

So That You May Know

An Expositional Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 4- The True Test of Salvation- Part 2

34. The Belief in Confession and Forgiveness- Part 6

WAOY Wednesday 06/06/07; WOSM Thursday 11/17/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing to go over our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to examine what John taught about “A Biblical View of Confession and Forgiveness”. So let’s open our Bibles and read **1John 1:7&9** and **1John 2:1a** again together.

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin...

Now because true Biblical Confession of sin is so important a subject, I want to recap what we have studied so far.

The first Principle that we must know about forgiveness is that without Biblical confession of sin- the Bible teaches that God will *not* forgive us. As we studied- the word “confession” denotes two aspects that we must keep in mind:

1. Agreement with God
2. Verbal acknowledgement

The first aspect of true confession is that we must come into agreement with God about our sin. We must agree that sin is the transgression of the Law and that it is a personal insult to the Character and nature of our holy God. So sin in all of its forms is wicked and evil and must not be hidden or forgotten and ignored and it must never be obscured by our excuses.

To attempt to hide our sin or to attempt in any way to justify our sin or to make excuses for our sin is to be in disagreement about what the Bible declares about our sin and if we do that beloved we are not confessing our sin.

For example to lie about your income on your tax return is to both lie and steal that which belongs to Caesar. If you do that and then use the excuse that the Federal Government is evil and therefore you're not obligated to pay your taxes is to justify your sin of thievery and deceit and you are not confessing it and therefore God does not and will not forgive you.

When the cashier at Wal-Mart gives you too much change and you really need the money- please don't think that God is blessing you. He's not. All that God is doing is giving you an opportunity to honor Him by returning the money and to be honest.

So we must know and understand Scripture in order to know when we have sinned so that we may quickly agree with God that what we just did or that which we just said or that action that we were a part of or that thought and intent of our heart dishonored God and was indeed sinful.

And we must *not* follow the dictates of our own heart at this point precisely because you cannot trust your own heart. I hear people say all the time, "*Well just follow you heart*". Which is about the most unscriptural thing that you could ever do because **Jeremiah 17:9** says:

The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?

It is out of our hearts where all sin originates so please never go by what your heart tells you. I know people who are living together who say that their heart told them that it was right. I know men who followed their heart all the way into dumping their wife and getting a new honey on the side.

We have to remember, beloved, that human beings have an enormous capacity to do and say and think and engage in horrible sin and still feel perfectly content about it. In **Mark 5** we can read about a man who had two thousand demons living inside of him and yet he could still walk and talk.

So simply because you don't feel bad about something is no indication that it is okay with God. And this same Principle applies to our consciences and our minds. We may rationalize sin and as a result of our rationalization- we will actually disagree with God and condone something that God denounces. So our consciences are reliable- but only to the degree that we have been feeding on the Word of God. If you watch a lot of television for example or if you listen to a lot of worldly music or if you engage in lots of video games- I promise you that you will not be as horrified about certain sins as you would spend time in God's Word and in prayer and in godly fellowship and in spreading the Gospel to the lost. Because one of the main drawbacks to television programming and movies and games and the internet is that it makes sin look attractive.

So the only truly reliable and trustworthy source to determine what is and is not sin is the Holy Bible and that is why I highly recommend that you get into a serious, in depth, daily Bible Reading Plan so that the inspired Words can get off the pages and into your mind and heart and life.

There are several of these plans available today and I have devised one that I will be happy to give you free of charge if you will simply write or call me.

So sin is not defined by what we *think* or *feel*- but by what God says is right or wrong through the pages of Holy Scripture.

We need to know that sin may be perfectly legal and still be evil to God. It may be completely accepted or even promoted by modern society and yet be wicked in God's Eyes. It may be something that you have engaged in for many years and yet God says that it displeases Him. It may be something that has been in your family for centuries but God says that it is an abomination. It may be something that your favorite sports star or your favorite movie actor or your favorite hero or politician engages in- yet God's Word condemns it as being dishonoring to God.

How you and I and society or the News media or momma or our friends or the Republican Party views things is completely irrelevant to God. That which God has said in Scripture is the determinant and the final arbiter of what is holy and what is profane.

So to truly confess is for you and me to come into alignment or to come into agreement with that which God has said and until you and I

do that- we *cannot* and we *will not* confess our sins and if you and I don't confess our sins- the Bible teaches that we cannot be forgiven.

Now another aspect that I want to bring out here is the fact that this is what separates true believers from people who just go to Church. True born again saints of God don't want to do anything wrong. Even though they periodically do sin- they cannot stand to fail God and it grieves them to their heart and they in no way desire to continue in unrepentant sin precisely because they are saved. John says that it is this internal desire to love and serve God that distinguishes saved people from lost people.

Saved people are not always successful in obeying God- but they always *want* to be successful. They periodically lapse into sin due to the weakness of their flesh and the fact that their bodies and the society in which they live is not holy.

But sin to a believer is a "once in a while" engagement. In other words, every truly saved person from way down deep in his soul wants to be absolutely perfect before God and when they do sin- they quickly repent and get up and learn from it and go on.

Over the last fifty years or so we have all been taught that there is no difference between saved people and lost people as it pertains to sin and that is simply not true. There is a huge difference. Saved people sin to be sure- but the Bible clearly teaches that sin to a saved soul is the *exception* and never the rule. The Bible boldly declares that holiness is the normal default setting for saved people while self-centered wickedness is the normal default setting for lost people.

The reason that this is true is because lost people do not have any capacity or desire to love God or the things of God. Saved people are saved only because they have received within themselves a new divine nature that is created in righteousness and true holiness. And it is this new nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit that compels saved people to love God and to love the things of God.

You see brothers and sisters; we have been wrongly taught that love for God is a human choice- but that is not true. Loving your dog or loving macaroni and cheese or loving the Dallas Cowboys is a human choice- that kind of sensual, earthy, carnal, worldly love is absolutely a human choice.

But for any fallen lost human being who is a descendant of Adam to love God and to genuinely love the straight and narrow path and the

life of self- denial – that kind of love is a sovereign gift from God. So it was rightly taught by the Puritans that our love *for* God is a gift *from* God.

You see, lost people love *themselves* by default and saved people love God by default. Lost people worship *themselves* and the omnipotence of their own free will and desires. But saved people worship Jesus Christ and they revel in the Sovereignty of God and the freedom of God to do as He pleases, and they realize that their own free will was destroyed in the Fall just like every other part of Mankind.

So, for a lost person to sin- is for him to operate in total compliance with his fallen nature. He doesn't have to even think about it- lost people sin naturally and normally- by virtue of their fallen and corrupt and rebellious nature.

But for a saved person to shun sin and to walk in holiness is for him to walk in total compliance with his new divine nature. But unlike lost people- every saved person has to be taught the ways of God because the ways of God run counter intuitive to human comprehension. Look with me at **Isaiah 55:8&9:**

Isaiah 55:8&9

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.

9 "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Conversely, for a lost person to try to love and serve God runs counter intuitive to *his* fallen nature. Oh, he can temporarily modify his behavior due to pressure from his wife or his own guilt or the Sheriff's Department- but after his wife quits nagging him and once his own guilt is alleviated or once he gets that ankle bracelet off- he will revert right back to doing what is normal and natural to a lost person- he will live in sin.

And people use all kinds of excuses to justify the fact that they are lost. For example, some people will tell you that the reason that they don't go to Church- even though the Bible specifically tells us in **Hebrews 10:25** not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together- is because there are too many hypocrites in Church or they got offended at some point in the past or they don't believe that you have to go to

Church to be saved or some other nonsense like that. But I notice that these same people don't mind going to Wal-Mart even though Wal-Mart is loaded with hypocrites.

So, in reality- the reason that anyone could live in direct rebellion to God's Word and not care about it and not even feel convicted about it and may even feel real good about it about it- is because they still have the old rebellious nature of Adam inside them and they are not saved.

So what John is telling us here by giving us these tests of true Salvation is that to be saved really is a Sovereign work of God. You and I cannot conjure up Salvation for ourselves precisely because we don't have the ability to change our own nature and it is the nature of man that is the problem.

So, we are totally and completely dependent upon God to forgive us and to save us to change us and to redeem us and to give us the new nature and to give us love for Himself and to give us both the desire and the power to do of His good pleasure.

Those that have these things are saved and precisely because they have the new divine nature- these saved people will serve God; they will love Him, and they will follow Him- and when these saved people sin- they will agree with God and confess their sins and beg God to forgive them.

Those who do *not* have these things are still lost and because they still possess their old Adamic nature- these lost people will not serve God; they will love themselves and they will follow the dictates of their own sinful hearts rather than the Bible- and when these lost people sin- they will justify it; they will hide it and they will disagree with God about their sin, and they will not confess it- which means they will not be forgiven.

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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