

The Joy of Sins Forgiven! -- 1 John 1:9

A beautiful young lady stood in an airport terminal watching the planes as they arrived & as they lifted off. After watching several jets climb up into the distant sky, the young woman was overheard saying: **"I wish I could vanish into space just like that plane & start life all over again!"**

Why? Why would she say such a thing? She was the wife of a well known successful doctor; she was young & attractive, obviously a woman of wealth & position. So why did she want to vanish? Why did she want to escape life & start all over again?

It was because her life was filled with **regret!** She was burdened with the guilt & weight of sin. **She had never experienced the joy of sins forgiveness.** Her guilt was more than she could bear! The thought of the future was more than she could take.

Many people today echo these same words of despair. This same haunting despair is a force that drives millions of people. Some only **wish** to escape; to vanish & start all over. Others find something to help them escape: they drink away their gloom; they get involved with drugs, or even sexual addictions; **anything to help them forget!** Why are so many people like this today? **It is because they do not know the Joy of Sins Forgiven!**

1 John 1:9 tells us good news about FORGIVENESS! It says: "If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful & just to forgive us our sins, & to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This one single piece of Scripture tells us about the **condition** of forgiveness; about the **source** of forgiveness; & about the **abundance** of forgiveness. Let's look at the forgiveness that can be ours if we will only obey God's Word, & put our faith & trust in God's Son, Jesus Christ.

1. THE CONDITION OF FORGIVENESS! -- "If we confess our sins ..."

Everyone of us is guilty of sin, sin of one kind or another! The Bible declares that we ALL have sinned, & come short of the glory of Almighty God!

Some have sinned & don't know it. Others have sinned & don't much care. Some sin & become remorseful. Others sin & become gleeful.

But all of us have sinned & stand in need of God's forgiveness. The Bible declares that **"all** have sinned & come short of the glory of God." We are guilty of doing that which is wrong in God's sight!

Sin is not a very common word anymore! It is even slipping from the vocabulary of so many churches! **But Sin** is a word still found in the dictionary! It means, "to violate the divine law;" "transgression of the law of God;" "to do or commit wrongly." The writer of my dictionary knew theology pretty well!

Certainly in this "permissive" day in which we live, we need to hear about sin, & its terrible mastery over people's lives. **Sin**, the doctrine is still in the Bible! **Sin**, the act is still going on in the world!

First & foremost, we must admit our personal sins, & pray to God for pardon & forgiveness! **We must face up to our sin & confess it!** **Sin:** we cannot **ignore** it; we cannot **excuse** it; we cannot **justify** it; we cannot **hid** it; we cannot **blame** it on others; **we must confess it!** Confession is the **condition** for forgiveness! Confession of sin is a sign of **strength**, rather than an admission of **weakness!** When **we** have done the **confessing**, **God** will do the **forgiving!**

A story that comes out of the past is told about a young man who had been seeking to be saved for many years, without much success. Finally it happen, & he personally experienced the joy of sins forgiven. Someone who had known him during his time of spiritual floundering, asked him: "How did it happen?" The young man replied: "It was really very simple. **I just used the right ticket!**"

"The right ticket?" responded his friend. "What do you mean?"

"Well," he said, "it's like this; the first ticket I tried to use read, '**Admit the bearer -- a sinner, but not as great as most.**' I was turned away. Then I tried another ticket, '**Admit the bearer -- a sinner, but one who has been led astray by bad company.**' Still I did not get in. I tried still another ticket, '**Admit the bearer -- a sinner who has reformed & quit most of his sins.**' When this did not give me relief I decided that I had committed the unpardonable sin. I wrote down, '**Too great a sinner to ever be saved. There is no hope for me.**' But that only made matters worse. Finally I got so under conviction, & so desperate that I threw myself on the mercy of Jesus. I went back to the original ticket, but I erased everything else from it. It read, '**Admit the bearer -- a sinner.**' & instantly the door of forgiveness opened to me."

My friends, there **is** a condition to the forgiveness of sins! We must admit our sinfulness & confess our sins to God Almighty. **An unconfessed sin is the only sin God cannot forgive!** Often, it is easy for us to confess the sins of **others**; or the sins of the **church**; or even the sins of our **nation**. But we find it very difficult to come before God & say: "I have sinned; I am guilty!" **And yet that is the condition of our forgiveness!**

Are you willing to go before God in prayer & say, "Dear God, I have a problem; **it's Me.**" It's not my brother; it's not my sister; but it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer! God's grace can only go as deep as the confession goes!

2. THE SOURCE OF FORGIVENESS! -- "He is faithful & just to forgive us our sins ..."

Sin, regardless of its nature, is ultimately against God! **It reaches to the very throne of Heaven!**
Only God can grant forgiveness. Nothing we can do will bring us pardon.

Our friends cannot forgive sin; they may tell you when you are wrong! **Our psychologist or psychiatrist cannot forgive sin;** he may help uncover the hidden elements of sin! **Our pastor/priest cannot forgive sin;** he may lead you to seek the grace of God!
Forgiveness of sin is Divine! God alone can forgive sin!

When I was pastoring in Wisconsin, a man by the name of Stanley attended our church occasionally. I would visit him in his home, & tried to encourage him to give his heart to Jesus, & to know for himself the joy of sins forgiven. On one of those visits, I asked him a very important question. I said: "Stan, suppose that you were to die tonight & stand before God, & He were to say to you, 'Why should I let you into heaven?' What would you say to Him?" Stan looked at me serious faced & said: "Pastor, I'd tell Him to call you; & you could tell Him it was all right."

My friends, I **wish** it were that easy! But only God can forgive sin, & His power is limited to sins which are confessed! He has promised in His Word, however, that all who come to Him, He will in no wise cast out! **He is the Source of our forgiveness!**

3. THE ABUNDANCE OF FORGIVENESS! -- "... And cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The only answer to our moral problem today is a **complete** spiritual cleansing. The abundance of God's forgiveness is not just a **tune up**; not just a **dusting**; not just a **whitewash**; **but a full pardon of all our sins!** AND a **complete cleansing** from all unrighteousness. Our need is for a total overhaul; a complete spiritual bath!

Too often we would settle for a **whitewash**, but God wants to **wash us whiter than the snow!** Little boys often have an aversion to soap & water. One mother tells of the difficulty she had in getting her little boy to wash, not only his hands, but behind his ears as well." She did her best to reason with the little boy. "Yes," he lamented, "but why don't you just dust me!"

Don't we sometimes make the same plea when it comes to the dirt of our sinfulness? Yet God desires to not only forgive our sins, but to also provide the power of His Holy Spirit to cleanse us completely from all unrighteousness! A dusting will not do; the abundance God provides is a **complete spiritual cleansing!**
The picture here of cleansing, is not of a rinsing, but a thorough & repeated scrubbing; a complete cleaning from the pollution of sin!

The answer to man's problem today is complete spiritual cleansing! Oh, what wonderful abundance there is in God's forgiveness of sin! There is something wrong with the **seemingly humble & popular assertion**, that Christians are just **sinners saved by grace**. **It is fundamentally & biblically wrong!**

You & I, as Christians, are a **lot more** than that! **You are a new creation in Christ!** Old things are passed away, & all things have been made new! The New Testament calls you a saint, a holy one, a child of God! The **abundance of forgiveness** is meant to **cleanse** us, & to made us **clean!** **God desires a holy people!** Thank God, the blood of Jesus Christ goes **deeper** than the stain of sin in our lives!

Conclusion: -- In I John 1:9, we have the **whole plan of salvation** summarized in a **nutshell**; God promising us pardon & purity on the condition of a full & honest confession of our sins.

What about you, my friend? Do you wish you could vanish into space just like an airplane & start life all over again! Are you bogged down by the load & the guilt of sin in your life? Are you living a **defeated life, with no real spiritual victory?** **Have you no real joy in life?**

Unconfessed sin is a major roadblock to the flow of love & joy in your life! But God's forgiveness is available for **you!** You can personally experience for yourself the **joy of forgiveness!** **It will literally revolutionize your life!**

You may say: "I've never committed murder or even adultery." "I'm not really a bad person." The Bible says no matter **who you are, or what you've done, YOU STAND EQUALLY GUILTY BEFORE GOD!** God's standard is **total righteousness** & nothing less will do. Jesus said that ALL men every where must come to **repentance!**

Won't you come to Jesus today? Acknowledge your guilt; confess your sins; seek His pardon & His cleansing. If you will do that, you will experience a happiness unlike anything you've ever known! The **joy of forgiveness** can be yours, right now! For the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin!