

Lesson for October 11, 2009

## Review of Our Spiritual Assets

All Judgment, All Scar Tissue Removed and Access to God

### All Judgment Removed

At salvation, all judgment is removed from the believer. Faith in Christ removes all condemnation. Christ was judged in our place and therefore the believer will not be judged. The word for judge in Greek is "krino" and means to sentence or to condemn. At physical birth every member of the human race is condemned because of Adam's original sin. This condemnation can be removed only by faith in Christ. He took our condemnation (judgment) on the Cross and paid the penalty that was demanded by the justice of God. (John 3:18; Romans 8:1)

### Doctrine of Sin

The word for sin in Greek is "hamartia" and literally means, "missing the mark." There are three types of sin in the Bible. *Imputed sin* is Adam's original sin imputed to the entire human race at physical birth. It is this sin that separates us from God (spiritual death). (Romans 5:12, 6:23; I Corinthians 15:21-22) *Inherent sin* is the sin nature inherited at physical birth by every member of the human race passed down genetically by the father. (Romans 5:12,18,19; Psalms 51:5) *Personal sin* is not imputed to the human race, but is committed after physical birth because of the sin nature and personal volition. (Psalms 32:2; Romans 4:8; II Corinthians 5:19)

Adam's original sin results in spiritual death, which is separation from God for all eternity. This means that the human race lacks the righteousness necessary to have a relationship with God or to enter Heaven. (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 64:6) Inherent sin makes people sinners because they possess a sin nature. A person is not a sinner because he commits personal sin; he sins because he possesses a sin nature. (Romans 5:19; James 1:13-15) Personal sin results from succumbing to temptation from the sin nature. Every person chooses to sin from his or her own volition. (Romans 7:15-20; I John 1:8-10)

The Scriptures are clear that spiritual death is a result of Adam's original sin, which is imputed at birth. *It is therefore spiritual death that is the penalty for sin.* It was Christ's spiritual death on the Cross that paid the penalty for Adam's original sin. This judgment satisfied the justice of God and faith in Christ secures forgiveness forever. The Bible says, "In Adam all die, but in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Corinthians 15:22) "Death" in this passage refers to spiritual death and "alive" means spiritually alive.

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Christ also paid the penalty for inherent sin (the nature passed to us from our fathers). The power of sin in the life of a believer can be broken, but only on the basis of Christ's payment for inherent sin. Positionally, the believer is secure forever since he possesses eternal life and is kept by the power of God. However, experientially the believer still possesses a sin nature. (John 3:16; Romans 8:8-10; II Corinthians 5:17)

Since the sin nature is not eradicated at salvation, the believer continues to sin. (Romans 8; I John 1:8-10) These sins are called personal sins and were imputed to Christ and judged. At salvation pre-salvation personal sins are forgiven and forgotten by God. (I John 2:2; Ephesians 1:7) However, there must be a solution to post-salvation sinning. God, in His magnificent way, has provided the solution. After salvation, the believer simply names, admits, or acknowledges his personal sin directly to God and is forgiven and cleansed. Not only does He forgive the sins we name, He cleanses from any unknown or forgotten sins. (I John 1:5-10)

Jesus Christ was judged for all sin: imputed, inherent and personal. He paid the penalty by His substitutionary spiritual death on the Cross. (Matthew 27:26; John 19:30) Forgiveness of sin means deliverance from the penalty of sin and the complete removal of sin. The word in Greek for forgiveness is "aphiemi" and means "to send forth" or "to send away," which is a perfect description of what God does with our sin.

### All Scar Tissue Removed

Human Viewpoint Thinking tells us that happiness is found in fulfilling our every human desire. This, of course, is not in harmony with God's Word. This kind of thinking (or lack of thinking) leads to "scar tissue on the soul" (hardness of the heart). Scar tissue on the soul leads to a frantic search for happiness in all of the details of life. (John 12:40)

Scar tissue on the soul shuts down Divine Viewpoint Thinking and removes the capacity for happiness. On the inside, mental attitude sins produce self-induced misery and on the outside, the details of life become your master. This is maladjustment to the grace of God. Reversionism, the condition of a believer who is negative toward Bible doctrine or has stopped growing spiritually, results in scar tissue on the soul. This is failure to follow God's plan of executing the Christian Way of Life. The reversionist is a believer in perpetual carnality, out of fellowship with God and controlled by his sin nature. If you are not advancing toward spiritual maturity as a Christian, you are retreating into reversionism. (Ephesians 4:19)

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As the reversionist moves farther away from God, his conscience becomes more and more “seared,” his norms and standards revert to human viewpoint and the “scar tissue on the soul” begins to build. Capacity for life is replaced with the temporary happiness of the World System: entertainment, money, power, social status, material possessions, and even personal relationships. What a person thought was going to bring him lasting happiness only brings delusion. Delusion leads to frustration, discouragement and even depression. (I Timothy 4:2; II Timothy 3:1-7)

*Removal of this “scar tissue” is not easy, but it is possible.* It can be removed only by the consistent, persistent intake and application of Bible doctrine. As the believer utilizes I John 1:9 (confession of known sins) and replaces Human Viewpoint Thinking with Divine Viewpoint Thinking by learning and applying accurate Bible doctrine, the “scar tissue” slowly begins to be removed. (Psalms 119:130)

In Ephesians 4 we find the decline into reversionism, and the recovery process. In the first half of the chapter we see a church executing the Christian Way of Life and growing spiritually. It is the “worthy walk” of the believer that is being described by Paul in verses 1-16. In verses 17-19 Paul admonishes these believers for sliding into reversionism. In verses 20-32 Paul gives these same believers the recovery process.

In verse 17 Paul warns these believers not to walk as the unbeliever (which apparently some were doing), in the vacuum or emptiness of their mind. This leads to “blackout of the soul” and “scar tissue on the soul” as described in verse 18. Verse 19 gives us the next progressive step in reversionism, which is total indulgence to the trend of the sin nature. In this case it is lascivious lawlessness.

### Access to God

Access to God has been provided for the believer through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our Royal High Priest and it is through His priesthood that the believer becomes a royal priest and is given access directly to God. (Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:6,10) In order to become our High Priest, Christ had to become true humanity. Jesus Christ represents us before God in Heaven before the throne of God. By becoming our High Priest, Jesus Christ became our mediator. (I Timothy 2:5-6) As Church Age believers, we belong to His priesthood (the Royal Priesthood). This priesthood is far superior to any that existed in the past. (Hebrews 7) As our High Priest, Christ has won the victory over Satan in the Angelic Conflict. (Hebrews 4:14-16; 6:17-20)

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The priesthood of Christ is the reality of the priesthoods that existed in the Old Testament. Just as the rituals and the sacrifices were shadows of real things (to come in the future), “The Order of the Royal Priesthood of Christ” is the realization of those shadow types. (Hebrews 8)

As believer-priests, we gain access to God and represent ourselves before Him. We do not need to confess our sins to a member of the clergy - we confess our sins directly to God. Confession (acknowledging our sins) is to be done in private, silently and immediately. We do not need someone else to pray for us, though we always appreciate the prayers of others on our behalf. As priests we are to come boldly to God and offer prayer for ourselves.

Prayer is the grace system of communication with God for the believer. The purpose of prayer is to communicate with our Heavenly Father. God communicates with us through His Word. We communicate with God through prayer. God, therefore, expects all believers to use prayer. We are actually commanded to pray without ceasing, which means *to have a consistent prayer life*. Prayer can be a powerful tool in the hands of a believer who knows *how* to pray. There are correct principles and procedures for praying and it is important that we learn and use these principles and procedures. (I Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16)

Unlike the Levitical priesthood in Israel, which was based on *physical birth*, the priesthood of the believer is based on *the “new birth”* (salvation). We actually share Christ’s priesthood because we are in union with Him. (Hebrews 3:1; 4:16)

Since we represent ourselves before God, it is our personal responsibility to grow spiritually through the perception and application of Bible doctrine. *Your spiritual life is your unseen relationship with God* functioning as a part of your Royal Priesthood. Until such time as your spiritual life is developed by consistent study and application of Bible doctrine, you will be unable to fulfill your responsibility as a priest. (Ephesians 4:12-15; II Peter 3:18)