

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS



The most vital subject for anyone's study.

AS WAS NOTED ABOVE, when one carefully examines all of the world's religions, there are really only two. Though nature and conscience (cf. Lesson 1) tell people that there *is* a God, neither can tell them *how to be saved*. Remember the question the jailer asked Paul in Acts 16: "What must I do to be saved?!" All other religions say you have to DO something yourself in order to be saved. Only true Christianity tells us about a God who, in His great love for us, paid our debt of sin by sacrificing His own Son on the cross. It's one or the other - either Jesus did everything necessary for your salvation (real Christianity), or He did not (all other religions).

What is the most precious gift God gives to a person? It is complete forgiveness, for Jesus' sake, of all his sin and guilt. In this lesson we will explore this happy subject on the basis of God's Word.

ICON KEY

-  Introduction
-  Important point
-  For further reading

What God Does with Your Sin

1. Read Isaiah 43:25. *How does God express the idea of forgiveness in this verse?*



2. Look up Psalm 130:3-4. In verse three, the Psalmist says that *none* of us would be acceptable to God if He held us to account for our sins. *But what does the writer say about God in verse four?*



3. See Daniel 9:9. *What are two wonderful qualities of our God?*



"LEARN FROM ME"

4. Read Acts 13:13-39. The Apostle Paul was preaching to the Jewish people in the city of Antioch about Jesus. From verse 38, ***What was the most important thing for them to know about this man?***

5. Read Acts 26:1-29, Paul's defence against King Agrippa. As he recounted his conversion from a Christ-hater to a Christian missionary, ***what did he say (v. 18 & 20) God sent Him to bring, even to the Gentiles?***

6. Look up Ephesians 1:7. Many "religious" people of our day say that in Christ we have a wonderful example of how we should live. No doubt that's true, but ***what is something far more important which we have in Christ?***

The Extent of God's Forgiveness

7. Read Psalm 103:3. ***What percentage of our iniquities does God forgive?***

8. Jeremiah 33:8. In this prophesy of Christ, ***how much of our sin does God promise to pardon?***

9. Some "Christians" think that, in order to gain salvation, God must do His part and they must do their part. But see John 19:30. ***What did Jesus say on the cross about his work of redeeming us from our sins?***

10. Read Hebrews 9:11-12. The Jewish priests in the Old Testament would offer blood sacrifices to God over and over, every day. ***But how many times would the sacrifice of Jesus' blood need to be offered?***

11. Look up Romans 3:21-24. From verse 23, ***how many people need the forgiveness God offers?***

12. From verse 24, ***HOW does that forgiveness ("justification") come to us?***

"LEARN FROM ME"

13. Read Romans 4:5. *What kind of people does God justify?*

14. Look up II Corinthians 5:21. *HOW RIGHTEOUS ARE WE when we trust in Jesus for forgiveness?*

15. Check Philippians 3:8-9. If forgiveness doesn't come through keeping the works of the Law, *where does it come from?*

16. When someone sins against you or me, it is often easier to forgive than to forget. But read Jeremiah 31:33-34, which is a prophesy about God's covenant of grace through His Son. *Here God promises not only to forgive our sins, but what else?*

17. Have you been haunted by old sins you committed years ago? No need! *What does the Bible promise us in Psalm 103:12?*

18. Read Hebrews 10:16-17. Perhaps *you* remember the "lawless deeds" that you have done in your past, *but what does this passage say about them?*

19. Refer again to Romans 4:4-5. An employer pays his employees because they earn it. But according to verse 5, *what does God look for in those whom He declares righteous?*

20. Read again II Corinthians 5:19-21. All people in the world are sinful, yet this passage says that God was "reconciled to the world." *Who reconciled God and man?*

The Impartiality of God's Forgiveness

21. Does God play favorites? Read I John 1:7-9. *According to verse nine, who may receive God's forgiveness?*

"LEARN FROM ME"

22. Look up I Peter 1:17-19. Complete this sentence: *"In God's judgment, there is no...*

23. Read Romans 3:28-30. To be "justified" means to be declared *not guilty* before God. Some say you can be justified by the good deeds which you do. ***But what does this passage say?***

24. Is the offer of salvation *really* for everybody? ***What does John 3:16 say on this subject?***

25. Check Romans 2:11. Once again, ***God is never guilty of showing WHAT?***

Where is God's Forgiveness Offered to Us?

26. Read II Corinthians 5:19. There is only one way in which a sinful human being can be reconciled to God. ***What is that Way?***

27: The Apostle Paul had much to be ashamed of, not least that he had started his career as a *persecutor* of those who followed the Gospel! But read Romans 1:16. ***What was Paul moved to say about the Gospel?***

28. Read Matthew 26:27-28. ***What Sacrament is described here, and what does God offer us through it?***

29. Read I Peter 3:21. ***What Sacrament is described here, and what does it do for us?***

How Can We Be Certain about Forgiveness and Eternal Life?

"LEARN FROM ME"

30. The Holy Spirit began the "good work" of faith in your heart. But some Christians worry about whether they will *remain* in the faith until Judgement Day. ***What encouragement does the Bible give us in Philippians 1:6?***

31. Read II Timothy 1:12. ***Who is the One who keeps us in the faith?***

32: God cannot lie, and He never breaks His promises. ***What blessed promise does He make to us in Titus 1:1-2?***

33. In John 8:31-32, Jesus says that we need only do one thing in order to enjoy the freedom of salvation and eternal life. ***What is that one thing?***



Additional Bible Readings

For more Bible reading on this subject, see Acts chapters 22-28, Romans chapters 1-6, and I Corinthians chapter 15.