

When a Christian Sins

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Jesus died as a sacrifice for our sin so that we might be accounted as holy and righteous in His sight, and thus have “fellowship” with God! Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, God can forgive our sin. But Jesus did not die so that we could *continue* sinning! We must come under new management. We must die to sin and be raised to “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4 KJV).

Does this mean we must live perfect lives henceforth; never ever sinning again? No. I doubt that we are even capable of that (although that should be our goal). The blood of Christ covers our sin in both direction — *backward* to our past and *forward* into our future.

But understand that forgiveness and salvation comes with the condition of a new allegiance. To fall occasionally and painfully into sin is not the same as to walk deliberately and persistently in self-chosen and self-justifying disobedience. Just as a parent will tolerate and forgive a son or daughter who is distracted from time to time by the allurements of childhood toys so as to forget to clean his room, but will punish that son or daughter who defiantly and stubbornly refuses to do what he is told; even so God can forgive those sins born out of weakness. But there is no acceptable excuse, no acceptable sacrifice, and no forgiveness for open, deliberate rebellion.

How, then, should a Christian respond when he *does* occasionally fall into

transgression? 1 Jn. 1:9 tells us. “***If we confess our sins***, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

Understand that John is not writing to unbelievers telling them how to *become* Christians. (If he were, I’m confident he would tell them to *believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, *repent* of sin, and be *baptized into Christ*.) But John is writing to those who are *already* immersed believers in Christ telling them how to live so as to serve and honor Christ. He is telling us *Christians* how we must deal with sin in our lives. We must confess our sin! We must admit *to ourselves* and *to God* that His way is right and best.

It’s important to know that to “confess” sin means “to say the same thing” that God says about that sin. It’s dark. It’s dirty. It hinders my friendship and fellowship with God and with others. God still loves me when I sin, but He is not able to bless me as He wants; He is not able to have that close relationship He wants to have with me. I need “to say the same thing” God says about my sin to “clear the air” between us. Implied in that admission, I believe, is also a re-commitment to conform myself to His way.

For Christians, the blessing of fellowship with God is to know that the blood of Jesus Christ is continually applied to our lives, and as we confess our sins we are forgiven. Relationship is restored.