

THE FORGIVENESS of GOD

#2

We can thank God that He has given us eternal life and provided us with a secure relationship with Himself. God also wants us to stay close to Him and communicate with Him throughout each day. Today we will look at staying “tight” with the Lord. To do this we will look at three things:

- **Our relationship/fellowship with God**
- **The problem of sin**
- **How to deal with sin in our lives**

In order to understand forgiveness though, we first must understand the relationship between God and humanity. God loves us. Unconditionally. But he is Holy.

Forgiveness is only possible because God is a God of grace. Forgiveness is rooted in His nature.

But notice, God’s forgiveness is not haphazard or aimless. You cannot abuse God or use Him. He does not leave the guilty unpunished.

If someone is to be forgiven by God, there must be repentance – remorse over sin, turning from sin, turning toward God for forgiveness. Repentant sinners are forgiven. And that begins a relationship with God.

Your Relationship with God

Read John 1:12

When does a relationship with God begin? _____

Read 1 Peter 1:3-4

How long will this relationship last? _____

Read John 10:27-28

Who maintains your relationship with God? _____

And day by day we walk out a relationship with him.

Read Psalm 66:18

What can hinder your relationship with God? _____

Read 1 John 1:9

What is our part in maintaining our relationship with God? _____

God does not force relationship on us – his Love is endless, but we can reject it. Without us being part of it, we cannot have true **Relationship** with Him.

Our relationship with and obedience to God is more important than anything else in our lives. To stay close with Him we must deal with our own sin and rebellion in a positive way. Before we look at how to confront our sin as a Christian, we first will take a closer look at the issue of sin in general. We are on a path called sanctification, a path in which God is transforming us to become more like Jesus.

What is Sin?

The word in the New Testament for sin means something in our human nature is lacking, that we “miss the mark” in life.

Read Romans 3:23

What does this verse say we fall short of? _____

So sin is us not meeting up to God’s laws and His principles – in how we treat Him, how we treat others, how we live.

The glory of God is His perfectly good nature, the essence of who God is —

He is the highest of perfection in one being.

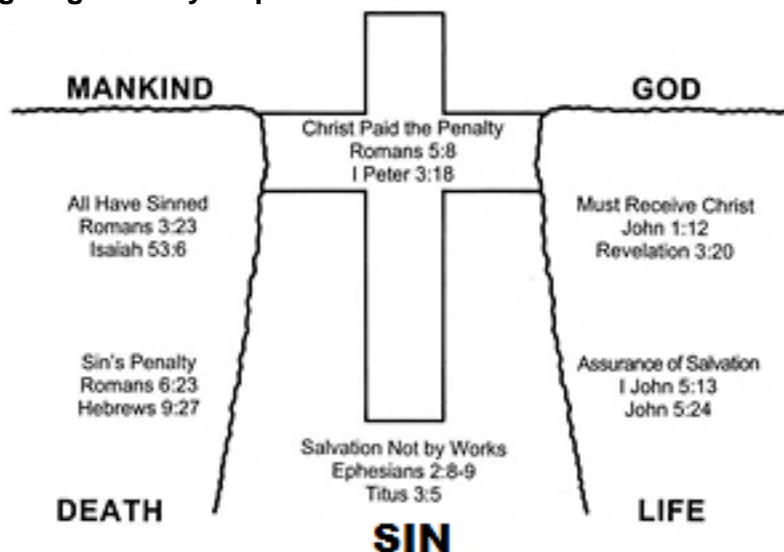
Each of us is created in His image. That means we bear the fingerprint of God in us – we are His.

We were made by God and for God (*Psalm 24:1, Colossians 1:16*)

God made us to be like Him and to love and worship Him. Simply stated, He made us for Himself.

Sin comes from our desires as we turn away to love and worship other things rather than God, for whom we were made. Sin can then be best described as a turning away to what we want instead of what God wants in both our attitudes and actions.

The following diagram may help illustrate the nature of our sin:



Sin separates us from a Holy God. It keeps us from experiencing His love in our life.

Yet all of us have sinned. (**Romans 3:23**) and there is a penalty for that (**Romans 6:23**)

What about unbelievers that try to live a good life? Are they separated from God? Why or why not?

God Gives us a Way Out of the Consequences of Sin

The person who puts trust in Christ's payment for their sin receives a full pardon from God. They are free from the fear of punishment for sin and free to enjoy loving fellowship with God.

Read Romans 5:8

When did God prepare a way out for us? _____

Read 1 Peter 3:18

Was his sacrifice simply one in a series, or was it the final one? _____

True Confession

Read 1 John 1:9

If you realize that you have sinned, and you want Christ to bridge the distance between you and God, simply confess it to God. Confession involves at least these three things.

1. Call it Sin

Call it what it is, don't rationalize it.

Have you ever rationalized a sin? _____ How? _____

2. Call it Forgiven

God has already forgiven you based on Christ's death on the cross.

3. Repent. Turn away from your sin

Call on God to change you. You must trust God to change your attitudes and actions back towards Him and away from your sin.

Do you feel that confession is more for us or for God? After all, doesn't He already know the condition of our hearts and all of our actions? _____

When you turn back to God and away from your own sin you will experience His great love and forgiveness, all provided through Christ's death on the cross. Confessing our sin to God restores a right relationship with Him that began when you first put your faith in Him. (**1 John 1:9**)

Observe how God views your sin after you have confessed it to Him.

Read Psalm 103:12 and Isaiah 43:25

Confessing our sins to God is central to our sanctification. As we confess our sins and walk in close intimacy with God, we will find that God is transforming us to be more like Jesus.

Confession—A Practical Exercise

Pray and ask God to reveal any sin in your life.

Write these down on paper. Be honest, as no one needs to see this but you and God.

Copy the promise of 1 John 1:9 across the top of the paper.

Thank Jesus for dying on the cross and forgiving you for these sins.

Tear up, burn, or shred the list.

How often do you think you need to confess your sins? _____

Summary of Main Points

- Our position with God is established and secure and is based upon God's complete acceptance of you in Christ. Our moment by moment walk with God is affected adversely when we sin.
- Sin is a very serious problem. For the non-believer, sin prohibits a relationship with God, and for the believer it interferes with our daily fellowship with God.
- We can be completely free from condemnation and fear of punishment because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. It is because of Christ alone that we can experience the love and forgiveness of God.
- True confession: call it sin, call it forgiven, and turn from sin and call on God to change us (repentance). This process restores our tight fellowship with God. Confessing our sins to God is central to our sanctification. As we confess our sins and walk in close fellowship with God, we will find that God is transforming us to be more and more like Jesus.

Memorize: 1 John 1:9