“God’s Forgiveness”

I John 1:8-2:2
9-23-2026

Introduction:

*** Believer, you can experience God’s forgiveness of your sins!**

I. Can God Really Forgive My Wicked Sin?
(The <u>MEANS</u> of God’s Forgiveness - 1:8-10)

A. You must <u>face</u> your sin honestly (v.8,10)
(Don’t practice denial)

B. You must <u>confess</u> your sins honestly (v.9)
(Call it what it is!)

II. How Does God Forgive Sin?
(The <u>BASIS</u> of God’s Forgiveness - 2:1-2)

A. Christ is our <u>DEFENCE ATTORNEY</u> who <u>pleads</u>
our case before the Father’s Throne (v.1)

B. Christ is our <u>SATISFYING SACRIFICE</u> who has <u>pleased</u>
the Father’s judicial wrath against our sin (v.2)

“God’s Forgiveness”

I John 1:8-2:2

9-23-2026

Introduction:

*** Believer, you can experience God’s forgiveness of your sins!**

I. Can God Really Forgive My Wicked Sin?

(The <u>MEANS</u> of God’s Forgiveness - 1:8-10)

A. You must _____ your sin honestly (v.8,10)
(_____)

B. You must _____ your sins honestly (v.9)
(_____)

II. How Does God Forgive Sin?

(The <u>BASIS</u> of God’s Forgiveness - 2:1-2)

A. Christ is our _____ who _____
our case before the Father’s Throne (v.1)

B. Christ is our _____ who has _____
the Father’s judicial wrath against our sin (v.2)

“God’s Forgiveness”

I John 1:8-2:2

9-23-2026

Introduction:

The expression “Clean Slate” refers to “A fresh start; another chance after wiping out old offenses or debts. This idiom often appears as wipe the slate clean. For example, Henry's boss assured him that the matter was finished and he could start with a clean slate, or He wished he could wipe the slate clean, but it was too late to salvage the relationship. This expression alludes to the slate boards on which school work or tavern bills were recorded in easily wiped-off chalk. Since 1850 or so the term has been used figuratively, and it has long outlived the practice of writing on slate.”
(http://www.answers.com/topic/clean-slate)

The major obstacle to our fellowship with God (that which prevents us from walking *“in the light”*) is SIN.

You cannot be fellowshipping with God and be sinning against God at the same time.

*** Believer, you can experience God’s forgiveness of your sins!**

I. Can God Really Forgive My Wicked Sin?
(The <u>MEANS</u> of God’s Forgiveness - 1:8-10)

A. You must <u>face</u> your sin honestly (v.8,10) (Don’t practice denial)

v. 8

“If we say” - *Note the list of hypothetical “if’s” (v. 6-10).*

John’s teaching on the believer’s sinful nature here is important to understand the rest of this Epistle. If it were not for these words, one might tend to misconstrue the rest of this Epistle, where John speaks of one who is born of God with these words: *“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin”* (3:9) etc.

We must <u>not</u> deny the presence or practice of sin in our lives (v. 8, 10)

1. Don't deny that you have a sinful nature (v.8)

V. 8

**The singular noun *"sin"* in contrast to the plural noun *"sins"* (v. 9) and the verb *"sinned"* (v. 10) indicates a person's denial of his own inner sinfulness.

**[The phrase *"have no sin"* is peculiar to John - Jn. 9:41; 15:22, 24; 19:11]
**The New Age lie of man's inner goodness flies in the face of the Bible's teaching of man's inner depravity. Are we going to follow God's or man's view of man?

**"Those who walk in the light (v. 7) realize they need the continuous cleansing of Christ's blood" (Zodhiates, p. 36).

"We have no sin" - present tense. Anyone who says that he has presently reached perfection and has no sin (no sin nature) is deceiving himself and the truth is not in him.

This one says in effect: "the principle of sin does not reside in me"

"We deceive ourselves" - we do not deceive God, since He knows the depths of man's heart (Heb. 4:12-13).

Many in a vain attempt to deny their sinfulness resort to redefining sin; or to a failure to evaluate the heart and personal motives; hence legalistically thinking they have arrived.

You were deceived if you ever said: "I could never do a thing like that!" You don't know your true nature.

"The truth is not in us" = the more you know the truth, the more you will be aware of your depravity; your old nature; your inherent sinful disposition; your weakness in the flesh.

Those who know God the best also know themselves the best and they cry out with Paul "O wretched man that I am" (Rom. 7:24).

The more I have grown in my knowledge of God's Word the more aware I have become of God's high standards and His exalted Holiness, and subsequently the more aware I have become of my own sinful heart & depraved nature.

A chief characteristic of the unregenerate man is his utter refusal to fully admit his sin.

John's statement has application to the:

1) Self-righteous
(unsaved man who sees no need for Christ's salvation)

2) Sinless perfection doctrine
(Christians, particularly of the Holiness movement, the Church of the Nazarene, etc., who believe it is possible to reach the point of sinless perfection in this life.

3) The Gnostic heresy
Some gnostics believed that since matter was evil and not the soul (the mind, the inner man), man was not really sinful internally, but merely externally.

2. Don't deny that you have committed sinful <u>attitudes & actions</u> (v.10)

V. 10

"This is a denial of any <u>specific acts</u> of sin, while in v. 8 we have the denial of the principle (the existence) of sin" (Robertson, p. 208).

"We have not sinned" - we have not missed the mark.

All who make such a statement make God out to be a <u>liar</u>, since He has said all have missed the mark (Rom. 3:23).

To call God a liar is to reduce Him to the level of the Devil (Jn. 8:44) (Hiebert, p. 68).

"His Word is not in us" = someone who is ignorant of God's righteous standards (revealed in Scripture) generally views himself as OK, not that bad.

The more the Word is in you, the more you will see your sin.

B. You must confess your sins honestly (v.9)
(Call it what it is!)

v.9.

"If we confess" - present tense, indicating a habitual or continual practice.

"Confess" = homo logeo. Lit. "to say the same thing." To have the same opinion of our sin as God has.

**"To agree with God" about our sin.

**God calls our sin: *"iniquity"; "trangression"* etc. (see Soteriology syllabus or Anthropology syllabus).

**when we see our sins as God sees them, we will abhor them. Sin is a hideous, loathsome, repulsive matter to God.

**No one abhors something if they can confess it and a short time later reindulge in it.

Confession means we tell the truth about what we have done

NOTE: Confession is not merely to say "I'm sorry" but it is ***to see our sin for what it is and admit it!** (not to excuse it, redefine it [as "sickness"] or explain it away)

"Our sins" - must take personal responsibility for our sin (cp. Ps. 32:1ff).

ILLUS: a man and the counselor - Wiersbe, p. 482

"Our sins" = hamartias; to miss the mark; to come short of God's standard of holiness (Rom. 3:23).

Note: the word "sins" is plural indicating that we should not confess sin generically but that we should confess each individual sin the Holy Spirit reminds us of, for which we want and need cleansing.

"He is faithful" - another attribute of God is His faithfulness - Hymn - "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

****"Faithful" -** Describes God's reliability, consistency, dependability. God can be trusted to do what He has promised (Hiebert, citing Kysar, p. 66).

Every time you confess to God, you will be forgiven (not for restored relationship to God but for a restored fellowship with God).

God is more anxious to forgive than we are to confess. His forgiveness is faithful, dependable, trustworthy, reliable, always present. God will never say, "I will not forgive" to the one who genuinely confesses.

"He is ... just" - God is righteous in His act of forgiving His saints.

**The second adjective *"just"* or *"righteous"* declares that when God forgives the sin of the penitent believer, He acts in full accord with His righteousness and holy nature. . . God acts in full moral consistency with His character in view of the cross (Hiebert, p. 66).

The reason God is "just" to forgive is because His just demands against sin have been satisfied. The penalty has been paid. Now He is both just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

"Forgive" - To release. Primarily means to send forth or send away. It pictures a removal and a carrying away of something.

Our sins are "removed as far as the east is from the west..."

"Cleanse" - to wash and make pure. Not only does God remove (forgive) our sin, but He erases every trace of that sin from His holy presence.

**Sin is an ugly stain on our soul; it is a pollution of our being; it is a defilement of our inner man. But God cleanses it away!

**The cleansing here is not for restoration of relationship with God (as if one could be saved and then lose it); but for restoration of "fellowship." (which is in view in context - v. 3, 6, 7).

Sad to say, many Christians confess their sins, but doubt God's desire ("faithful") or ability ("just") to forgive and cleanse. Hence, they live life with a load of false guilt.

The accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10) may try to throw dirt back into your face that has been removed by God (EX: Zech. 3:1-7).

"When he reminds you of your past, remind him of his future!" (Rev. 20:1-3, 10).

****"Our sins" -** Plural; each and every specific sin (note the Greek definite article). God is faithful and just to forgive ever sin we confess.

"<u>All</u> unrighteousness" - not a trace is left

"All <u>unrighteousness</u>" - all unjust thoughts, words, and deeds are scrubbed clean by God. Every lack of conformity to the moral law of God is rectified.

**"A small boy presents himself at the breakfast table – his knees are clean, his hands are clean, his face is clean, even his neck is clean; but, alas, he is sent upstairs again to complete his ablutions. 'You haven't washed behind your ears.' Our Heavenly Father is not satisfied unless we are clean through and through (Guy King, p. 27).

"What is the secret of forgiveness? It is God's faithfulness and righteousness - <u>not</u> our feelings or remorse, nor anything in ourselves - that cleanses us from <u>all</u> unrighteousness" (David Hocking, <u>I John</u>, p. 22).

****"All" -** There is no sin which is unforgivable.

**Can God forgive a repentant liar, thief, fornicator, adulterer, drinker, etc.? YES!

II. How Does God Forgive Sin?
(The BASIS of God's Forgiveness - 2:1-2)

v. 1

"My little children" - An expression of affection and endearment. John reflects the love God has for His children.

"These things write I unto you that ye sin not" - God's hopeful message of forgiveness should not have the effect of encouraging sin ("Well, if God is so willing to forgive, I can just indulge, confess it, and everything will be okay!").

To the contrary, His message of forgiveness is a great incentive for us to not indulge in evil. When you are clean, you have a greater desire to remain clean. When you feel dirty and sinful, you can more easily psychologically justify more sinning. You figure, "I'm dirty already, what's the big deal with getting more dirty."

ILLUS: It is easier for a dirty, grimy, greasy mechanic to gleefully get under the car and add dirt to his already filthy body and clothes, than for someone who is clean, freshly showered, and dressed in his Sunday-best three-piece suit.

One of the greatest incentives for us to be [practically] clean from sin is the realization that we are [positionally] clean from sin. When we realize our holy (saintly) standing in Christ, we are motivated to live that way. Our identity helps determine our behavior (Rom. 6; Col. 3, etc.).

It is God's desire that we don't commit acts of sin; out goal for ourselves should be God's goal for us: namely, *"Be ye perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

ILLUS: The company with the 10% tolerance level for defective manufacturing. When the company allowed a 10% failure rate, the workman produced products with a 10% failure rate. However, when they strives for a 0% failure rate, they would still mess up on a part or two, but the failure rate was less than 1%.

Now is the only time in our eternal existence that we have the opportunity and privilege to glorify God by overcoming temptation in this life. In heaven we will never again strive against sin.

A. Christ is our <u>DEFENCE ATTOURNEY</u> who <u>pleads</u> our case before the Father's Throne (v.1)

When we sin, we are <u>not</u> left (abandoned) to our own self-efforts to provide our own restoration to fellowship with God.

"Advocate" - Greek *parakletos* - one who comes along side and gives a defense. "In rabbinical literature the word could indicate one who offers legal aid" (Rienecker, p. 786).

In a legal context (as is here in I Jn. 2:1), the word refers to a defense attorney (who pleads the case of the one he is defending).

What better defense attorney could we have than the Son of God!? (The Virgin Mary, St. Peter, St. Jude, etc., could not defend us because they are guilty of the same sinful nature we have. Christ is not! (this is why He is called "*Jesus Christ the righteous"*).

Satan may sling his mud and accuse us before god's throne rev. 12:10), but Jesus Christ is there to defend us and to show His wounds "yet visible above." And He says, "Father, forgive them, based on My sacrifice."

"<u>We</u> have an Advocate" - the "we" and "our" (of v. 2) demonstrates that John is applying this to believers in contrast to *"the <u>world</u>"* (v. 2). The world does <u>not</u> have an advocate, but we believers do!

Note: Because Jesus Christ is called "the righteous" He is clearly distinguished from the crooked lawyers of our day. As a righteous defense attorney, "He never resorts to anything crooked or unworthy to get His client "off the hook" with the Judge" (Hiebert, p. 74).

B. Christ is our <u>SATISFYING SACRIFICE</u> who has <u>pleased</u> the Father's judicial wrath against our sin (v.2)

"Propitiation" - Satisfaction; one who satisfies or placates the wrath of god. God the Father saw the travail of His (Jesus') soul and was satisfied (Is. 53:11).

There is no other remedy for sin than that sacrifice which Christ offered for us.

"Propitiation" - the word *hilasmos* is related to the word *hilasterion* which was the mercy seat on which blood was sprinkled on the Day of Atonement. Implicit is the blood of Christ which satisfies the holy demands of God against sin.

"Not for ours only" - If the word "our" refers to believers (as distinguished from non-believers), then the contrasting word "world" must refer to unbelievers.

Christ being the <u>infinite God</u> died an infinite <u>death</u> to make an infinite <u>payment</u> for the sins of everyone who has ever lived.

His death is sufficient for all, but is only efficient to those who believe. The Bible does <u>not</u> teach a limited atonement (in its provision), but it is obviously limited (in its application) since not all men (but only few, a remnant) will be saved. Christ died even to buy the souls of those who would reject Him and go to hell (II Pet. 2:1 - *"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction."*).

What is the scope of Christ's atonement? Christ's "propitiation is as wide as the sin" (Hiebert, p. 76) . . . as wide as the need for propitiation.

Since all have sinned, all stand in need of propitiation. Christ died for all; therefore, He died for you, my friend. Do you believe on Him?