

## CONFESSION OF SIN

Today's request comes from a bible student from our website ministry. ([www.doctrinalstudies.com](http://www.doctrinalstudies.com))

**Request:** "Can you explain what makes confession of sin the key that opens the door to being spiritual?"

This believer probably does not realize the importance of this question to her spiritual growth. This is the type of question a spiritual mature believer seeks to have answered that excites me as a pastor-teacher.

The answer will require being able to put milk doctrines with meat doctrines to spiritually advance you in **epignosis** (a more exact or fuller knowledge that powerfully influences the believer)

"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge (epignosis) of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge (epignosis) of God." (Col.1:9-10)

**. I will do my best to answer this request by the following four points.**

### **1. Let's begin by keeping it simple. Confession of personal sin is exactly what it says – confession of personal sin.**

"If (3cc) we confess (homologeō / p.a.subj) our sins (tas hamartia / a.pl.f), He is (eimi / p.a.ind) faithful and righteous to forgive (aphiemi / a.a.subj) us our sins and to cleanse (katharizo / a.a.subj) us from (aop+abl of separation) all unrighteousness (adikia / abl.s.f)."

**Homologeō** means "to speak the same thing, to assent, accord, agree with, to confess, declare, admit, - "to confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of, the results of inward conviction." (Vine's, 120)

There are **six 3<sup>rd</sup> class conditional 'if'** clauses (maybe you will or maybe you won't) in 1 John 1:5-2:2 (1:6, 7, 8, 9, 10; 2:1). They are used to confront false teachings.

- **Premise** (1:6) "**if we say** that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth"(living a lie, believing a false teaching)
  - **Answer** (1:7) "But **if we** walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."(Divine promise).
- **Premise:** (1:8) "**If we say** that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (living a lie, believing a false teaching)
  - **Answer** (1:9) "**if we** confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."(Divine promise).
- **Premise:** (1:10) "**If we say** that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and the word is not in us." (living a lie, believing a false teaching)
  - **Answer** (2:1b-2) "**if anyone** sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also *for the sins* of the whole world."(Divine promise).

1 John 1:8 introduces us to a false teaching that attacks the doctrine of confession of sin. Some believers were being deceived and aborting doctrinal truth regarding sin (old sin nature / OSN).

How is personal sin associated with the believer's OSN? Why would the Devil want us to engage in lies concerning the OSN?

**2. The answer is found in the connection between the OSN and personal sin.**

“But each one is **tempted** when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust (OSN). Then when lust has conceived, it gives **birth to sin**; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.” (James 1:14-15)

An example of “sin accomplished bringing forth death” is the younger prodigal (Luke 15:24, 32/ carnality).

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires (lust) of the flesh (OSN).” (Gal.5:16-17; Rom.8:8-9)

**Isn't God wonderful that He only requires confession of sin to restore us to fellowship?**

**3. In our lesson text, we learn that the issue is whether the believer is walking in light or darkness. If we walk in light, we have fellowship with Him (1 Jn.1:6-7).**

We are told that if we walk in light, we have fellowship with Him and “the **blood of Jesus** His son cleanses us from all sin.” (1 Jn.1:7) “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and **He Himself is the propitiation for our sins**; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.” (1 Jn.2:1-2)

We are told in 1 Jn.1:5 “that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.” OSN produces spiritual darkness within the believer and the indwelling Holy Spirit produces spiritual light.

This makes the connection between confession of sin and spirituality. Confession of sin removes us from the dominion of temporal darkness because of the extension of the permanent propitiation work of Jesus Christ regarding sin.

When an unbeliever believes the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9), he is removed from the dominion of darkness because of the propitiation work of Jesus Christ (Acts 26:18; Col.1:13-14). At that moment, he receives at least 8 works of the Holy Spirit in the package of grace salvation. 1 of these 8 is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.6:19-20; Gal.3:1-2).

This brings us full circle in our discussion of CONFESSION OF SIN AND SPIRITUALITY.

**4. Two important results of the propitiation work of Jesus Christ regarding sin are forgiveness and cleansing.**

Believers are reminded “And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” (Eph.4:32)

All your sins are forgiven and cleansed forever on the cross of Jesus Christ. We have this divine promised in 1 John 1:9 – “He is faithful and righteous to forgive (aorist of the point of the cross) us our sins and to cleanse (aorist of the cross and ministry of indwelling Holy Spirit) us from all unrighteousness.”

Therefore, we are NOT told to ask for forgiveness or for cleansing. But rather we are told to confess our sin.

What sin did the younger prodigal son confess? (**Luke 15:17-21**) He was in a state of carnal reversionism (1 Cor.3:1-3) – “Oh, God where could I begin?” “I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight.”

**What does God want from confession?** God wants to hear our need and desire for fellowship with Him – “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him.” (Luke 15:20)