

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Forgiveness

By Greg Gwin

There are many things about God that our finite minds have trouble grasping. Perhaps nothing is more difficult to comprehend than His amazing capacity to forgive. When we wrong Him again and again, even repeating the same sins over and over, He patiently and lovingly offers forgiveness - for He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (**2 Peter 3:9**). The ultimate sign of this great willingness to pardon us was shown in the sending of His own Son to be a sacrifice for our sins (**Ephesians 2:4,5**).

For us, the challenge is to be like Him. We are commanded to be "kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (**Ephesians 4:32**). This may, in fact, be one of the most difficult commands for us to obey. The tendency for us, when wronged,

is to strike back - get our revenge. But we are warned: "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (**Romans 12:19**).

So, there can be no revenge, but forgiveness is a BIG step beyond mere forbearance. Can you forgive your neighbor one time? Maybe twice? Three strikes and you're out! NO! "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (**Luke 17:3,4**). Even seven times will not ultimately be enough. Peter said, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (**Matthew 18:21,22**).

Can you forgive? Can you pardon again and again, even for the same sin repeated over and over? If not, you have not attained unto the "divine nature" (**2 Peter 1:4**), and you are in spiritual danger. Think!

Would This Marriage Work?

By Bobby Duncan

For some time the late brother G. C. Brewer wrote a series of articles in the Gospel Advocate in answer to questions received from readers of that journal. A number of these articles were published in 1941 in a book entitled *Contending for the Faith*. As would be expected, some of those questions brother Brewer discussed concerned marriage, divorce, and remarriage. In one of those articles the author was dealing with the idea someone had advanced that sometimes people should divorce for the simple reason they are not compatible. Brother Brewer wrote:

Let us suppose a case. A man is cast upon a lonely island after a shipwreck. At first he seems to be the only living human being on the island. a true Robinson Crusoe. But later he finds that a woman from the

same ship was also cast upon the island....They are strangers; they never saw each other before they met upon the island. They soon find that they are the only human inhabitants of the island. After a time, hope of ever being rescued dies and they become resigned to the idea of spending their lives together and alone, so far as other human beings are concerned. Can anyone believe that a normal man and a normal woman would not under such circumstances become real companions and find consolation and comfort and strength in such a companionship? They might be very different at first. They might have come from different stations in life and might have entirely different ideas and views, but they would become adjusted to each other and each would help the other.

O, but someone suggests that necessity would be upon that pair and they would, of course, make the best of their situation. That is the point. Then, if we can make husbands and wives see that they must, by the necessity of God's requirements and the necessity of their family's needs and by the necessity of their soul's salvation, dwell together in

mutual helpfulness and companionship, they will make the best of their situation also. Can we miss the point of brother Brewer's illustration? Husbands and wives can make their marriages work if both are determined so to do. The reason one or the other is not so determined is not because that one no longer needs or desires marriage companionship, but because he (or she) desires someone else other than his present spouse. He has already become infatuated with someone else, or he is in love with some imaginary perfect person he expects to meet who will not have all the faults and flaws characteristic of that one's present spouse.

Marriages can work if we are determined to make them work. The necessity brother Brewer mentioned in his article will make marriages work. Unfortunately, too many married people feel no necessity for making their marriages work. Those who know and believe what the Bible teaches know there is a necessity to make their marriages work. Jesus said, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth

adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (**Matthew 19:9**).

A successful marriage is an edifice that must be rebuilt everyday!

Andre Maurois

Only Human?

By Frank Bush

A year or so ago, I had a student in my office. He was there because his behavior was much less than what I expected in a Bible college student. After discussing the matter, he crowned his long recitation with the excuse, "After all, I'm only human." When he said that, I jumped to my feet, raised my voice about 16 decibels and fairly shouted, "Only human! Do you realize what you have just said?" He moved back into his chair and his eyes were wide in surprise. I didn't wait for an answer.

"Only human! You mean in the image of God, made a little lower than the angels and in Christ, given the power to become greater than the angels, only human! You have been given dominion over the earth and every living creature on the face of the earth. The greatest of all God's creatures. The only creature able to think the

thoughts of God. The object of His love and the one for whose salvation He sent Jesus to Calvary. What do you mean, 'only human'?"

Silence reigned heavily in the room. For a long moment he stared at me in bewilderment and I attempted to look through his eyes into his soul. I was hoping that my words had driven home an important truth. Soon he began to move uneasily in his chair and said, "I guess I have been less than what He wants me to be. I'm sorry, I will do better." I nodded my head and he walked out.

To use being human as an excuse for our thoughtless and stupid behavior is an insult to the God who made us.

March 3-8, 2013

David Lanus

"One on God's
side is a
majority!"
Wendell Phillips

A Special Saturday

This Saturday

9:00 AM Until

12:00 Noon

Here At The

Building -

All Members

Invited And

Expected!

Our Next Gospel Meeting