

# What the Bible Says About...

## How Does God Forgive Sins?

### INTRO.

A. The value you place on spiritual matters is directly proportional to the need you feel for it.

- That's why it is so important that we are regularly reminded of the reality and consequences of sin.
- It's not a pleasant subject, but a considerable amount of both Jesus' teaching and N.T. epistles deals with sin and its consequences.

B. For instance, in our Romans class- the first section is a vivid explanation of "How and Why All Men are Lost."

- Paul concludes that section with statements like:
  - Romans 3:9-10,21- "... We have already concluded that Jews and Gentiles alike are **all under sin**. As it is written: *'There is no one righteous, [for emphasis, he adds] **not even one**'*. ...**For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**"
  - Romans 6:23- "*For the wages of sin is death...*"

C. But God is able to change that hopeless picture of doom to one filled with life and security - Ro. 4:7-8  
... How does he accomplish that?

### I- WHY DOES SIN CARRY SUCH SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES?

A. FIRST - GOD IS RIGHTEOUS

- From the Old Testament - Habakkuk 1:13
- To the New Testament - 1 John 1:5; James 1:17

B. SECOND - WE ARE UNRIGHTEOUS

- Romans 3:9-10, 21- (see above)

C. THIRD- THIS PRESENTS A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR US

- Our sin has eternally separated us from God!
- Isaiah 59:1-2- The problem is not with God, it is with us

### II- HOW DO WE RESOLVE THIS PREDICAMENT?

A. Commonly-held solution: By living morally and not sinning additionally - ("I'll do better.")

- Two problems with that solution:
  1. We can't live up to that commitment. (see Romans 7:18ff)
  2. If we could, it would not forgive past sins
- James 2:10- even a single sin carries the punishment of separation from God
- Galatians 2:16- "... a man is not justified by the works of law..."
- Ephesians 2:9- "[salvation] is... not by works so that no one can boast."

B. Moral righteousness/keeping moral law does not save - Romans 10:1-4

- Galatians 3:21-22- "...For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by law. But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin..."

C. Paul expresses the hopelessness and frustration of "trying to be good enough to go to heaven":

- Romans 7:24- "*What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?*"

- **WE CANNOT RESOLVE OUR PROBLEM!**

### III- BUT GOD HAS A SOLUTION!

A. God will become a man and take our punishment for us!

- John 3:16- *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life."*
- I Peter 2:24- *"He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."*
- John 1:29- *"Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."*
- Hebrews 9:26- *"[Christ]... has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself"*
- II Corinthians 5:21- *"God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*
- Romans 5:8- *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

### IV- HOW DO WE APPROPRIATE THIS SALVATION?

A. Interestingly, just as Christ made this salvation available to us **by dying**... We receive salvation **by dying**!

- When you recognize your lost condition, hear the "good news" that God offers you salvation by sending His son to be punished in your place, you can receive forgiveness by **dying with him**!
- Romans 6:3,5,8- *"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ...If we have been united with him like this in his death ...Now if we died with Christ..."*
- Baptism is more than an "outward sign of an inward faith." It is a **participation in Jesus' death**!

B. Just as incredibly, God resurrects me!

- Romans 6:4- *"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

... Now, we are able to say with Paul:

- Galatians 2:20- (KJV)- *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

CONCL.

A. How does a righteous God forgive sins?

- By sending His Son to be punished for them.
- Hebrews 8:12- *"I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."*

B. How do we receive that forgiveness?

- Not by righteous works; but by an obedient, submissive trust - **FAITH**.
- Which leads us participate in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus - in **BAPTISM**.

C. Now, as Ananias said to Saul (Acts 22:16)- *"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."*