

Redemption.

I'm going to begin this by dropping a bomb: Sin is no longer an issue with God; we are redeemed! With that statement, you are either rejoicing, shocked, or confused. That is one radical statement, but one I believe I can back up by the Word of God.

The message most people hear says that sin breaks your relationship or fellowship with God. The strictest message says that you lose your salvation ("backslide") every time you sin, until it's confessed. Others believe your eternal salvation is still secure, but you lose fellowship, can't get your prayers answered, or can't be used of God if you sin. That's not good news, since all of us sin (Rom. 3:23 and 1 John 1:8).

Christians usually cope by trying to keep every sin confessed. Let me just put this bluntly: That's impossible! The Bible says that whatever is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). Do we always walk in faith? James 4:17 reveals that sin isn't only doing things that are wrong, but it's not doing what we know is right. Would any claim they are loving God and others as they know they should?

By these definitions, we all sin through the weakness of our flesh. It's impossible to keep every sin confessed. Even if it were possible, that puts the burden of salvation on our backs. There wouldn't be any peace or rest in our relationship with the Lord if that's the way it worked (Rom. 5:1).

Most people, including Christians, see the forgiveness of sins as something that God can do, and continues to do, but not as something He has completed. From that comes the false concept that we must constantly confess our sins, which makes and keeps us sin conscious.

The New Testament presents the forgiveness of sins as something that is already accomplished and that the effect of this redemption is that we are not even to be conscious of sin (Heb. 10:1-2).

Ask yourself, what produced the forgiveness of sins and when did that happen? Jesus was the Lamb of God that took away the sins of the world (John 1:29). It was through the shedding of Jesus' blood that you received redemption, which is the forgiveness of your sins (Eph. 1:7 and Col. 1:14).

When did Jesus die and shed His blood for our sins? About 2,000 years ago. He will never die again (Rom. 6:9-10). He dealt with the sins of the whole human race once, for all time (Heb. 9:25-28 and 10:10-14). Jesus' sacrifice for our sins is already an accomplished work.

We don't have to ask Jesus to forgive our sins; He's already done it. Paul didn't tell the Philippian jailor to ask Jesus to forgive him; Paul told him to believe on what Jesus had already

done and he would be saved (Acts 16:31). We confess the Lord Jesus, not our sins, to receive this gift of salvation (Rom. 10:9).

Does that mean everyone in the whole world is saved? Certainly not. We have to receive forgiveness by faith (Acts 26:18). The Lord has already forgiven everyone's sins (1 John 2:2). That's grace. But we have to put faith in what God has already accomplished by grace to be saved (Eph. 2:8).

Therefore, it's not a person's many sins that sends them to hell; sin has already been paid for and forgiven. It's the singular sin of not believing on Jesus that sends a person to hell. It's their failure to accept what Jesus did for them that puts them into that place of eternal torment.

John 16:8-9 says,

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me.C

The singular sin the Holy Spirit reproves us of is the sin of not believing on Jesus. That's it. That's not to say that the Holy Spirit will not show us that things we do are wrong. But He uses them to illustrate that we don't believe on Jesus. The Holy Spirit isn't nailing us every time we sin; He loves us back into faith and trust in Jesus. That's the whole issue with God.

What difference does it make in our lives if we accept forgiveness as something that has already been accomplished or not? There is a huge difference! It gives us security and peace, knowing that God isn't mad at us and won't be mad at us. Our sins are already forgiven—and not just the past sins we committed before we were born again. All of our sins—past, present, and even future ones—are already forgiven.

Someone will say, "How can God forgive our sins before we commit them?" Well, you better pray that He can do that, because Jesus only died for our sins once; 2,000 years ago; before you committed any sin. If He can't forgive sins before you commit them, then you can't be saved.

It says in Hebrews 10:10-12 and 14,

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (emphasis mine).

We have received eternal, not momentary, redemption (Heb. 9:12). One sacrifice was made for all sin forever, and we have been perfected forever. How can we read these scriptures and come to any other conclusion than that every sin—past, present, and future—was forgiven and our redemption is eternal?

If you have accepted the sacrifice of Jesus for your sins by faith, then your spirit is perfect (Heb. 12:23)! Your spirit has been born again. A million years from now, your spirit will be identical to what it is right now, and it is identical to Jesus (1 Cor. 6:17 and 1 John 4:17). One-third of your redemption is complete.

So, am I making light of sin or saying sin doesn't matter? No! Sin is a terrible thing, and it's an inroad for Satan into your life (Rom. 6:16). I hate sin! I live a holier life than most of you reading this. I just value the blood and the atonement of Jesus above sin. His sacrifice was infinitely greater than all the past, present, and future transgressions of the entire human race. Jesus overpaid the debt we owed.

You might say, "What about 1 John 1:9?"

I'm glad you brought that up.

First John 1:9 says,

"If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (brackets mine).

We don't have to confess sin in order to be saved, to retain, or to maintain our salvation. If I believed that was so, I would kill every person who came forward for salvation. I might go to hell, but that's the only way they would ever get to heaven. We need to confess it, not for the purpose of becoming born again, but because our flesh gets defiled. That gives Satan a legal right to function in our flesh (Rom. 6:16).

Confessing we have sinned means we are coming back into agreement with God and out of agreement with the devil. That stops Satan from dominating us through that sin and draws the forgiveness and purity, which is already in our born-again spirits, out into our flesh.

Our born-again spirits are already eternally redeemed (Heb. 9:12). The other two-thirds, your soul and body, have also been purchased by His blood, but their redemption has not yet taken place. However, God has made provision for this as well.

Romans 8:23 reads,

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Ephesians 1:14 says,

"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

When redemption is complete in spirit, soul, and body, we will know Him as we are known (1 Cor. 13:12). But until then, we can experience a renewed mind through His Word. And although we are waiting for the redemption of our bodies, we can receive healing while we live in our mortal bodies. God has made provision for both the soul and the body even though their redemption has not yet been made manifest.

Unfortunately, most Christians are not taking advantage of these provisions. They have not renewed their minds, and they still don't understand that we are also redeemed from the curse of the Law (Gal. 3:13). The average New Testament believer is still trying to get God to respond to them based on their performance. Why? Because they don't know that the performance covenant of the Old Testament Law is over. We are now under the New Testament ministry of grace and faith (2 Cor. 3:7-8).

The Law was given to convict people of their self-righteousness so they could see their need for a savior. Praise God, we are now no longer under the Law. First Timothy 1:9 says that the Law is not made for a righteous man. And who is righteous? Any person who is born again (2 Cor. 5:21).

Hebrews 7:12 and 18 says,

"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof."

What a radical statement! A disannulling! The word disannulling literally means cancellation, to make null and void. The Old Testament Law has been nullified, canceled, done away with. The Law was weak and unprofitable. It was only a stop-gap measure until Jesus (Gal. 3:23-25).

Ephesians 1:3-5 says,

"[He] hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings...hath chosen us...Having predestined us unto the adoption of children" (brackets and emphasis mine).

In the Greek, "hath" is an aortas tense, which means it is a done deal—it's an accomplished fact. So how blessed is all spiritual blessings? Verse 6 says that we have been accepted in the beloved. Really, that is a super understatement. The Greek word that is used for "accepted" is only used twice in the New Testament. The other place is in Luke 1 where the the Angel Gabriel appeared unto Mary.

Gabriel said, "Hail thou that are highly favoured, the Lord is with thee" (verse 28).

The Greek word for "highly favoured" is the only other time that this word was used. When it says that we are accepted in the beloved, it is saying He has made us highly favored. Mary hasn't got anything on a born-again believer. Every one of us is accepted, chosen, and highly favored. It's all part of redemption.

Understanding redemption, the complete forgiveness of your sins, is foundational to understanding the New Covenant and how God deals with you today. If you're born again and still asking questions like these: "Can I lose my salvation?" "If I die with unconfessed sin, will I go to heaven?" or "Does God answer the prayers of someone who still sins?" then you do not understand redemption.

Redemption is very practical, and your understanding of it will determine what you are able to receive from God, not just in eternity, but here and now.