

## LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

### SESSION THREE

#### TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

#### ABOUT THIS SESSION

Using Psalm 51 as our key Scripture, this is the final of three sessions exploring what happens when a Christian sins. In the previous two sessions, Pastor Rogers introduced seven specific consequences a believer faces when he/she sins. Sin, he said, dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, depresses the heart, diseases the body, defiles the spirit, and destroys one's testimony. In this session, Pastor Rogers will share how Christians can overcome and become cleansed from sin when it happens to creep into their lives

#### PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

#### CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

---

## LESSON FOUR | SESSION THREE

#### INTRODUCTION

In our last two sessions, Pastor Rogers detailed seven specific consequences of sin that befall Christians when they sin. Sin, he said, dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, depresses the heart, diseases the body, defiles the spirit, and destroys one's testimony. As painful as these are, God still loves us more than we can fathom, and He always provides a way of restoration through His mercy and grace. In this session, Pastor Rogers provides four biblical practices to restore relationship with God and relieve the pressure God brings to bear when believers fail Him.

#### OUR KEY PASSAGES

**Psalm 51:1-7** "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be

found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

**Psalm 51:12-15** “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What do you think God expects from us as Christians, when we sin?
- How do you think believers are restored in their relationship to God when sin enters their lives?

**PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF:** “What Happens When a Christian Sins”

### AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

God does not love us because we are valuable, we are valuable *because He loves us!*

—Adrian Rogers

**Amplification:** The sad truth of life is that as Christians, we still live in a fallen world in fallen bodies with all of “the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life” (1 John 2:16), with which we must contend. The good news is that Jesus has redeemed us (bought us back) with His shed blood, and that He died “*once for all*” (Hebrews 7:27; 9:12; 10:10). His sacrifice was sufficient for all our past and future sins. As has been previously emphasized, that does not give Christians license to sin (see Romans 6:15). True believers do not want to sin. However, sin remains an inevitable part of this fallen world. That does not mean it should be accepted or tolerated, which is why sin always brings spiritual consequences in the life of a genuine Christian.

The good news is that along with the pain of the consequence of sin, God provides a way for us to be cleansed and restored, not by crucifying Christ again, but by our possessing a contrite spirit given to us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Pastor Rogers discussed four basic practices that Christians can follow to be cleansed and restored to a right relationship with God. The first is to have **confidence** in the fact that we are loved. The Bible says, “... neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:39-39). It further declares, “... that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:17-18).

**For Discussion:** What do you think it means to have a broken and contrite spirit, or heart? What can we do to cultivate a broken and contrite spirit before God?

**Amplification:** The confidence we have in the trustworthiness of God’s Word and in His unfailing love is what allows us to **confess** (agree with Him) when we sin, which literally means “to miss the mark” with God. We need to remember the many ways in which we sin. There are sins of commission (doing what is wrong), sins of omission (failing to do what is right), sins of the tongue (saying what God would not have us say), and as if that were not enough, there are sins of our thought life. Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount that to even lust after a woman is equal to adultery, and to hate is equal to murder.

Confession is the first step in “spiritual breathing,” where we “exhale” our sin, then “inhale” God’s **cleansing** by appropriating by faith the refilling of the Holy Spirit. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). The Bible also commands, “... be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). In the original language, this verse literally says, “... be being [constantly] filled with the Spirit.” The problem is that each of us is like a leaking vessel. Each time we sin, we grieve the Holy Spirit and hurt our relationship with God. We need to be in a constant state of contriteness regarding our sin, and to be consciously seeking forgiveness and cleansing when we fail.

**For Discussion:** What attitude do you think we should have toward sin and God’s gift of forgiveness?

**Amplification:** When we are faithful to confidently approach the throne of God, confessing our sin and seeking His face for forgiveness and cleansing, then we can be **consecrated** (set apart) to be used by Him for His glory. The Bible says, “Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter [iniquity], he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work” (2 Timothy 2:21).

The story is told of a young child who disobeyed his father. The little boy came to the father and said, “Papa, I did that naughty thing you told me not to do.” The father said, “I see that you are sorry for what you did, and I am thankful that you have confessed it to me. You are forgiven.” The next day the boy returned and again asked the father for forgiveness for what he had done. The father said, “My son, were you not forgiven yesterday?” The boy replied, “Yes, but I want you to forgive me again.” How it must break the heart of God to have us repeatedly ask for forgiveness for that which we have already been forgiven!

**For Discussion:** How should we respond to God’s forgiveness when we sin?

**For Discussion:** What can we do to teach others about God’s love and forgiveness? Can we effectively share those truths if they are not real in our own lives?

## PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions and throughout the week, try to put into practice “spiritual breathing” each time you find yourself having fallen short of what God expects of you. Be quick to immediately confess to Him any shortcoming, then by faith, receive His forgiveness and filling of the Holy Spirit. You may want to journal and make a record of the results.

## GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

**Suggested group prayer** – “Lord, we are so needy and daily fall short of Your glory. Help us to be sensitive to sin whether in thought or deed, and help us to quickly confess and receive the infilling of Your Holy Spirit.”

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you reflect on the truths contained in the following verses, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a broken heart and contrite spirit for sin. Make that a routine prayer as you face the daily issues of life.

**Psalm 34:18** “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

**Psalm 51:17** “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.”

**Isaiah 57:15** “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

**Isaiah 66:2b** “But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

It is important to remember that nothing can be hidden from Almighty God. The verses not only remind us of that fact, but they testify of the Lord’s mercy and willingness to forgive and restore when we confess our sins.

**Proverbs 28:13** “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”

**Isaiah 1:18** “Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD, ‘though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’”

**Romans 5:8** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

**1 John 1:7-9** “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Being a Christian does not give one a license to sin. It does, however, provide a way to escape the temptation of sin if we choose to follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and be obedient to the Word of God for “the way of escape.”

**Romans 6:15** “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!”

**1 Corinthians 10:13** “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

#### ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Andrew Murray, “Divine Healing” (Whitaker House, 2019)
- R. Kent Hughes, “Disciplines of a Godly Man,” (Crossway, 2019)
- Samuel Dickey Gordon, “Quiet Talks on Following the Christ,” (Kessinger Publishing, 2008)



## AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

God does not love us because we are valuable, we are valuable *because He loves us!*

—Adrian Rogers

**For Discussion:** What do you think it means to have a broken and contrite spirit, or heart? What can we do to cultivate a broken and contrite spirit before God?

**For Discussion:** What attitude do you think we should have toward sin and God's gift of forgiveness?

**For Discussion:** How should we respond to God's forgiveness when we sin?

**For Discussion:** What can we do to teach others about God's love and forgiveness? Can we effectively share those truths if they are not real in our own lives?

### PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions and throughout the week, try to put into practice “spiritual breathing” each time you find yourself having fallen short of what God expects of you. Be quick to immediately confess to Him any shortcoming, then by faith, receive His forgiveness and filling of the Holy Spirit. You may want to journal and make a record of the results.

### GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

**Suggested group prayer** – “Lord, we are so needy and daily fall short of Your glory. Help us to be sensitive to sin whether in thought or deed, and help us to quickly confess and receive the infilling of Your Holy Spirit.”

### ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you reflect on the truths contained in the following verses, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a broken heart and contrite spirit for sin. Make that a routine prayer as you face the daily issues of life.

**Psalms 34:18** “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

**Psalms 51:17** “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.”

**Isaiah 57:15** “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

**Isaiah 66:2b** “But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

It is important to remember that nothing can be hidden from Almighty God. The verses not only remind us of that fact, but they testify of the Lord’s mercy and willingness to forgive and restore when we confess our sins.

**Proverbs 28:13** “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”

**Isaiah 1:18** “Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD, “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

**Romans 5:8** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

**1 John 1:7-9** “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Being a Christian does not give one a license to sin. It does, however, provide a way to escape the temptation of sin if we choose to follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and be obedient to the Word of God for “the way of escape.”

**Romans 6:15** “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!”

**1 Corinthians 10:13** “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

#### ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Andrew Murray, “Divine Healing” (Whitaker House, 2019)
- R. Kent Hughes, “Disciplines of a Godly Man,” (Crossway, 2019)
- Samuel Dickey Gordon, “Quiet Talks on Following the Christ,” (Kessinger Publishing, 2008)