

Giving Bible Answers to Bible Questions

By Paul R. Blake

Frances C. asked the following question: "We sin daily without intent. How can we enter heaven if we have sinned and did not ask forgiveness? Christ died for all our sins, once for all. There is no more sacrifice for willful sinning. Did Christ already die for the sins I have not yet committed? Can we rest with the peace that we are seen by God thru Christ's righteousness?"

Answer: It is true that we often sin without intent (inadvertently - Ezek. 45:20), and sometimes we sin without awareness (in ignorance - 1Tim. 1:13). Not all sins are the result of consciously yielding to temptation (Matt. 26:41) or purposefully choosing to do something wrong (Heb. 10:26). However, sin is sin; all sin brings one under condemnation (Rom. 6:23). Every sinner needs to be forgiven of every sin (1John 1:8-9).

It must be understood that the Christian's spiritual condition is called a walk, a journey that one makes by faith in God and obedience to His word. 1John 1:6 states: "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." In any given day, a dedicated Christian may succumb to temptation or sin inadvertently or in ignorance. But as he is walking in the light, he will pray that all of his sins be forgiven. He will grow in wisdom and understanding until he comes to the point that he is more aware of sin and more self-aware as well. His prayers for forgiveness cover the sins of ignorance, inadvertence, and weakness. To suggest that every sin must be specifically named makes it impossible to obtain forgiveness for sins of ignorance and inadvertence. How can one confess that of which he is unaware? God does not ask His children to do anything that is impossible.

So what does the disciple do who is endeavoring to walk in the light, but realizes that he is subject to falling to temptation, or may commit sins of ignorance and inadvertence? He confesses the sins of which he is aware, he strives to grow in his knowledge and understanding of sin and self, he asks for forgiveness for sins he committed in ignorance, and then ... and this is important ... he trusts in the grace and mercy of God to forgive him of his sins and to hold him in His Divine fellowship. God does not require perfect law-keeping for justification in Christ as He did under the Law of Moses. He requires that we walk in the light and the blood of Christ cleanses us from ALL sin. Walk as a faithful child of God and confess sins as you are aware of them; pray for forgiveness for the sins you are unaware of and trust in the grace and mercy of God to cover them.

Johnny B. asked the following question: "With the subject being the resurrection in 1Corinthians 15:20-23 doesn't (v20) tell us that the dead are Christ's firstfruits (ap-ar-khay)? And (v23), "But every man in his own order (that is to say order of the resurrection) Christ the firstfruits (the dead) and afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming (those that are alive and remain). Does not this teach that the dead are not raised when Christ returns but are raised before he returns?"

Answer: The firstfruits of 1Cor. 15:20, 23 is Jesus Christ Himself. Firstfruits are the first of the harvest. Jesus is the first to rise from the dead never to die again; hence, He is the First. 1Cor. 15:20 clearly states that Jesus is the firstfruits, not Christians -- "But now **Christ is risen** from the dead, **and has become the firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep." Christ is risen from the dead and become the firstfruits (the first) among those who have fallen asleep (died). It means that because Christ rose from the dead never to die again, all those who have died in Christ will rise never to die again.

Consider the harmony of the scriptures in this matter: "That the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:23). "And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the

dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5).

The righteous will rise from the dead with the unrighteous at the Judgment, not before. Jesus Himself said: "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28-29). The apostle Paul wrote: "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1Cor. 15:51-52). For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1Thes. 4:16-17).

There is only one resurrection. Everyone, righteous and unrighteous, will rise from the dead to face the Lord in Judgment on that same day. There is no statement or implication in scripture that suggests otherwise.

A Moments Wisdom

- Let your speech be better than silence, or else keep silent.
- Ignorance is never out of style; it was in fashion yesterday, it is all the rage today, and it will set the pace for tomorrow.
- The amount you give is not important. What matters is what that amount represents in terms of your life.
- Life is like a calendar: when a page is turned, it is gone. And no matter what we do today or wish tomorrow, no yesterdays will dawn.
- An important part of praying is the willingness to take part in the answer.
- It takes dedicated parents to raise consecrated children.
- Of all of the troubles in the world, the worst is that people are trying to fix the blame instead of the problem.
- A world of hurt is created when one combines a narrow mind with a wide mouth.
- We need a faith that will not shrink when washed in the hot waters of affliction and adversity.
- Be happy when your troubles are at their worst; it means that anything that happens at that point will be an improvement.
- One of the great wonders of life is just that -- the wonder of life.
- Examine your troubles closely, and you may find your name stamped on them as manufacturer.
- The secret to a happy life is to count your blessings while others are adding up their troubles.
- If your troubles are deep seated and longstanding, try kneeling.
- The true measure of what a man is what he would be if he would never be found out.
- What does anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; but instead, it empties today of its strength. It does not help you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes.