

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE
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SERIES: Matthew (The King, His Kingdom And Me)

TITLE: Program – Your Sins Are Forgiven

THURSDAY

OPEN

Are there things in your life, Beloved, that you wish that you could forget, that you could obliterate? Does it make you tremble to think about standing before God because of where you've been and what you've done and how you've turned your back on Him and how you've sunken to, really, a pit that you've dug with your own hands? O My Friend, I have a message for you today from the city of Capernaum on the shore of the Galilee.

PART ONE

The people from the country of the Gadarenes wanted Jesus to leave their region. They were so frightened and terrified because they had seen two men who had been so violent that no one could control them, and now one of them was sitting and clothed and in his right mind. Jesus had cast out the demons and the demons had gone into the swine and the swine had gone into the Sea of Galilee. Now in Matthew chapter 9 it says, “[And] **getting in...a**

boat, Jesus crossed over the sea and came to His own city.” (Matthew 9:1) The country of the Gadarenes, if you’ve looked at your map and your study guide, is in the southeast of the Sea of Galilee. He’s crossing over across the sea and He’s going north and He’s coming to His own city. And if you’ve been following the study right now you know that His own city is the city of Capernaum. It’s not Nazareth where He was raised, but rather it’s Capernaum where He settled. It’s a Roman city. It’s a huge city. And right now I’m standing in the ruins of this city. At my back are buildings, stones from the very city of Jesus’ time. Over on my other side is the house where Peter lived. There’s enough historical and archeological evidence that they believe that this is actually the house where Peter lived, the house, the place where Peter’s mother-in-law was sick of a fever and Jesus came and healed her. This is the house where they brought so many of the sick and Jesus did all sorts of miracles in the city of Capernaum. It’s so awesome to be here because even as you go into the synagogue and you look at the base stones of the current ruins of the synagogue there, you see the same basalt stone that you see here, this dark black stone. This is Jesus’ own city. And what is about to happen in this city is so amazing. It says, **“And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. [And] seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, ‘Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.’” (Matthew 9:2)** This is a man that cannot move. We know from the other gospel that he has four friends. Four friends that come to the house of Peter where Jesus is staying, four friends who cannot get in because of the crowd, because of the people that have come, four friends that are ingenious and go to the roof of the house, make an opening in the roof of the house and let the paralytic down from the roof and Jesus heals the man. (Mark 2:3-5) What Matthew wants you to understand is that Jesus is the Christ, that He is the Messiah, that He is the expected One, that He is the King of the Jews, that He is the Son of David, that He is the Son of Abraham, that He is the Son of God. He is God incarnate, God in the flesh. And God is the only one that can tell you

that your sins are forgiven and you can know without a shadow of a doubt that they are forgiven. So this man is lowered and he's brought into this house and Jesus looks at Him and says, **"...Take courage, son...."** (Matthew 9:2b) And that's God's message to you today. It's no accident that you are watching this program. God wants to say to you, "Take courage, son. Take courage, daughter. Your sins are forgiven." Now there's only One that can say that. There's only One that can take away your sins and that's the Son of God. And it says, **"And some of the scribes said to themselves, 'This fellow blasphemes.' And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, 'Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?'"** ["Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"] (Matthew 9:3-4) You see the Son of Man knows the heart of men. God knows your heart right now. He knows exactly what's going on. He knows what you're thinking as you listen to this teaching. He knows what you think about the Word of God when I open it and begin to read it. He knows if you're a skeptic. He knows if you're an honest doubter. He knows if you're just one that is curious and watching and wants to mock and to make fun or to be entertained by these stupid Christians. He knows what's in your heart. And what is in your heart that is not in accordance with this Word, but is borne of the flesh—it's sin. Sin is me walking my own way. Sin is me doing my own thing. Sin is independent living from God. And when we live independently from God then we do things that are against God. We live unrighteously. The Bible says, **"...All have sinned and [they come] short of the glory of God."** (Romans 3:23) The Bible says, **"...There's none righteous, no, not...one: There's none that understandeth, there's none that seeketh after God."** (Romans 3:10-11, KJV) And yet Jesus has come and His message is, "Repent, have a change of mind about who you are. Have a change of mind about your sins. Have a change of mind, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (See Matthew 3:2) The King is here and the King is preaching to you. And the King is able to say to you, **"...Your sins are forgiven."** (Matthew 9:2) So

it doesn't matter if you fit all of the descriptions of everything that I have said. He can say to you today, **"...Your sins are forgiven."** (Matthew 9:2) Now the scribes and the Pharisees did not like Jesus. Now they haven't said anything. They're watching what's going on. But in their hearts they're saying, **"...This [man] blasphemes."** (9:3) Now why would they say that, ["This man is blaspheming?"] (PARAPHRASE, 9:3b) Jesus says, **"Which is easier [for you] to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'—then He said to the paralytic, '[Go]..., pick up your bed and go home.'" (9:5-6) "...[Go], get up, pick up your bed...." (9:6)** This man hasn't walked. This man was paralyzed. Now, carried there by four men, he is able to get up off that bed. He is able to pick up his bed, and he is able to walk out of there. Can you imagine what happened? But it's all because his sins had been forgiven, because he had been made clean, because he had been made whole. And he says, **"[What] is easier, [for you] to say...?" (Matthew 9:5)** ["Is it easier for you to say, 'Get up and walk,' or 'Your sins have been forgiven'?" (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 9:5) And He says, **"...So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." (Matthew 9:6)** There's only One, Precious One, that can say to you, **"...Your sins are forgiven."**(Matthew 9:2) It says, **"[So] he got up and [he] went home. But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck...." (Matthew 9:7-8)** I mean this "awestruck" means it's a word like I would use the word "discombobulated." I mean they were just absolutely thrown for a loop. They were overcome with wonder. They were overcome with awe. It was a staggering thing. It's the same word that God used when Jesus came down off of the mountain after giving the Sermon on the Mount. It's the very same word. And it says, **"...They were awestruck, and [they or or] glorified God, who had given such authority to men."** (Matthew 9:8) Now what "man" had God given this authority to? God had given the Son of God, His Son, Jesus Christ this authority. Now you're

going to find later when you study the gospel of John, that Jesus, in turn, after His death, after His burial, after His resurrection, breathed on His disciples and His apostles and said, [“You can go and tell others that their sins are forgiven.”] (PARAPHRASE, John 20:22-23) This is the authority, but it rests in Jesus Christ. Well it says, **“As Jesus went...from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in [a] tax collector’s booth; and He said to him, ‘Follow Me!’ And he got up and followed....” (Matthew 9:9)** What are we reading here? We’re reading Matthew’s testimony. Was it somewhere in this region of Capernaum? Was it somewhere at this great city where they had set up a booth to collect taxes? Now you have to know that tax collectors were despised in those days. They were despised by the Jews because they were collecting money from the Jews. And many times they collected more than they really needed, more than they were supposed to. And they would take that money and they would pocket that money. And not only that, but the money that they collected from the Jews was then in turn given to their oppressors, the Romans, and so tax collectors were hated. What Matthew lets you know is he was a man that was despised by the Jews. He was a man, who too, was a sinner. But Jesus passed by. Jesus left the house of Peter and Jesus passed by and He came to that tax booth and He looked into the eyes of Matthew and He said, “[...Come and] **follow Me...!**” And what does it say? It says, **“...And he got up and followed Him.” (Matthew 9:9)** He followed Jesus. And it says, “[And] **then it happened ... as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house....**” Not the house of Peter, but it’s a different house now. It says, **“...Behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples.” (Matthew 9:10)** Now we know from reading the other gospels that Matthew was so overwhelmed that he could follow Jesus and that Jesus invited him to be His disciple that Matthew gave a great party. He gave a great party. (Luke 5:29) Now who do you invite to a party? You invite those people that you know. You invite your friends. You invite those that you

hang around with. Well, if the tax collectors were despised by the Jews, who would the tax collectors hang out with? Other tax collectors, tax collectors also that were pocketing money, but other people, too. And who would hang out with them? It was the sinners because the sinners were despised by the Jews. Have you been despised by people because of your sin? Do you despise yourself? O Beloved, today that can come to an end. We'll talk about it in just a minute.

PART TWO

I'm walking out of the ruins of a house that go back to the times of Jesus. As I told you, I'm in the city of Capernaum where Jesus made His headquarters, where Peter's house was, where many were healed in this city. In the background you can hear pilgrims singing. They come from all over the world because this is such a significant place. Well, Matthew was throwing a party. He was throwing a party because this tax collector had followed Jesus. He followed Jesus because Jesus called him. He said, ["Come!" And Matthew got up and found a whole new life.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 9:9) Remember, Jesus was the One that called Peter and called Andrew, his brother and said, **"...Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."** (Matthew 4:19) Well Matthew was a fisher of men. Matthew is gathering his friends, other tax collectors and sinners, and he is throwing a big party. And Jesus is there and the Pharisees find out what's going on. And it says, **"When the Pharisees saw this..."** verse 11, **"...they said to His disciples, 'Why is your Teacher eating with...tax collectors and sinners?'"** (Matthew 9:11) But remember now, they are the self-righteous. They are the people that keep the law, but they are the people that look down on others. They are people with hearts of stone instead of hearts of flesh. They are people without compassion, but they have the letter of the Law and therefore they think they are righteous. They are people that say, "We are of Abraham's seed." And they think that because they were born a Jew they've

got it made with God. Well listen to what Jesus said. **“...When Jesus heard this, He said, ‘It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.’ (Matthew 9:12)** You think you’re fine. You don’t know you’re sick then you’re not going to look for a physician. If you know that you’re sick then you’re going to look for someone who is able to heal you. And He says, **“But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire compassion, and not sacrifice....’” (Matthew 9:13)** Now Jesus doesn’t say this once in the gospel of Matthew. He says it twice. He says, [“I’m not looking for someone that’s going to the temple and making sacrifices, who has the outward ritual, the outward routine, the trappings of their religiosity. I’m looking for a man who has a compassionate heart.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 9:13a) And a compassionate heart is a heart that looks upon people that are sick and know that they need a physician and get the physician to them. And this is what Matthew was doing. Matthew needed a physician. Matthew knew that he was a sinner. He was an outcast among the Jews. And he knew that he needed a physician to heal him and he was healed because he followed Jesus. And now he wants his friends to be healed. He says, **“...I desire compassion, and not sacrifice, for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” (Matthew 9:13)** Now does that mean that these men, that these scribes and these Pharisees are righteous? No. It doesn’t mean that. But He says, [“I came to call sinners.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 9:13b) And I want to take you back again to the Sermon on the Mount, to the Beatitudes. **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)** The kingdom of heaven belongs to those who know, who know what they are, who know and understand that they are sinners in need of forgiveness. It says, **“Blessed are those [that] mourn, [mourn over their sin] for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)** But if you think there’s nothing wrong with you then you don’t need a Savior--if you don’t know you’re a sinner. Beware, Beloved, beware of listening to people who do not confront sin, who do not tell you that you are

a sinner, who only want you to feel good, who only want you to feel happy. Beware of those because God didn't come to call the happy. God didn't come to call the righteous. God came to call sinners. The sick know they have a need of a physician and only if you are a sinner do you need a Savior. Well he goes on to say, **"Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?'"** (Matthew 9:14) Now they're not saying it in a condemning way. They want to know. ["We're the disciples of John the Baptist. We've been fasting. The Pharisees fast, but why are You not fasting?"] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 9:14) And Jesus explains it. And He says, **"...The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days [are coming] when the bridegroom [will be] taken away from them, and then they will fast."** (Matthew 9:15) Right now is not the time for fasting. Right now is not the time for mourning. The bridegroom is here. Now is the time to celebrate. And then He says this interesting statement. **"But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins [will] burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."** (Matthew 9:16-17) Now why is He saying that and what is He saying? He's saying this, "I'm the mediator." In essence, He's saying, "There's a new covenant. There's a new day." He's going to fulfill the Law by being made a curse for them, **"...[For] cursed is everyone that hangs on the tree,"** (Galatians 3:13) but He is the mediator of the new covenant, the mediator of the covenant that was promised in Jeremiah chapter 31:31. **"Behold, days are coming..., when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and...the house of Judah, not like the covenant which...they broke...[when they came out of Egypt.] But this is the covenant...I will make with [them in] those days."** (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

And it says, ["I will take away their sins."] **"...I will forgive their [sins]...their sin[s] I will remember no more."** (Matthew 31:34c) And it says, "[And] **while He was saying these things to them, a synagogue official came and bowed down before Him, and said, 'My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live.'** [And] **Jesus got up and began to follow him, and so did His disciples. And a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak.**" (Matthew 9:18-20) Now what they had on their garments, according to Numbers, was ribbons of blue. They had ribbons hanging down, or a fringe hanging down of blue to remind them that they were a people that were set apart unto God. And she just wanted to touch the hem of that garment. She wanted to touch the fringe. You can read about that in Numbers 15:37-41. **"For she was saying to herself, 'If I only touch His garment, I will get well.' But Jesus turning and seeing her said, 'Daughter, take courage...',"** listen, **"...your faith has made you well.' At once the woman was made well. [And] when Jesus came into the official's house, and saw the flute-players and the crowd in noisy disorder, He said, 'Leave; for the girl has not died, [she is] but ...asleep.' And they began laughing at Him. But when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. [And the] news spread throughout all that land."** (Matthew 9:21-26) Jesus, the One who could say, **"...Your sins are forgiven."** (9:2) is the One that could raise the dead and give us life. He's the One that could heal the sick and give us forgiveness of sins. O Beloved, are you in need of forgiveness of sins? Then God's word to you today is there is a Savior. His name is Jesus Christ. He's the Son of God and He's the only One that can forgive your sins. Ask Him. He came to set you free. And free indeed you'll be, my friend.