heaven. Now I didn't say that 'saved' meant 'going to heaven'. But I did say, quoting the scripture, "Baptism doth also now SAVE us." Now there was what was called a 'like figure', that means 'an analogy'. "I'll explain the principle by the use of an analogy." The analogy is baptism saves us in the way that Moses was delivered from pharaoh, Moese and Israel was saved from pharaoh. If you go back and check the record, Moses said to Israel, as pharaohs chariots were approaching, Moses says to Israel, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord your God. The Egyptians you see today, you will never see again." What does Moses mean when he says, "Stand still and see the 'salvation' of the Lord your God."? Well does that mean that he was about to take them to heaven."

If every time the Bible mentioned 'saved' or 'salvation' that its a reference to going to heaven, then clearly Moses was about to take a group of them to heaven. That's about as silly as considering when Peter said, "The like figure where unto baptism doth also now save us," as meaning that baptism sends you to heaven. You know, there are actually church groups that teach that, that you're saved by baptism and if you're not baptized in water, you can't be saved the scripture. And they quote this scripture, "The like figure where unto baptism doth also now save us." It is true that baptism saves us, but salvation there is not a reference to going to heaven. No more than "the Egyptians you see today you will not see again" was a reference to going to heaven. "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord your God, the Egyptians you see today you will not see again," they're about to be saved from being made slaves of Egypt again. They were about to be saved from the wrath of the Egyptians. And, this is an analogy, because pharaoh there represents, he is a type of the god of this world.

So baptism saves us from being under the control of the god of this world. When you are water baptized, you are basically declaring that you have participated in a symbol of death, you didn't actually expire. But because when you came to Christ you gave up the right to rule your own life, it is said by the Lord that you die. You didn't physically stop drawing breath but spiritually you are no longer subject to the control of the god of this world. So God translates you from the control of the god of this world and puts you into the kingdom of the Son whom He loves. This is the book of Colossians chapter 1 verse 14.

So how does baptism save you? It saves you by symbolizing to the enemy that you are not under his control anymore. Now because someone has been liberated from the control of the god of this world, and they've been brought into the kingdom of God, they have changed their governments; they're no longer under the government of the life of sin, they're no longer under the government of the god of this world; they are no longer subject to the government of the evil one. In that sense, they're saved by baptism, baptism is asserted as the physical symbol, the physical representing of the fact that you are not legally subject to the control of the god of this world. Because, in being baptized you are signifying what has already happened. A symbol is not the thing; a symbol is a representation of the thing. The thing in question is that you have been liberated by Jesus the King from being under the control of the god of this world, that's the actuality. What symbolizes that actuality is water baptism, because water baptism symbolizes burial. Burial is accorded to someone who has died; when you die, you're buried. Water baptism symbolizes burial, acknowledging that you died and therefore are no longer legally subject to the control of the god of this world. You are liberated from that control and the undeniable evidence of that liberation is that you are no longer a creature of sin. A new creation has come where the old one used to be.

So it is not inappropriate, then, for the one who has been sent to declare to you Jesus is the King and to declare to you the salvation FROM the god of this world that is now available to you; it is not inappropriate for that person also to be empowered by the Lord to say what the Lord Himself would say to you if He were present, and that is, "Your sins are forgiven." Everywhere in the scriptures, this is the model of bringing people under the rule of Christ. The woman at the well is a classic example of this. The man in the tree, Zaccheus in the tree, classic examples of this truth. The woman at the well, Jesus says to her, "Woman, give Me some water." She has a flirtatious engagement with Him; He doesn't follow on to her lead, and then ends up telling her who she was. That she had been married to five husbands and the one she was living with now she wasn't married to, and it broke through her very calloused defenses when the fact that as bad as her life had been, that the Living God still knew her and would come that day to this place to affirm and acknowledge her as a creature of God. That was more than it took for her to just throw down her defenses and acknowledge that He was the true and Living God, the Lord Jesus was the Christ. And so she said, "Come and see the Man who told

me my whole life, He must be the Son of God." Jesus had forgiven her sins; the transformation in her was instantaneous.

The same thing was true of the man in the tree, Zaccheus, the short tax collector. What was he doing in a tree, advertising that he was short, displaying himself to a crowd who hated him? No. His desire to see the Lord was greater than his fear either of being ridiculed or being hated; ridiculed for being short, hated for being a tax collector. When he was sitting in the tree, all of that was evident to the One who could discern the man as he really was. Jesus didn't see any need to lead him into the plan of salvation; He wasn't trying to persuade the man, He was sent by God to declare to the man what was already true, namely that his sins were forgiven. And upon that declaration, Jesus went to the house of Zaccheus and Zaccheus proceeded to give a 4 to 1 rebate that afternoon, 4 to 1. He said, "Everything I've stolen from anyone by I'll gotten gains, I will replace on the order of 4 times to 1." I promise you, that's genuine repentance.

So when someone was brought under the rule of Christ and their sins declared to be forgiven, then they were welcomed into the kingdom of God as citizens of the kingdom of heaven. That's how it works, that's what the truth of it is. Now being brought in this way, all of the benefits of being under the rule of Christ now come to you. Jesus commissioned us and sent us out to do just that, He said, "Go into all the world, preach the good news to every creature." He instructed us that baptism, which I've explained, the repentance and the remission of sins, baptism; all of these elements should in fact come into place to declare and to show the things that are true that these things symbolize. They are not the reality, baptism is not the reality, baptism is a symbol. It symbolizes the reality, the reality of being released from the control of the god of this world and released into citizenship into the kingdom of heaven.

So what should you do, when you go out and you meet someone who is genuinely interested in the word of the kingdom, you shouldn't be surprised because God will often arrange for you to make contact with exactly these types of people. When you go out and you are the contact person, and the conversation turns to the things of the Lord, you will be able to discern exactly where people are. You see, if we accepted one of the functions of the Holy Spirit as the gift of discerning of spirits, if we accepted that as the norm, you know we would never need the four spiritual laws or any other speech or spiel that we have concatenated to try and bring people into a relationship with God. God told us what to do, He didn't leave us to invent what we are to do, He told us what we are to do. "While you go, as you go, you will see those who I am drawing." And just as He forgave the thief on the cross, because the man asked for mercy, He declared his sins to be forgiven and welcomed him into the kingdom of God, that very day. In the same way, you get to declare peoples sins are forgiven and you get to welcome them into the kingdom of God.

Come under the rule of the King and be liberated from the control of the god of this world, that's what the gospel is, that's what the commission is. You were commissioned and sent to do this.

I'm Sam Soleyn, God bless you. I'll continue with this discussion. I'll talk with you the next time. Visit me on the website, [www.soleyn.com](http://www.soleyn.com) copies of this message is available on multimedia formats so I hope you will enjoy the resources that are there. God bless you, I'll see you next time. Bye bye.