

Is Forgiveness Really Forever?
How to Know I Am Eternally Safe and Secure

5-04-14

Recap:

- We need personally to be forgiven;
- We need to forgive ourselves;
- We should forgive others...
- Today, Can God really forgive us forever? Yes, and we can have this assurance. In the bible it says,

“I write this to you who believe in the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.” **– 1 John 5:13, NLT**

Some words Jesus used that can be interchanged:

-eternal

-everlasting

-forever

All these indicate a quality of life

Gift of eternal life

Gift of Holy Spirit

Gift of knowing we are saved / eternally secure

Problem today:

- Many don't have assurance of their forgiveness
- So Satan eats us up!
- We don't offer to give it away
- Scared that I might lose it today / tomorrow...

1. Sealing my eternity with Christ.

Def: Something that secures or fastens/ Envelope!

- Being 'In Christ' is what makes the difference.
- Bible expression emphasizes what Jesus did, not us

“In Christ, God has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world. In Christ, he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people . . . God gave that grace to us freely, in Christ, the One he loves. In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have

forgiveness of sins.”

— Ephesians 1:3-4, 6-7, NCV

Circle each time ‘In Christ’ is used. The Bible is saying,

- in Christ you are blessed,
- in Christ you were adopted,
- in Christ you were set free,
- in Christ you are [eternally] forgiven (for some of us, it is scary to use the word ‘eternally’ in conjunction with forgiven. Why is that??)

To be saved, to have salvation, means to be sealed / accepted permanently with God. How?

- Not by earning forgiveness, working hard enough to get it (how would we ever know we that we got it?!)
- Not by sealing ourselves
- Only by accepting or receiving it through Jesus
- By placing our lives in His care
- If you haven’t done that why not today?

2. Admit my sins regularly (confession)

Confession, since the early church, has become misunderstood:

- **It is not something we go to but**
- **A conversation with God, with others**
- **It keeps us on track spiritually**
- **Remember, Christians are not Perfect, but Forgiven! We mess up from time to time...**
- **So when we sin we are not kicked out of ‘Christ’**
- **Confession:**

“But if we confess our sins to him, he can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. And it is perfectly proper for God to do this for us because Christ died to wash away our sins.”

— 1 John 1:9

Truth about sin:

- Sin has the power to kill, so we need to be saved!

- Sin has consequences...it hurts relationships
- When we sin after salvation, our temporary fellowship is broken; the Relationship (eternal life) is still there, but fellowship / closeness is broken

Marriage illustration Becky and I

1. 29 yrs of marriage (we are oddballs!)
2. vows before God and friends
3. our relationship is SECURE
4. I've done real stupid things...like wash darks and lights together! Not taken out the trash and we began to farm maggots
5. From time to time, our fellowship gets broken: arguments, distant-ness
6. This is imperfect, but our love is imperfect...Only God is perfect. But do you see the parallels?

So, What about Confession? 2 things:

1. We agree with God that our sins are BAD
 - We tell Him we don't want to do this
 - We say 'this is not really me anymore'
2. Confession means we are taking responsibility for our actions
 - We don't blame anybody else, don't pass buck
 - It allows us to grow
 - It allows healing / restoration to occur
 - It brings humility into our life

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Submit yourselves, then, to God . . . Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. . . Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”

— James 4:6-10

Important: What Confession doesn't mean:

- I can sin / repent, sin / repent, sin / repent...this is being presumptuous
- We can expect his forgiveness, count on it, but don't sin intentionally

then ask forgiveness the again and again...

- Don't test or play games with God!
- **So, Confession keeps our relationship alive**

3. Faithfully obey Him [as our Heavenly Father]

- **Obedience doesn't save you but it is a characteristic of a person who is in Christ.**

“Whoever knows and obeys my commandments is the person who loves me. Those who love me will have my Father's love, and I, too, will love them and show myself to them.”

-John 14:21, God's Word Translation (GW)

Obedience / Faithful living equals love

“Since you have been raised to new life with Christ . . . Let heaven fill your thoughts . . . So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. Don't be greedy for the good things of this life . . . get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language.”

—Colossians 3:1-2, 5, 8

When I know we are secure *for eternity* with God,

4. I can enjoy my security as God's child.

- **Not just enduring life but enjoying it**
- **Not to be in fear of judgment / condemnation, looking over your shoulder with God!**

****Discipline will always be part of our spiritual lives, but this is different from eternal punishment! The writer of Hebrews reminds us:**

“My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you . . . For the Lord disciplines those he loves . . . remember that God is treating you as his own children . . . If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children

after all.”

— Hebrews 12:5-8

“Sin will not be your master, because you are not under law but under God's grace.”

- Romans 6:14

Key Points to Romans 6:

- 1. When you sin, you don't lose your place in God's family**
- 2. 2nd, this verse says that when you are God's child you can break the cycle of sin. How? By Choice: you can say NO to sin!**
- 3. God is a god of second and third...chances! GRACE!**

How strong is God and His love for us? Eternally strong! Listen to Romans 8:

“In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

— Romans 8:37-39

Find this security today: receive Jesus's forgiveness, His freedom, His cleansing, and move from condemnation to security. Let's pray.