

LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

Forgiveness, Cleansing, and Restoration

“Everybody sins. But the Christian has a unique place to turn that will take him past the sin and on to forgiveness.”

In Psalm 51 we find the story of David's sin.

If you are bound to _____, you are bound to _____.

I. _____ of sin in the life of a Christian.

1. It _____ the soul.

Psalm 51:1-2 - “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.”

“Some have been starched and ironed, but have never been washed.”

If you can sin and don't feel _____,
You should ask if you have ever been _____.

2. It _____ the mind.

Psalm 51:3 - “For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.”

There are two kinds of wounds. _____ is a clean wound.
_____ is a dirty wound. It will fester until it is cleansed.

3. It _____ the Lord.

Psalm 51:4 - "Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight."

An unsaved man feels bad about what his sin does to _____.

A saved man feels bad about what his sin does to _____.

4. It _____ the heart.

Psalm 51:8 - "Make me hear joy and gladness that the bones You have broken may rejoice."

Psalm 51:12 - "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation."

The most miserable person on earth is a _____ person out of fellowship with God.

Somebody else's sin cannot take your joy. Only one kind of sin can take your joy: _____.

"Pain is inevitable, _____ is optional." —Barbara Johnson

The Difference Between Happiness and Joy

Happiness is like a thermometer. It registers conditions. Joy is like a thermostat. It controls conditions. Happiness changes. The joy of the Lord is constant. Happiness depends upon what happens. You would get sick and tired of being happy *all* the time. Joy remains steady whether the thermometer of happiness goes up or down.

5. It _____ the body.

1 Corinthians 11:30 - "For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."

6. It _____ the spirit.

Psalm 51:10 - "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

7. It _____ the testimony.

Psalm 51:14-15 - "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, 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."

Can a Christian sin? _____

Can a Christian sin and not suffer? _____

II. The _____ of Sin in the Life of a Christian.

1. _____

Psalm 51:1 - "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness."

For a multitude of sins, there are a multitude of mercies.

God does not love us because we are _____.

We're _____ because God loves us.

2. _____

Psalm 51:3 - "I acknowledge my transgressions."

One thing God will not accept for sin is an _____.

1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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

KEY THOUGHT

If we cover our sin, God uncovers it. If we uncover our sin, God covers it!

Accusation is the work of _____.

_____ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

3. _____

Psalm 51:2 - "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."

Psalm 51:7 - "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Isaiah 1:18 KJV - "Come now, 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.'"

KEY THOUGHT

There is no stain the blood of Jesus cannot remove.

4. _____

The sins of _____ are greater than the sins of _____.

If you're doing what you _____ to be doing, you can't be doing what you _____ to have been doing.

LESSON FOUR: DAY ONE

Sonship and Fellowship

The Christian has a two-fold relationship with the Father. First, we are His sons. When we became Christians, we were born into the family of God. Nothing can take that away; it is settled for all time. If you are a Christian, you are born again and can never be “unborn.” So there is the relationship of sonship. Second, there is the relationship of fellowship. Even though we are God's children, we must walk in His way if we are to remain close to Him. Sin doesn't affect my sonship, but it does affect my fellowship. As a boy, I was always my father's son. I had his name, his genes in my body, and there was nothing that could undo my sonship. But if I disobeyed my father, our fellowship could be broken. And until I got myself straightened out and asked his forgiveness, our fellowship wasn't close.

A true child of God may slip and fall into sin, but he always has a desire for a quick recovery. When Christians sin, they break fellowship with their Heavenly Father. But they can get back into fellowship with Him by following the formula of 1 John 1. The Apostle John wrote,

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 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. (1 John 1:6-9)

As you walk close to the Lord, you remain in fellowship with Him. As you will see tomorrow, if you fall out of fellowship there are some things you must do.

How would you define fellowship?

Who are you in fellowship with?

What is the difference between sonship and fellowship?

When have you felt that your fellowship with God was broken?

What brought you back into fellowship?

LESSON FOUR: DAY TWO

Sin: Deal with It

If we are to experience true fellowship, we must first recognize our own sin. God forgives sin, as long as we confess it as such. In our world we have evolutionists telling us that man is the result of some blind force, which means that sin doesn't really exist—sin is just an accident, or perhaps a mere stumble as man progresses. But that is the opposite of the truth. Man didn't evolve, he devolved, from the image of God into sin.

Sin has ruined the human race. If you don't recognize sin as an affront to a Holy God, you will never be able to have fellowship with God. If sin is seen as a mistake or a sickness, then there is no reason to have God; so Christ died for nothing! A growing problem in our society is that people have the burden of guilt without the sense of sin. They know they are sinners in need of salvation, but they do not want to admit it. So they try to fix themselves up and somehow compensate for the problem of sin, without ever getting cleansed from the sin itself.

The evolutionist believes man is on his way up. The educator believes man can be taught to live without sin. Science seems to think that in solving the problems of the natural world, we will do away with sin. The sociologist thinks that sin comes from an unhealthy environment. And the psychologist believes that if you talk about yourself long enough, you can erase your guilty feelings about sin. Everybody wants to ignore God, deny sin, and hope that there is no justice in the next world to which they'll be accountable. But that is wishful thinking, and it fails to do anything about the guilt people have because they know they can never overcome the sin in their lives.

What is sin?

What do the following verses tell us about sin?

Romans 3:23

James 4:17

Jeremiah 14:7

Isaiah 59:1-2

What plan has God put in place to deal with man's guilt?

LESSON FOUR: DAY THREE

"You're Right—I'm Wrong"

Confess literally means to “say the same thing.” When we confess to God, we are saying the same thing about our sins that God says about them.

One of the great promises of Scripture is in 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” When you confess your sin to the Lord, you call it by name and admit specifically what you have done. You agree completely with the Holy Spirit about the problem in your life, and you admit it to the Lord.

The word *confess* is used in the present tense, so confess your sin immediately. Don't wait for the end of the day or the end of the week—tell the Lord you want to be right with Him immediately. When you get a speck of dust in your eye, you don't wait until nightfall to take care of it, you fix it right then. You need to do that on a regular basis for sin, too.

The Spirit-filled life is not a life without sin, but a life that remains in close fellowship with God. Some Christians ride a spiritual roller coaster, riding high with God on Sunday mornings, but down in the dumps on Monday. They're back up, high again after Tuesday Bible study but down low by Wednesday afternoon. That's not the way the Christian life should work.

Instead, we should stay in constant contact with the Lord by confessing sin immediately and remaining in fellowship with Him.

How do we expose our sin to the light?

How does unconfessed sin keep us out of fellowship with God?

How does unconfessed sin keep us out of fellowship with other Christians?

What principles for confessing sin can you find in the following verses?

Leviticus 5:5

Nehemiah 9:2-3

Psalms 32:3-5

Luke 15:18-20

James 5:16

LESSON FOUR: DAY FOUR

Clean and Forgiven

The best news in the world is that there is one place man can turn to find forgiveness of his sins. There is one Source for ridding himself of guilt. It is found in the blood of Jesus Christ. Man is looking for an answer to sin, and Christ is offering it. If we confess our sins, He is faithful. No matter how many times you come to Him, He is always there and always ready to forgive. *He is just.* God blots our sins. They are no longer counted against us. On that great judgment day, when our sins are listed we will be declared “not guilty” because Christ has already paid the penalty for our sins, meeting the legal requirement. So He can offer us forgiveness that we can find no other place.

He is faithful and just and He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He will do it. He has promised to do it. Mankind is looking for a way to feel clean. We want to get rid of our guilt, and Christ can take it away. Unfortunately, man wants to do it for himself. And, he wants to deny that sins exists. God won't allow any other road to forgiveness. He has already done the hard work, preparing a way for mankind to find redemption. If you go to Him and confess your sins, He will forgive you and cleanse you. Then you can be in fellowship with Him.

Read Isaiah 6:1-8. Describe what the prophet saw in verses 1-4:

What was his first response?

Why do you suppose he responded that way?

What did the Lord do for him? (verse 7)

What was Isaiah's new response? (verse 8)

In 1 John 1:9, what condition does God put upon our being cleansed?

LESSON FOUR: DAY FIVE

Confidence

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. (1 John 3:21)

A believer with sin in his life feels dirty. His conscience constantly makes him feel guilty. He loses the joy of his salvation as David did. When we acknowledge our sin, confess our sin, and receive forgiveness and cleansing, we can have confidence.

There is a beautiful verse in Hebrews that says “their iniquities will I remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12). If we go to God and repent of our sin, He will forgive us and cleanse us, even forgetting about our sin. “I, even I, am He who blots out your transgression for My sake; and I will not remember your sins,” the Lord says in Isaiah 43:25. When you are saved, all of your sins are forgiven, and put in the grave of God's forgetfulness. “...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isaiah 1:18 KJV). All your sins—past, present, and future—will never be brought up against you any more. You stand clean before Him.

When David sinned, he prayed, “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your lovingkindness.” David had confidence in God. He knew that for a multitude of sins, God offers a multitude of tender mercies. No matter what you've done, or how many times you've failed, God still loves you and wants to be in a right relationship with you.

First John 3:21 tells us that if our heart *does not* condemn us, we have confidence toward God. If our heart *does* condemn us, what reassurance do we have, according to 1 John 3:20?

When our heart condemns us, we sometimes may not feel that God still loves us. How can we have confidence that God loves us even though our sin breaks our fellowship with Him?

Read Ephesians 3:11-12 and Hebrews 4:16. Complete this sentence in your own words:

I can have boldness and confidence toward God because
