

If We Confess Our Sins

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
I John 1:9

I. The NEED

- A. This is one of the most intimate chapters in the Bible, where fellowship with God is described.
 - 1. John describes his personal relationship with the Word made flesh, Jesus our Lord (1-2).
 - 2. He is writing that we might have fellowship with the Father, with the Son, and them (3).
 - 3. And He is writing these things that we might have life in its fullest – the fullness of joy (4).
 - 4. God gave John the direct message he wrote to us – God is light: holy, righteous, true (5).
 - 5. To truly have fellowship with Him, we must walk in the same light in which He walks (6).
 - 6. If we live holy lives, we have fellowship with Him; and Christ’s blood will cover sin (7).
 - 7. There will be sin, and to think otherwise is self-deception and to be against the truth (8).
 - 8. While walking in light, if we confess our sins, He will faithfully and justly forgive us (9).
 - 9. If we misunderstand or reject our condition and claim no sin, we make Him a liar (10).
 - 10. Even when John writes to keep us from sinning, he provides for our great Advocate (2:1).
- B. If you are not daily confessing sins, you are not self-examining yourself in light of Scripture.
- C. If you are not daily confessing sins, you are not walking with God, regardless of your thoughts.
- D. Walking with God in the spiritual, glorious, peaceful life of true saints requires confessing sins.

II. The DUTY

- A. There is no other time to confess your sins than immediately, right now, this very instant!
- B. Be sensitive to chastening, conviction, conscience, guilt, reproof, or any leading to confession.
- C. You only have limited time to repent, as Jezebel passed her space of time (Rev 2:20-22).
- D. God swore in wrath at Israel: they could not repent (Num 14:39-45; Ps 95:7-11; Heb 3:7-19).

III. The PROMISE

- A. It is His faithfulness that forgives you, not your faithfulness before or after. Go to Him naked.
- B. He is faithful to keep His promises; and He is just to fully consider Christ’s complete sacrifice!
- C. Forgiveness is His faithfulness, not yours; come to the faithful God telling your unfaithfulness.
- D. Forgiveness is a matter of pure mercy, not of merit or favor. Humble yourself down to nothing.
- E. Forgiveness is a matter of faith, not a matter of feelings. Emotions are totally worthless in it.
- F. Faith is the “substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).
- G. Faith believes God is, and rewards those who diligently seek Him, as in confession (Heb 11:6).
- H. Our God forgives very differently than we do – much, much more mercifully (Isaiah 55:6-9).

IV. The CONDITION

- A. A broken spirit and contrite heart are the sacrifices with which He is pleased (Psalm 51:17).
 - 1. **Broken.** Crushed in feelings by misfortune, remorse, etc.; subdued, humbled, contrite.
 - 2. **Contrite.** Crushed or broken in spirit by a sense of sin; brought to complete penitence.
 - 3. **Penitence.** Contrition or sorrow for sin committed, with desire and intention of amendment; repentance.
 - 4. Manasseh “humbled himself greatly” in prayer to God for forgiveness (II Chron 33:11-13).
- B. Job described three aspects of confession, which help us learn more of the details (Job 33:27).
 - 1. “I have sinned.” We admit we know the commandment, and we admit we broke it anyway.
 - 2. “I perverted that which was right.” We admit God’s law was good and our choice was evil.
 - 3. “It profited me not.” We admit that our choice did not work, and it cost us pain and trouble.
- C. Let us remember that sin is against God, not man, even if we certainly wronged man (Ps 51:4).

- D. Do not take righteousness with you, or you will be rejected; go naked and filthy, as you are.
 - 1. When saints asked the Lord to remember their good, it was for blessing or mercy, not forgiveness of their sins. See Hezekiah (Is 38:3) and Nehemiah (Neh 13:14,22,31).
 - 2. As the song says, "If you wait until you're ready, you will never come at all."
 - 3. If you take anything with you, you are not going for forgiveness, you are making a deal.
 - 4. If you take anything with you, you are not going crushed and broken, but proud and resourceful. He will not hear; you will not be forgiven; you will never have fullness of joy.
- E. David's prayer recorded for us was very short, even considering Psalm 51 (II Samuel 12:13).

V. The OBSTACLES

- A. I can do it later. This is a lie from hell, for the conviction may pass and you totally lose it; you give place to the devil; you grieve and quench the Spirit of God; God may swear against you.
- B. I'm too bad to be forgiven. This is a lie from hell, for Christ Jesus came for just such sinners. Go read the outline or listen to the tapes for the sermons entitled, "Jesus Loves Losers."
- C. I don't feel forgiven yet. This is a lie from hell, for faith does not look to feelings, but to the promises and faithfulness of God declared plainly in the Bible.
 - 1. God did not rescue Peter immediately from his bitter weeping, and He reminded him later!
 - 2. David, the man after God's own heart, spoke of a lack of feeling on many occasions!
- D. It can't be that easy. This is a lie from hell. It wasn't that easy. Jesus died a horrible death. It is too easy for you and Satan, because neither of you are as faithful and just with Christ's blood.
- E. Reject the devil's lies with the shield of faith. He will never be forgiven, and he doesn't want you to know and believe your full and free forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Resist him; he will flee!

VI. The REWARD

- A. You are freshly in fellowship with God again, and the difference is as definite as with men.
- B. You get to start over! For God forgives your sin, and you get to keep on walking in fellowship.
- C. Peace and joy will come, but not necessarily immediately, for He must teach us full humility.
- D. The full power of Christian strength and joy is available in your life for victorious living.
- E. When you meet the Lord Jesus by death or His coming, you will meet Him in fellowship.

VII. The PUNISHMENT

- A. If you do not confess sins, you grieve and quench the Holy Spirit and harden your conscience.
- B. If you do not confess your sins, our holy God will not hear your prayers (Ps 66:12; Is 59:1-2).

VIII. The GLORY

- A. We have been gloriously forgiven our sins in other phases of salvation; but this is practical.
- B. The great and dreadful God can be approached daily and still forgive us faithfully and totally.
- C. We can have fellowship with the great God and have fullness of joy for two simple matters.
 - 1. We must walk in holiness and righteousness, as He does, and we can fellowship with Him.
 - 2. We must constantly and consistently confess sins and trust for full and free forgiveness.