

Steps to Christ

Bible Study Series



Confession

5 - 16

(1) WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR US, AS SINNERS, TO OBTAIN MERCY?

Proverbs 28:13

Related Texts: 2 Chronicles 7:14; Luke 15:18-24; Jeremiah 3:12, 13

The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy.

(2) TO WHOM SHOULD WE CONFESS OUR FAULTS?

James 5:16

Psalms 32:5

Related Texts: Psalm 38:18; 41:4; Matthew 5:24; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-10; Romans 10:10; James 4:10

The apostle says, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offense to your friend or neighbor, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty freely to forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother you have wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer. The case is brought before the only true Mediator, our great High Priest, who “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,” and who is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and is able to cleanse from every stain of iniquity. Hebrews 4:15.

(3) IN WHAT CONDITION MUST OUR HEART AND SPIRIT BE TO EXPERIENCE TRUE PEACE AND CLOSENESS TO GOD?

Psalm 34:18

Related Texts: Psalm 51:17; 69:32; 10:17; 147:3; Isaiah 61:1; 66:2; 57:15; Ezekiel 36:26, 31

Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced that repentance which is not to be repented of, and have not with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit confessed our sins, abhorring our iniquity, we have never truly sought for the forgiveness of sin; and if we have never sought, we have never found the peace of God. The only reason why we do not have remission of sins that are past is that we are not willing to humble our hearts and comply with the conditions of the word of truth.

(4) HOW SPECIFIC SHOULD OUR CONFESSION OF SIN BE?

Leviticus 5:5

Related Texts: Leviticus 26:40; 6:4-7; Numbers 5:7; Joshua 7:19; 1 Corinthians 11:28

Explicit instruction is given concerning this matter. Confession of sin, whether public or private, should be heartfelt and freely expressed. It is not to be urged from the sinner. It is not to be made in a flippant and careless way, or forced from those who have no realizing sense of the abhorrent character of sin. The confession that is the outpouring of the inmost soul finds its way to the God of infinite pity. The Psalmist says, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalm 34:18.

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty.

(5) WHAT SPECIFIC SIN DID THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL CONFESS?

1 Samuel 12:19

Related Texts: Psalm 51:1-4; Deuteronomy 32:49-52

In the days of Samuel the Israelites wandered from God. They were suffering the consequences of sin; for they had lost their faith in God, lost their discernment of His power and wisdom to rule the nation, lost their confidence in His ability to defend and vindicate His cause. They turned from the great Ruler of the universe and desired to be governed as were the nations around them. Before they found peace they made this definite confession: “We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.” The very sin of which they were convicted had to be confessed. Their ingratitude oppressed their souls and severed them from God.

(6) IN ORDER FOR OUR CONFESSION TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, WHAT PART MUST WE PLAY IN DEMONSTRATING OUR SINCERE DESIRE FOR FORGIVENESS?

Isaiah 1:16

Related Texts: James 4:8; Psalm 119:11; Titus 2:11-14; Zechariah 1:3; Acts 22:16; Isaiah 55:6, 7; Matthew 3:8; Amos 5:4, 15; Romans 12:9

Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. The work that we have to do on our part is plainly set before us: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” Isaiah 1:16, 17. “If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.” Ezekiel 33:15. Paul says, speaking of the work of repentance: “Ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement de-

sire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.” 2 Corinthians 7:11.

(7) WHEN IT IS POSSIBLE, WHAT SHOULD WE DO FOR THOSE WHOM WE HAVE OFFENDED, DEFRAUDED, OR INJURED?

Ezekiel 33:15

Related Texts: Luke 19:8; Leviticus 6:2-5; Ezekiel 18:7, 12, 16; Numbers 5:6-8; 1 Samuel 12:3; 2 Samuel 12:6; Matthew 5:24

(8) WHO DID ADAM AND EVE BLAME FOR THEIR ACTION, WHICH RENDERED THEIR CONFESSION UNACCEPTABLE TO GOD?

Genesis 3:12

Genesis 3:13

Related Texts: James 1:13; Exodus 32:21-24; 1 Samuel 15:20-22; Proverbs 28:13

When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character nor realize the enormity of the evil he has committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances he would not have done this or that for which he is reproved.

After Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion: “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” The woman put the blame upon the serpent, saying, “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” Why did You make the serpent? Why did You suffer him to come into Eden? These were the questions implied in her excuse for her

sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit and will not be acceptable to God.

(9) HOW DID THE PUBLICAN VIEW HIMSELF?

Luke 18:13

Related Texts: Luke 5:8; Ezra 9:6; Psalm 40:12; Isaiah 6:5; Ezekiel 16:63

True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. Like the poor publican, not lifting up so much as his eyes unto heaven, he will cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” and those who do acknowledge their guilt will be justified, for Jesus will plead His blood in behalf of the repentant soul.

(10) WHAT SPECIFIC WORD DID BOTH PAUL AND DAVID USE WHICH WAS AN INDICATION OF THEIR TRUE SORROW FOR SIN?

Acts 26:10, 11

Psalm 51:3, 4

Related Texts: Psalm 32:5; 38:18; Luke 15:18-21

Examples of Sincere Confession: Luke 18:13, 14; 15:18-21; Psalm 51:3, 4; 2 Samuel 12:13; Daniel 9:3-12, 18; Jeremiah 3:25

Examples of Insincere Confession: Genesis 3:12, 13; 1 Samuel 15:22-26; Joshua 7:19-21

The examples in God’s word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin or attempt at self-justification. Paul did not seek to shield himself; he paints his sin in its darkest hue, not attempting to lessen his guilt. He does not hesitate to declare that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” 1 Timothy 1:15.

(11) WHAT WONDERFUL PROMISE CAN WE CLAIM IF WE ARE TRULY SORRY FOR OUR SIN AND CONFESS IT TO GOD?

1 John 1:9

Related Texts: Proverbs 28:13; Acts 3:19; Jeremiah 33:8; Nehemiah 9:17; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Hebrews 7:25; Isaiah 43:25, 26: 1:18

The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God.

I praise the Lord for giving me the gift of repentance and I am making the choice to follow His leading and to confess and forsake my sins.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

I understand that in order to obtain mercy and have the true peace in my heart that I long for I must confess my specific sin to God, and when it is possible, to the one I have offended.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

As I study and am drawn closer to Christ I realize that in my past there are those whom I have offended, defrauded, or injured. By God's grace I pledge to, as much as possible, make things right.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

I ask for His precious blood to cover the many transgressions I have committed against Him and those whom He has created.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

My prayer is that if I stray from His path God will continue to give me the gift of repentance and lead me to confess my sins that I may walk in the path of righteousness for His name sake.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

Study Notes - Prayer Requests - Answered Prayers

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