

WHAT IS THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS?

Col 1:14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Gal 6:8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

The New Testament is plain on this issue- our sins have been forgiven by the shed blood of Jesus. However, what this means is unclear to many. What is the forgiveness of sins? To answer this we must first look at the penalty for sin.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The wages or penalty of sin is death. This is not just natural death, but spiritual death, or separation from God. So, for there to be forgiveness of sins then there must be the payment for its penalty, which is death. This is the payment that Jesus paid. Jesus paid the penalty of sin and sins by his death.

(1Co 15:3) For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

The guilt and sentence of sin which was death was paid. We do not have to pay this debt. We do not have to die or be separated from God because the debt has been paid by Christ's death. **This is the meaning of the forgiveness of sins.** This is important to understand because multitudes of Christians do not understand what forgiveness of sins is. Many have a grave misunderstanding about the forgiveness of sins. What many Christians understand forgiveness of sins to mean is that God removes the **CONSEQUENCES OF** our sinful behavior. They believe since God has forgiven them of their sins, then all effects of their behavior will be removed as well. This is a grave error. God's grace of forgiveness removes the penalty of sin which is death. It does not remove natural consequences of actions. King David learned this. Although David lived in the time period of the Law, he understood grace, and received grace. Under the Law David should have been stoned to death for committing adultery with Bathsheba.

However, David placed his faith in God's grace and was spared death. However, he was not spared the consequences of his actions!

2Sa 12:13 *So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."*

David experienced the forgiveness of his sin. **HE DID NOT DIE!** We have too light an understanding of sin. The penalty of sin is death, not bad things happening to us! **The forgiveness of sins in our life is a commuting of the death sentence!** We don't have to die! David did not have to die for His sin. God allowed David to kill a sacrificial animal in his place. The death of that animal pictured the death of the coming Messiah for the sins of the world. Although God put away the sin of David, **HE DID NOT PUT AWAY THE CONSEQUENCES OF DAVID'S SIN.** Here were the consequences of David's sin:

2Sa 12:9 *Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.*

2Sa 12:10 *Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'*

2Sa 12:11 *Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.*

2Sa 12:12 *For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'* "

David had to walk through the consequences of his actions. He experienced trouble in his house all of his days. He had trouble with his son Amnon who raped his daughter Tamar. Then his son Absalom killed Amnon. Absalom also made a nationwide revolt against his father and ended up dying because of it. Also, the illegitimate child David had with Bathsheba died. David paid a dear price in the natural for his actions. Although, David had to face the consequences of his actions, God gave him grace and help through it all. Many Christians do not understand what it means to have their sins forgiven. Since they believe that it means the consequences of their actions are removed, they feel like it does not

matter what they do. Forgiveness of sins is a spiritual putting away of guilt before God and its resulting penalty which is death. **It is not the removal of a natural law that God has put into the earth that is always at work.** This law is the law of sowing and reaping. This is what God says about this law.

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Gal 6:8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Paul tells us not to be deceived. Deceived about what? Deceived that our actions do not matter and that the forgiveness of sins is the removal of consequences. Paul says, God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. If someone sows from his flesh, from his flesh he will reap corruption. This word corruption means decay, destruction, and ruin. Let me say it this way. **We can have our sins forgiven by God and experience decay, destruction, and ruin in our natural lives because of our bad choices and actions.** This was true of David! We will not be separated from God because the debt of sin has been paid by God. Praise the Lord! However, we need to learn to walk in faith and righteousness and learn to sow to the Spirit to see our lives blossom under the blessing and grace of God. Our sins have been forgiven, but we must repent of our wrong actions and learn to walk in faith in God's grace. God says we will reap what we sow, but if we will repent, which in the Greek means to change the way we think about our actions, then we can stop the sowing of bad seed and we can even see some crop failure! Do you know we can experience crop failure of the good seed we sow? The enemy works to negate our good crops. Not all of our good crops come up 100 fold. Some only make 30 or 60 fold. If the enemy can lessen our good crops, then God working with us can lessen our bad crops that we have sown! Praise God! However, do not be deceived dear Christian! Your sins have been forgiven, but your actions still matter! Thank God for His grace and thank Him that your death sentence has been paid. That is what it means to have your sins forgiven!