

“I Am Afraid God Won’t Forgive Me!”

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Introduction:

- A. 2Tim. 1:7 - “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”
 - 1. The fact that you are concerned shows that your conscience is intact
 - 2. The fact that you desire to do what it takes to be forgiven shows that your will is intact
 - 3. The fact that you believe that God forgives sins shows that your faith and knowledge are intact
 - 4. The fact that you are sorrowful for sin’s effect on your relationship with God shows that your heart is intact
 - 5. However, the fact that you do not believe God will or can forgive you shows that your understanding is broken. Of these five, your understanding is the easiest to make whole

I. THE NEED FOR FORGIVENESS FOR ONE WITH AN INTACT UNDERSTANDING

- A. God hates sin; He cannot stand to look at its ugliness. Therefore, unconfessed sin in our lives comes between us and damages our relationship with the Lord.
 - 1. Isa. 59:1-2
- B. The requirements for forgiveness
 - 1. Sacrifice - Heb. 9:22; 1Peter 3:18; Eph. 1:7
 - a. “I am having a hard time believing my sins are covered by the sacrifice of Christ, because I am having a hard time believing anyone loves ME enough to make such a sacrifice.”
 - 2. Forgiveness of others - 1Cor. 13:5; Prov. 17:9; Matt. 6:14-15; Eph. 4:32
 - a. “I have a hard time believing I am forgiven because I have a hard time forgiving others.”
 - 3. Repentance. We must decide to change, to turn from our sins.
 - a. “I am having a hard time believing I am forgiven because I am having a hard time forsaking the practice of sin.”
 - b. Jer. 15:19
 - 4. Confession of sin - 2Tim. 2:13; 1John 1:9
 - a. Have you tried being specific? “I am having a hard time believing I am forgiven because I have a hard time admitting my sins out loud to myself.”
- C. The product of forgiveness
 - 1. Happiness - Psalm 32:1-2
 - a. “I am not feeling happy about being forgiven because I am not sure what happiness feels like, let alone happiness in the blessings in Christ.”
 - 2. God doesn’t keep a record of our sins; He does not hold them against us - Isa. 43:25
 - a. “I am having a hard time accepting that God has forgotten my sins because I keep playing them over and over in my mind.”

3. God removes our sin from us - Psalm 103:12
 - a. "I am having a hard time believing my sins are taken from me because I believe they are so much a part of who I am."
4. We then can forgive ourselves - Phil. 3:13-14
 - a. "I am having a hard time forgiving myself because I have never known anything but punishment, both from without and from within."

II. THE NEED FOR FORGIVENESS FOR ONE WITH A BROKEN UNDERSTANDING

- A. 1John 1:7 - "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."
 1. God continues to cleanse us as we are trying to live the Christian life and praying to Him when we stumble.
 2. While God wants you to know you are forgiven, Satan wants you to feel guilty. Satan knows that your feelings of guilt will keep you (in your mind) separated from God.
 3. When you have met God's conditions, it is not your reasoning or conscience that informs you of the guilt you feel. It's your Adversary
 - a. Rev. 12:10 - The Devil's role in the guilt you feel
 - b. Col. 1:21-22 - Jesus role in the guilt you feel
 4. So when you have feelings of guilt where there's no basis for that guilt, go back to the facts. Those facts tell you that you are loved by God, completely pure and holy through Jesus Christ, and cleansed by walking in the light with the Heavenly Father.
- B. David understood where you are.
 1. The sin and repentance seem so matter of fact - 2Sam. 12:1-13
 2. But David really felt the enormity of his sin - Psalm 51:1-2, 9-10
 3. David understood that his sin was forgiven and his cause for guilt was removed; he was having a hard time living with the regret.
 4. The trigger to your understanding may be this thought: consider that the breakdown in your understanding is simply not discerning the difference between guilt and regret
 5. Guilt has a basis, pain that is generated by sin that has not been properly removed
 6. Regret has a basis, the pain that remains after the sin has been removed
 7. Guilt no longer has a basis because the cause has been removed, sin
 8. Regret still has a basis, sorrow over the sense of lose generated by sin
 9. Heal your understanding by informing it that what you are feeling is sorrow over sins committed in the past and forgiven forever in the present
 10. Experience the sorrow in a healthy way; be motivated to draw close to God for comfort as a child does to a loving parent; God will help you remove the regret over time, just as He removed the sins the moment you asked him to.
 11. Ecc. 3:1-11