

Confessing Our Sins

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 1387

INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

Whether you are a new Christian or an old one, you never stop the process of spiritual maturity. A Christian who is committed to Christ is going to grow. Based on that, the truths we are learning in these studies are for everyone.

A. Progressing Through the Levels of Growth

A significant passage on spiritual growth is 1 John 2:13-14. It discusses three stages of spiritual growth: First, babies; second, young men; and third, fathers. And those stages correspond to human life. The beginning is infancy--there is parental recognition. Then there is young adulthood--the time when you know what you believe. In spiritual maturity the young man has the ability to comprehend doctrine and the Word of God. He has his feet on the ground; he is not "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine..." (Eph. 4:14). Finally, there is fatherhood. The spiritual father not only knows what he believes in, but he knows the One in whom he believes in a deep, abiding, and mature way.

1. THE GOAL OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

The process of spiritual growth is an ascension toward the goal of knowing God. The Apostle Paul continued in the process of spiritual growth even though he had reached a high level. At the height of his life and ministry--when he had accomplished the great dreams and desires of his heart--he said his goal was "That I may know him..." (Phil. 3:10). In other words, no matter how far he had gone, he still longed for a deeper, broader, more vital and fulfilling comprehension of the very God he loved and served.

2. THE LIFE OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Christians move through the three stages of spiritual growth by the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and in response to the command of God. And the key is this: Christians can only grow when they are living to the glory of God. When they live for themselves, nothing positive will occur. Growth will only take place when Christians are spiritual, not carnal, and when they are living for the glory of God, not for themselves.

After Christians have been saved, there is a balancing act that is carried on. We have new life in us, but we also have our old sin nature around us--the sin that's in our flesh. A believer finds that a part of his life is given to God, and a part to sin. But as he matures, there is an increasing frequency of righteousness and a decreasing frequency of sinfulness. There isn't a time in your Christian life that you stop being sinful and are always righteous; the Christian life is always a progression. Paul says, "Not as though I had already attained.... I press toward the mark..." (Phil. 3:12, 14). The evidence of

your progression is a decreasing frequency of sin.

When I was saved, I faced the struggle that Paul talks about in Romans 7:15-23. The things I wanted to do, I didn't do; and the things I didn't want to do, I did. I was fighting against the flesh. The struggle is still the same, but with one difference. As I have progressed in spiritual maturity by living to the glory of God, walking in the Holy Spirit, and living a life of obedience, I have seen the decrease of the frequency of sinfulness, but not its absence. I just don't sin as much as I used to as I have grown toward a more righteous standard.

B. Progressing Through the Levels of Glory

Glorifying God is the key to spiritual growth. Second Corinthians 3:18 says, "But we all, with an unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord...." So as we focus on the Word of God and obey its principles, we see God's glory through the mirror that is His Word. Then Paul says that as we see God's glory, we "are changed into the same image from [one level of] glory to [the next level of] glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (v. 18b). So the Bible sees spiritual growth as progressing from being a baby, to a young man, to a father, and from one level of glory to the next level of glory. But that growth only occurs when we focus on glorifying God. As you and I live to the glory of God, we will progress toward Christlikeness. But that does not happen when we live for self and the flesh.

Now there are some very practical principles that apply to living to the glory of God. Let me remind you of the two major principles that we have previously discussed. If living to the glory of God is the key to spiritual growth, then what does it mean to live to the glory of God? First, we glorify God by...

I. CONFESSING JESUS AS LORD

Second, we live to God's glory by...

II. AIMING OUR LIVES AT GLORIFYING HIM

A. The Purpose of Submission

B. The Principles of Submission

1. SACRIFICE

2. SENSITIVITY

Success or Service?

"Christian" society in America is breeding a generation of people who don't have an attitude of service or humility. Instead of saying, "I will give my life for the glory and will of God no matter what it costs me," the attitude often is: "I want to be successful." One minister observed that whenever someone wants to draw a big crowd of Christians together, they get a celebrity-- Miss America, some wealthy businessman, the president of a company, a very successful Hollywood personality, a famous athlete, or a politician. The wealthy, the famous, and the elite draw the crowds. But that is providing Christians with a model of personal success rather than service.

Thus when Christian leaders approach Christians about spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the world or to give their life for the cause of Christ, it will be difficult because they have been taught, whether verbally or not, that Christians are rich, famous, successful, and popular. As a result, we are seeing a generation of Christians who are oriented toward personal success much more than humble service. But that is the exact opposite of living to the glory of God.

Living to the glory of God is being expendable--being ready to die if need be to accomplish God's ends. I know that I'm expendable. Paul said, "...if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all" (Phil. 2:17). That is the attitude of one who lives to the glory of God. The bottom line is humility. If you are aiming your life at the glory of God, you will have the kind of humility that hurts when God hurts and seeks to glorify God no matter what the cost.

Unfortunately, there are many people who want to serve the Lord on their conditions and in the perfect environment. They want the success factors already built in. I wonder where the humble people are who are willing to risk absolute obscurity for the great adventure of glorifying God!

3. HUMILITY

If we are to grow spiritually, we must first lose ourselves in the lordship of Christ at the moment of salvation. Then, He dominates our lives from that point on. When we obey Christ and respond to His direction in our lives--with no thought of success or comfort but only His glory--then we are growing spiritually. Every time we seek our own will--even Christian service with the wrong motive--we won't grow.

Third, we glorify God by...

III. CONFESSING SIN

The greatest expression of humility is confessing our sin. However, many Christians gloss over sin. We are either too busy to acknowledge it, think we are too good to do so, or we blame our circumstances, environment, or the people around us. We are prone to avoid confessing sin, and thus we fail to glorify God.

A. The Demonstrations

1. THE SIN OF ACHAN

a. The Calculation of Achan's Sin

The children of Israel had entered into the promised land under the leadership of Joshua--not Moses. When Moses struck the rock with a rod when God told him to speak to it, he sinned and forfeited his right to lead the people into the promised land (Num. 20:7-13). Moses was seeking his own glory, wanting everyone to think that he was powerful. So Joshua led the people into the land. They soon had a great victory at Jericho--the walls fell down and they captured the city (Josh. 6:1-21). Jericho was the first of many cities they were to capture as they began to dominate the land of Canaan. But Joshua told the people one thing, "Don't take anything out of that city. I don't want you to have any remnants of that pagan society" (Josh. 6:18). But one man named Achan took some things out of the city. As a result, Israel was defeated at the city of Ai (Josh. 7:1-5).

b. The Confrontation of Achan's Sin

1) The Confession

In Joshua 7:19-20, Achan was confronted by Joshua: "And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto Him, and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed, I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done." Joshua told Achan to give glory to

the God of Israel by confessing his sin. Verse 19 says that it glorifies God to confess your sin. Why?

2) The Chastening

Joshua 7:24-25 says, "And Joshua, and all the children of Israel with him, took Achan, the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold [all that he had taken], and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? The LORD shall trouble thee this day...." Even though Achan had confessed his sin, his judgment was still forthcoming. Confession doesn't preclude chastening. David confessed his sin in Psalm 32 and 51, and God forgave him but then punished him. The fact of forgiveness doesn't mean that there won't be chastening. Achan had confessed, but God judged him anyway.

Verse 25 continues the narrative, "...And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day" (vv. 25b-26). The name Achor in Hebrew means, "trouble." God was teaching Israel a lesson: "Don't disobey Me. If you do, there will be severe consequences." Achan and his family (evidently implicated in the crime) were all stoned to death.

Why did Joshua want Achan to confess his sin? Because God would have appeared as an evil God had He taken the life of that man and his family without no one knowing why. When Achan confessed his sin he was saying, "God, as a holy, righteous God, you are free to chasten me, without impugning Your righteous nature, because I deserve to be punished." That is the motive behind confessing sin. The reason God wanted Achan to confess his sin was so that He would be free to chasten Achan and not have anybody think that he didn't deserve it. God is holy; He reacts against sin. He cannot tolerate it; and cannot let it go unpunished. If He could tolerate sin, Jesus would never have needed to die. God must deal with sin. He will appear unjust in the eyes of people if you and I do not admit that we deserve everything God does to chasten us. In Joshua 7:20 Achan said, "...I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel...." He didn't blame God, the circumstances, or his influences; he accepted the responsibility.

2. THE SIN OF THE THIEF

The thief who hung on a cross beside the crucified Jesus Christ had dishonored God all of his life. But in the last moment of his life--for one time in his life--he gave glory to God. In Luke 23:41 he said this to the other thief, "...we, indeed, [suffer] justly...." He was saying, "What are you complaining about? We are getting exactly what we deserve. You cannot dishonor God!" That is the heart of what I want you to understand. Whenever you excuse your sin, you blame God.

3. THE SIN OF ADAM

a. Avoiding Responsibility

In Genesis 3:6, Eve sinned and then Adam fell too. Then God said to Adam, "Why did you do that?" (Gen. 3:11). Adam said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me..." (Gen. 3:12). People have normally thought that Adam blamed Eve, but he didn't; he blamed God. By not being willing to blame himself, he impugned God. He also implicated the woman, and indirectly the serpent.

b. Accepting Responsibility

Giving glory to God means accepting responsibility. Sin isn't God's fault, the fault of somebody God brought into my life, or the fault of some circumstance. You can't say, "God, You didn't have to make Satan. You didn't have to let him fall. You didn't have to put me in the city I'm in. You didn't have to bring that person across my path. You're sovereign and in control." Excusing sin impugns God. If you or I sin, who's fault is it? Ours--and ours alone. So if God chooses to chasten us, He is free to. We cannot deny responsibility for sin.

I believe that you will grow spiritually as you openly face the reality of your sinfulness and confess it.

Then you are dealing with the dead weight that drags down the process of spiritual growth. If growth is like a race, then we can't run it with weights (Heb. 12:1). That just slows us down. As we acknowledge our sin, that weight drops off and we can continue to grow.

4. THE SIN OF THE PHILISTINES

Another illustration of confession is found in 1 Samuel 4--6.

a. Their Conflict

1) With Israel

The children of Israel had paid little attention to God for a long time. Instead, they had been pursuing their own ends. They were still religious in a formal and ritualistic sense, but their hearts were empty towards God. In 1 Samuel 4, they were about to engage in a battle with the Philistines. But they had a problem: the Philistines could overpower them militarily. They became fearful, and decided that if they were going to defend themselves successfully against the Philistines, they needed God in their army. However, they had ignored Him for a long time. They had removed the Ark of the Covenant (where God's presence was) to a place where it should not have been. In 1 Samuel 4:3 the people decided to go to Shiloh and get God. They knew they had no chance of victory unless they had God on their side.

a) The Fear of the Philistines

When the Israelites returned with the Ark, tremendous things begin to happen. First Samuel 4:7 says, "And the Philistines were afraid; for they said, God is come into the camp...." To the Philistines, the ark was an idol. When they saw it, they said, "That's their God. And their God is powerful." In 1 Samuel 4:8 they said, "Woe unto us!...These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness."

b) The Flight of the Israelites

But the Philistines didn't have much of a choice--they had to fight. Verses 10-11 say, "And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli [the high priest], Hophni and Phinehas, were slain." The priest's sons were killed, thirty thousand footmen died, and the Philistines walked off with the Ark. Israel didn't expect that; they thought God was a utilitarian genie who would do what they wanted, but He isn't. They had ignored Him, and God was teaching them a lesson. So they lost the battle.

2) With God

It may have been a tough time for Israel, but it was going to be an even tougher time for the Philistines because now they would have to deal with God.

a) Dagon's Troubles

First Samuel 5:1-2 says, "And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon." The obvious thing for the Philistines to do with God was to put Him in the house of Dagon, their god, who was half fish and half man. Verses 3-4 say, "And when they in Ashdod arose early on the next day, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the next morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him." God was saying, "Don't pick him up again; he's right where he belongs." God will not tolerate any gods or idols being compared to Him.

b) The Philistines' Troubles

(1) IN ASHDOD

Verse 6 says, "But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and He destroyed them, and smote them with tumors, even Ashdod and its borders." Many of the people died in a plague that

was brought on by mice (1 Sam. 6:4-5), and the ones that didn't die from the plague were smitten with tumors. The men of Ashdod realized that the Ark of God was causing their trouble, so they decided to send it to Gath (1 Sam. 5:8).

(2) IN GATH

Gath is a familiar town of Philistia because Goliath came from Gath. So the ark of the God of Israel came to Gath. The same thing happened in Gath as in Ashdod--there was great destruction, a plague of mice, and death everywhere. Verse 9 says, "...He smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had tumors in their secret parts." That means that they had internal cancers. The Gathites wanted to get rid of the ark, so they sent it to Ekron.

(3) IN EKRON

The Ekronites didn't want any part of the Ark. Verse 12 says, "And the men that died not [from the plague] were smitten with the tumors; and the cry of the city went up to heaven."

b. Their Confession

What was their cry to heaven? Were they saying, "God, why are You doing this?" First Samuel 6:1-3 says, "And the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? Tell us in what way we shall send it to its place. And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but by all means return Him a trespass offering; then ye shall be healed...." What does a trespass offering admit to? Sin. If you want to have peace, you admit that the God you have desecrated, dishonored, and defamed has every right to react the way He does. In other words, you take the blame and give Him a trespass offering. Verse 4 says, "Then said they, What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return to Him? They answered, Five golden tumors, and five golden mice...."

Describing a Votive Offering

Pagans would not give a Levitical trespass offering. Instead, they gave what was called a "votive offering." A votive offering was a symbolic replica of the problem that was brought on by desecrating the god. For example, if you had a withered hand and were a pagan, you would assume that the gods had given it to you because you had dishonored them. So when you went to the temple to worship the gods, you would bring a hand that you had fashioned out of clay. By that offering you would be acknowledging that you knew you had the problem with your hand because you had dishonored them.

When I visited the city of Corinth, I went into a little room in the museum where they kept the votive offerings that had been recovered. I noticed that there were clay replicas of practically every organ and limb of the body. When people came to worship the god Asclepius (the god of healing), they brought those symbols, acknowledging that their disease was a result of their failure to fulfill the will of the gods.

The Philistines were doing what was very normal for pagans. They knew that the tumors and mice were a result of God's judgment on them. First Samuel 6:5 says, "Wherefore ye shall make images of your tumors, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel...." In other words, they were glorifying God by recognizing that He had every right to punish them because they had defiled Him.

B. The Directives

1. ACKNOWLEDGE SIN SPECIFICALLY

As long as you are making excuses for your sinfulness, you will never grow spiritually. That will only occur when you humbly acknowledge your sin and do something about it. Since spiritual growth is a process in which there is a decreasing frequency of sin, then it must include an acknowledgement of responsibility for sin. Don't blame your circumstances, your husband, your wife, your boyfriend, your

girlfriend, your boss, your employees, or your pastor; blame yourself. Don't even blame the devil. Certainly anything in the world's system contributes to the problem, but sin ultimately occurs as an act of the will-- and you are responsible for it.

a. Nehemiah 9:33 -- Nehemiah said this about God: "...Thou art just in all that is brought upon us...."

b. Luke 15:21 -- When the prodigal son returned home to his loving father, he said, "...I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight...." He realized that his father would be gracious in treating him simply as a day laborer. He didn't expect anything because he knew he didn't deserve anything. That is the mentality of a person who realizes he is a sinner and deserves nothing.

c. Psalm 51:4 -- David said, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight...." David didn't blame anybody but himself. He was saying, "God, You are just in all that You have brought to bear on my life."

Confession is acknowledging that sin is your fault.

2. ACKNOWLEDGE SIN GENERALLY

If you are going to grow spiritually, you must be confessing your sins to the glory of God. That means that first you acknowledge sin specifically, and second that you acknowledge it generally. Sin is my problem and it is an affront against God's divine nature.

a. Genesis 41:9 -- "Then spoke the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day."

b. Genesis 44:16 -- "And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants...."

c. 1 Samuel 15:24 -- "And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD...."

d. 2 Samuel 12:13 -- "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD...."

e. Daniel 9:20 -- "...I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin...."

f. Luke 5:8 -- "...Simon Peter...fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

g. Luke 18:13 -- "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

Confession of sin is recognizing that sin is your problem and that it is sin. That understanding is basic to spiritual growth because you are dealing with the thing that keeps you from growing.

C. The Definitions

1. FOR CONFESSION

The word confess in Greek is homologeo. The Greek word logeo means "to speak." The word logic comes from it and means "a discussion of principles." The other part of homologeo is the prefix homo. When we say something is homogeneous, we mean it is the same. So homologeo means, "to speak the same." Confessing your sin is not begging for forgiveness; it is saying the same thing about your sin that God says--that it is sin and is your fault. Confession is an agreement with God that you have sinned.

When I confess my sin, I am not saying, "God, please forgive me." When you became a Christian, how much of your sin did God forgive? The Bible says, "...your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake" (1 Jn. 2:12). All of your sin is forgiven. Confession is not a matter of forgiveness; it is a matter of agreeing with God that you are a sinner and are willing to deal with sin. Jesus has already paid the penalty for all of my sin, and it doesn't have to be paid again. Ephesians 4:32 says, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." You are already forgiven; confession is just agreeing with God that you are at fault.

2. FOR CHRISTIAN

First John 1:9 says that if we confess our sins, then He is faithful and just to forgive our sins. That verse characterizes a Christian. The reason the Apostle John wrote 1 John was to define the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian. First John 1:10 says that if any man says he has not sinned, then he makes God a liar. An unregenerate man denies his sin. But Christians confess their sin. A characteristic of a true believer is that he agrees with God that he has sinned against Him, and that the sin is his fault.

a. The Attitude of Confession

People say, "Don't you have to deal with sin when you get saved, but not afterwards?" Were you saved by faith? Yes. But is that where faith ended? Were you saved by faith so you could live by sight? No. You were saved by faith and you continue by faith. You were saved when you confessed your sin and you continue to confess the sin in your life. The marks of a Christian are a constant life of faith, love, obedience, separation from the world, instruction at the hands of the Holy Spirit rather than from the world's wisdom, and a constant willingness and openness to confess sin. Of course there are varying degrees of our confession-- sometimes we don't make as full a confession as we should-- but a true believer sooner or later acknowledges his sin (1 Jn. 1:9).

b. The Accompaniment of Confession

When you are faithfully, honestly, and objectively confessing your sin before God, you will find yourself growing. When you find you aren't, admit it, and bring it before God. You won't grow until you are ready to let go of your sin. That is the key. There is no such thing as true confession without repentance. I can remember saying, "Lord, I'm so sorry for those sins. I thank You for already forgiving me." But that was all I said. A milestone occurred in my life when I began to say, "Lord, thank You for forgiving those sins. I know they did not please You, and I never want to do them again." Sometimes we won't say that because we want to commit those sins again. We want to take care of the past, but we don't want to eliminate the future. That betrays our lack of spiritual maturity. When you face your sin, acknowledge that it's yours, and repent of it, then that is genuine confession of sin.

c. The Application of Confession

1) As You Grow

As Christians try to grow, sin retards that growth. We endeavor to glorify God, yet the one thing in the universe that doesn't glorify God is sin. For example, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. 66:18). I can't grow spiritually; I can't even commune with God if I am harboring sin. So there must be confession of sin in my life. As you and I face the reality of our sin and confess it, we free God from any impunity. If He wants to chasten us, we should accept it. If you feel that God is being rough, you ought to examine your life. You may be getting exactly what you deserve, and you ought to be willing to accept it. A believer must be dealing with the sin that retards his growth if he wants to grow.

2) As You Pray

In your prayer life, as a matter of routine, there ought to be the confession of sin--an open and honest dealing with sin, and a willingness to accept whatever chastening God brings. That is how He keeps you from making the same mistakes. I tell parents that if there are no consequences to their child's misbehavior, then the child will continue to misbehave. I have said to the Lord, "If I need chastening to be conformed to Your image, then chasten me." I don't want to follow the same path all of my life.

God has put feelings of guilt over our sin within us. And it is good that He has. If you didn't feel guilty over your sin, that would be like living without physical pain. Guilt in a person's spiritual life is like a bell or buzzer that goes off when you sin. When you sin, guilt should immediately bring you to the point of confession. Guilt is God's way of allowing pain to hurt your soul. Then you should confront the sin in your life and say to God, "I know it is sin. I know it is against You. I realize that it is my fault."

I don't want to do it again. Give me the strength to walk on another path." As you live like that, you will find that you are growing spiritually. But you will never do that until you begin to deal with the things that retard your maturity.

Spiritual growth is a process of giving God glory. And as we live in that framework, we will grow. That means we confess Jesus as Lord. It means that we aim our lives at glorifying Him no matter what it costs, being ready to suffer when He suffers, and being content to be outdone by others. Also, we are to be willing to acknowledge our sin so that God is justified when He chastens us. Only under those conditions will we begin to grow spiritually.

Focusing on the Facts

1. What are three stages of spiritual growth? Explain how they correspond to human life.
2. What did the Apostle Paul desire even after he had reached the height of his ministry?
3. How do Christians progress through the three stages of spiritual growth?
4. When is the only time that spiritual growth can take place?
5. What is the evidence of spiritual progression in the life of a Christian?
6. What has become a popular attitude in Christian society today? What is the attitude that God desires in Christians? What was Paul's attitude? (see Phil. 2:17)
7. What is the greatest expression of humility?
8. Why did God not allow Moses to lead Israel into the promised land?
9. Why did God and Joshua want Achan to confess his sin? How did Achan respond?
10. What are you doing to God when you excuse your sin? Who deserves the blame for sin?
11. Explain how sin is like a dead weight. What do we need to do with that weight? (see Heb. 12:1)
12. Why did Israel lose the battle against the Philistines in 1 Samuel 4:10-11?
13. What did God do to the Philistines after they captured the Ark? How did the Philistines respond? (see 1 Sam. 5:6-6:4)
14. What is a votive offering?
15. Since spiritual growth is a process in which there is a decreasing frequency of sin, what must it include?
16. What two things must a Christian acknowledge about his sin?

17. Discuss the Greek meaning of the word confess. (see p. 14)
18. When a person becomes a Christian, how much of his sin does God forgive? Support your answer with Scripture.
19. What does a true believer do with his sin? What does an unregenerate man say about his sin? (see 1 John 1:9-10)
20. What is one characteristic of a true believer?
21. What must accompany true confession?
22. What should be a part of your daily prayer life?
23. Why has God allowed guilt to be a part of a person's spiritual life?

Pondering the Principles

1. Is there a decreasing frequency of sinfulness in your life and an increasing frequency of righteousness? If there is, then you are maturing in your spiritual walk. If there isn't, then you need to examine your commitment to God. Look up the following verses: Deuteronomy 17:19; Psalm 119:11; Proverbs 2:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17. According to those verses, what is the best way that a Christian can decrease the frequency of sin in his life? As a Christian, you should be willing to make that commitment.
2. What is your goal as a Christian? Do you desire to be successful? popular? rich? Or is your life oriented toward humbly serving like Jesus Christ? Read Philippians 1:12-21; 2:17; 3:7-14. What was the goal of Paul's life? Read Matthew 4:1-11. What was Christ's goal for His life? When Satan tempted Jesus, he offered Him all that the world offers Christians today. Name some of the things that the world offers that would correspond to what Satan offered Christ. Is your response to what the world offers the same as Christ's response to Satan? Do you live your life based solely on God's Word? Do you worship and serve God only, or are there things in the world that you let take the place of God in your life? Take this time to renew your commitment to love and serve God only.
3. Do you frequently blame others for your sin, or do you accept the responsibility for your sinfulness? Give some examples of when you have done either. If the habit of your life is to confess your sin, then you will grow as a Christian. But if the habit of your life is to harbor sin, then you will not grow. Are you presently undergoing some struggles in your life? Could God be chastening you for some sin? Take this time to examine your life. Are you experiencing any guilt over something in your life? Perhaps you are harboring some sin in your heart right now. Are you closing your eyes to your responsibility for it and blaming someone else instead of yourself? Open up your heart before God and confess to Him any sin that He reveals to you. After confessing it, repent from it. In addition, make sure you get in the habit of examining your life daily for any sin that you may be harboring. Develop the attitude of confessing any sin on a daily basis.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2026 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<https://www.gty.org/about#copyright>).