

Biblical Forgiveness

God's Continuing Forgiveness

Introduction

- We have those far examined the nature of God's forgiveness in salvation of a sinner.
- Today we will examine how God continues to forgive sin in the life of a saint.

Perpetual Forgiveness

- By perpetual, we see that God has forgiven the sins of a sinner, placed them in a state of righteousness, and secured that position eternally.
- This is the work of grace toward an underserving sinner, whereby we are made righteous through Christ – Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 3:21-28
- This forgiveness of sins is applied to past, present, and future sins – Colossians 2:13-15; Romans 5:1, 8:31-39
- Thus, the saved will never face condemnation or lose their status as righteous – John 3:18, 5:24; Romans 8:1
- This does not mean that saved person cannot sin, only that they cannot lose their status of righteousness before God – I John 1:8
 - Note – Verses like I John 3:9 speak of saved people not sinning. This does not mean they cannot sin, but rather that they would not abide in sin because of God's sanctifying work in them. – Romans 6:1-2, Galatians 5:17, Philippians 3:13-14

Incidental Forgiveness

- By incidental, we see how God forgives the saint when they commit sin after their salvation.
- Lewis Sperry Chafer explains the distinction between our unchanging standing as sons of God and our varying state of closeness to the Father:
 - “At this point a distinction is called for between this abiding judicial forgiveness and the oft-repeated forgiveness within the family of God. The seeming paradox that one is forgiven and yet must be forgiven, is explained on the ground of the truth that there are two wholly and unrelated spheres of relationship between the believer and God. Regarding his *standing*, which like his Sonship is immutable since it is secured by his place in Christ, he is not subject to condemnation and will never be unjustified or separated from God. Regarding his *state*, which like the daily conduct of a son is mutable and is wholly within the family relationship, he must be both forgiven and cleansed (1 John 1:9). The writer to the Hebrews declares that, had the old order of sacrifices been as efficacious as the sacrifice of Christ, those presenting an animal sacrifice for their sin would ‘have had no more conscience of sins’ (Hebrews 10:2). On

the other hand, it is the believer's portion to be free from the sense of the condemnation of sin-he never thinks of himself as a lost soul, if at all instructed in God's Word; however, this is not to say that the Christian will not be conscious of the sins he commits. Sin, to the believer, is more abhorrent than ever it could have been before he was saved; but, when sinning, he will not have broken the abiding fact of his union with God though he has injured his communion with Him. Within the family relation – which relation cannot be broken – he may sin as a child (without ceasing to be a child) and be forgiven, and restored back into the Father's fellowship on the basis of his own confession of his sin and the deeper truth that Christ has borne the sin which otherwise would condemn.”

- Pictures of cleansing vs. washing show that there is a difference between permanent cleansing and incidental washing:
 - The priests we ceremonially consecrated to their service with blood sacrifice (Leviticus 8) yet continually washed themselves (Exodus 30:19-21).
 - Christ uses similar language speaking to Peter – John 13:10
- The method of God's incidental forgiveness towards saints when they sin:
 - The saved are not purged immediately from the presence nor power of sin.
 - This will be accomplished after death – Romans 8:16-18, I John 3:2, I Corinthians 15:50-58
 - The saved do continue to commit sin – I John 1:10, Romans 7:21-23
 - This does not cause them to lose their standing in salvation – Romans 8:1
 - The spiritual reactions to a Christian's sin:
 - Satan accuses us before God – Job 1-2, Revelation 12:10
 - The state of our relationship with God is affected – Psalm 32:3-4, 66:18; Isaiah 59:2
 - Guilt and conviction are felt – Psalm 51
 - God's chastisement is sent – Hebrews 12:5-8
 - This is meant to purify us more than punish us.
 - How forgiveness is found:
 - Christ is our advocate, asserting our standing as righteous through His redemptive work – I John 2:1
 - We acknowledge our sin – Psalm 51:3
 - We express sorrow for our sins and repent – Psalm 32, 51
 - We confess our sin – I John 1:9, Matthew 6:11-12
 - We make amends to anyone that we have hurt – Matthew 5:23-24
 - The results of finding forgiveness for incidental sin:
 - Our relationship with God is restored, along with its joy and peace.
 - We are reminded of the goodness of God toward us.
 - We learn from our errors and strive to avoid such again.