

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:16&17**

Chapter 29- The Sin Unto Death

273 The Sin Unto Death- Part 13

WAOY Friday- Monday 10/31-11/3/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we're going to continue to look at what John taught about "The Sin that is unto Death". So let's open our Bibles and read **1John 5:16&17** again together:

16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not *leading* to death, he shall ask and *God* will for him give life to those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is a sin *leading* to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not *leading* to death.

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at what Law and Grace are so that we may rightly understand what John is talking about here when he mentions the sin that leads to death.

As you recall- some religious groups teach that there are two classifications of sins- "venial" and "mortal". They teach that "mortal sins" are the sin that leads to death that John was talking about here in this passage. And I pray that I can show you how that is not true for a number of reasons.

First of all- those who teach about mortal sins say that mortal sins are those sins which are so bad that they actually "kill" the *process* of Salvation that began at infant baptism and extends over the life of an individual including a couple of hundred thousand years in Purgatory.

It is from this false and unbiblical teaching of mortal sins where other false teachings come forth such as The Rite of Penance and the notion that Salvation can be lost.

And I was showing you last time how that Justification is not a process at all. Biblical Justification is not something that *gradually* happens to a person over a long period of time. True genuine

Justification is an event- that happens instantly- one time- at a particular moment in time to lost sinners.

Justification is when lost sinners are forgiven and made righteous before God- and that event involves two things that instantly happen as the result of one thing that God Sovereignly does in us first.

Now we must remember that there are two parts to being Justified- not one. Everybody understands that we are forgiven when we are justified- but there is a *second* thing that occurs when we are justified in addition to being forgiven that is mostly left out when justification is being discussed.

And I was showing you that before we are saved- we have two problems- not just one. We are sinners- that's problem #1 and in addition to being sinful- we are also unrighteous as a result of being sinful. So, when we are justified- two things happen:

1. We are forgiven
2. We are made righteous

We are forgiven when we are bathed in the Blood of Jesus, when we are washed. And that forgiveness entails that before we are washed- we must first agree with God about our sin. And that agreement is called, "Confession". Biblical confession is not when a person goes into the confession booth and spills his guts to the priest. That action is not taught anywhere in the Bible.

No, true biblical confession is either done privately between a person and God or it is done between believers as when saved people are being chastened by the Lord because of ongoing sin in their lives and they are suffering without relief. **James 5:16** says:

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

But other than an individual confessing his sin directly to God or in that one exception when a suffering man confesses his sin to someone else- nowhere does the Bible ever teach that we are to confess our sins to a priest or a minister or a pastor.

And that is because contrary to what some people teach- no human

minister on earth has the ability to forgive sin. Only God can forgive sin. And Jesus could forgive sin when He walked the earth because Jesus was God.

So real confession is simply agreeing with what the Bible says about your sin. When you confess sin- you don't make excuses about it or try to justify it- but you speak out of your mouth exactly what God said about it in all its naked ugliness. A very good example of Biblical Confession is given to us in **Psalms 51** when King David went before God- broken over his adulterous affair with Bathsheba and the subsequent murder that he engineered- so let's look at this example of Biblical Confession by reading **Psalms 51:1-17** together:

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

Here David is pleading for mercy- not justice or fairness. David knew that he had no cause to expect anything out of God but Judgment for his sin- because he knew he was guilty. He makes absolutely no excuses and does not in any way try to justify why he did what he did- so he asks for mercy- that he does not deserve.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.

Notice that David doesn't say anything about how much he loves God or how hard he has tried to serve God. That is not appropriate when you are confessing sin. When confessing sin- it is very important to call a cat a cat and not white wash what happened. Here, David calls what he did – iniquity; sin; transgression; and then sin again.

So one of the purposes of Biblical confession is that the horror of what we just did becomes very apparent to us. And again- I need to stress that while it is true that sin is enormously expensive and personally destructive- that is *not* what we should be horrified about. What should break our heart is how our sin just offended God- not how bad it made us feel. And this is very important if we are to learn how to hate our sin.

You see, we continue on in sin because we do not hate our sin. If we

really hated our sin with a Biblical hatred and if we really understood just how offensive that sin is to God- we would engage in that sin a whole lot less. And part of developing a Biblical hatred of sin and part of understanding the horror of our sin is to confess our sin out loud with our lips just like David did here and let our own ears hear what we are saying about our sin.

4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

Now although both the families of Bathsheba and Urriah were devastated by the sin of David- David realized that his sin had been against God and only against God. And also notice here that David was concerned that God's Wrath and Judgment against him for his sin would be vindicated.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

Here David shows us that he understands that people are not sinners because of what they do- but they sin because in their heart – they are already sinners. David knew the Doctrine of Original Sin that teaches that all men are born bad- all human beings are corrupt in their very nature at the very moment of conception and are born sinners.

Now while David understood Original Sin- he did not use Original Sin as an excuse- but only acknowledged that at his core- he was a wretched sinner. So notice that David didn't spend any time here in his confession talking about all the good things that he had done in the past- he simply confessed his sin.

Now in the next seven verses- David talks about how that it is God and God alone who forgives and cleanses and creates and strengthens and makes and restores and blots and upholds. The next seven verses tell us that David understood that Salvation and Forgiveness and Restoration and Pardoning is a Sovereign act of God alone without any human penance or human action or human cooperation.

6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.

7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter

than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit.

Now again see how that David says that God has to do all of these things- alone- Sovereignly without anything done on his part except to plead for Mercy. And the look at what David teaches us here in verse 13 about what the first action that a forgiven man is to do after he has confessed his sin and God has forgiven him:

13 *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; *Then* my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.

15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise.

16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Now it is very important that we understand right here that we are not forgiven simply because we confessed our sin. We are commanded to confess our sin and we do so out of obedience to God as we agree with God about how terrible our sin is. But confession in and of itself does not makes forgiveness happen. Confession *leads* to forgiveness but it does not *cause* it. And we also have to realize that we are not forgiven because we said we were sorry. Neither our confession nor our sorrow is enough to cause God to forgive us. And that is because we are forgiven for sins that we commit after we are saved the very same way that we are saved to begin with- because of what Jesus did for us- not because of what we do for ourselves.

God forgives sins that we confess and sins that we repent of because Jesus paid for all of our sins on the Cross- not because we asked Him to. Our asking and our confession and our sorrow and our brokenness is the proper response to our sin- but we must know that what we do doesn't forgive us anymore than what we do saved us in the first place. And we must also know that our sins are not forgiven due to the intercession of a priest or pastor or minister.

No, **1John 2:12** tells us why our sins are forgiven:

... for His name's sake.

The Bible says that God forgives us when we sin after we are saved for the very same reason that God forgave us when He saved us in the first place- for the Glory of God; or for God's Own Name sake or for no other reason other than it pleased God to do so.

So if you understand this correctly dear friends- you will not trust in your own prayer of repentance or your own confession or the absolution from any man or a Church sacrament called Penance- but you will fully place your trust for your forgiveness in the fact that Jesus died to pay for every single one of your sins and God accepted Jesus' Sacrifice as payment in full so that you can now live your life to the Glory of God – free from all Condemnation.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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