

Why We Needed Forgiveness? **201-2**

What is sin?

Sin is an Old English word that has to do with **archery**, which means to miss the mark or to miss the bull's eye on the target.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines sin as a transgression of a religious or moral law, especially when deliberate, or a deliberate disobedience to the known will of God.

According to Southern Nazarene University, "*Sin is generally defined as an action that violates moral or religious law, often seen as an offense against God or a higher moral standard. It can also refer to a serious shortcoming or fault in behavior.*"

Why does Jesus heal and forgive people?

Most of us would agree that escaping the penalty for our rebellious sin is a good thing, *but is that the main reason Jesus came to set us free?*

Is Christianity simply receiving a get out of jail free card and then living for self until the day we go home to be with the Lord?

The problem we face today is that we want Jesus, but we sometimes want Him to do things our way and in our **timeframe**.

Jesus came and saved us for so many reasons that we can never explain them all; however, there are a few reasons that should not be overlooked.

God planned our salvation before the foundation of the world.

Jesus came not only from love, but also from obedience to His Father. Jesus wanted His own special people for a relationship and to save us, transforming us into His image.

Most importantly, God saved us for His Glory.

Ephesians 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. NKJV

I. Born sinners.

There is a theological term in Christianity that we must discuss, and the term is **original** sin.

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, NKJV

When the LORD created Adam and Eve, He placed them in a perfect environment inside the Garden of Eden, and they were provided with all they could ever need.

The LORD God also walked and fellowshiped with Adam and Eve in the Garden as they experienced a perfect paradise.

The LORD gave Adam and Eve complete reign over everything, with the only exception being that they were forbidden from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

When Adam and Eve decided to **believe** the devil's lies and eat the forbidden fruit, their sin of disobedience affected the rest of the human race from then on.

Every person, since Adam and Eve, is born with original sin, which can be described as a moral corruption we possess as a consequence of Adam's sin.

Because we are all born with natural sin, all people naturally sin. Think about a newborn baby; no one has to teach that child to be self-centered or to sin.

*What do we need since we all have sinned? A new **birth**.*

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

John 3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." NKJV

We must receive a new life free from the power of sin, and that can only happen if we are born again. Jesus' reason for coming to earth was to save His people from their sins.

Matthew 1:20 Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." NKJV

John Piper said, “*The problem of our moral defilement and habitual sinning is solved by his purifying us by the work of the Spirit.*”

The fact that every person is born with original sin means that we can never please the Lord by works of righteousness.

Titus 3:4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

Titus 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, NKJV

No matter how many “good deeds” we do, we still commit sin, and we still have a problem because of our corrupt nature.

Read ***Mark 2:5-11***

Talk about a **good distraction** while teaching: Jesus looks and sees these four men with some sort of rope and pulley set up, and they are lowering a paralyzed man down into the house.

Jesus saw the **faith** of these four friends; these men were so determined to get their friend to Jesus that they opened the roof of the house and let the man down on his mat.

Faith means to believe in and trust in what the Lord has said.

Faith is knowing what God has promised will happen, even if we can't see it with our **physical** eyes.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. NKJV

How do we know these men had faith?

These men had to have faith in Jesus to heal this man, because if they didn't think Jesus would heal their friend, they would have had to lift him and his mat back up through the roof.

James 2:18 someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. NKJV

Biblical faith in Christ is not simply believing Jesus exists; belief is an **action** word.

If you have true faith and trust in Jesus, you can't help but act upon that faith.

Someone would ask, “So I am saved by the things that I do since real faith is not seen only through my words?” **NO**.

When someone has true faith, the Holy Spirit comes to live within them and empowers them to change and live for the Lord.

These men showed their trust in Christ by their actions.

Mark 1:32, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. NKJV

We said there is a lesson for us. Contrary to some beliefs, there is a real difference here between the sick and demon-possessed.

All sin and sickness began at the **fall** of man when Adam and Eve sinned, **but** not all illnesses are caused by the devil.

Mental and physical illness can happen for several different reasons.

There are environmental reasons for sickness. The Lord allows some sickness for His purposes. Some sicknesses are a direct **spiritual** attack.

We see this man’s paralysis **was a result of sin**, but there is another time Jesus healed, and He said it was **not** a result of sin.

John 9:1 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.

John 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

John 9:3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him."

The religious leaders were not interested in the **faith** of these men who brought their friend to Jesus. The Scribes were concerned with rule-keeping, not with the healing of this man.

The Scribes were sin sniffers and heresy hunters, concerned with the possibility of Jesus claiming He could forgive sin.

Jesus perceived in His Spirit these leaders' thoughts. Jesus is all-knowing, and the fact that He knew their thoughts should have been enough for them to realize that Jesus is more than a man.

Jesus is more than a mere man. Yes, He is fully man, but He is also fully God. The angel predicting His birth said...

Matthew 1:23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." NKJV

Jesus' claim to possess divine authority to forgive some of their sin upset the teachers of the law who were present.

Never do we see an Old Testament prophet claiming **authority** to forgive someone of their sins...

The Scribes were wrong, saying Jesus committed blasphemy.

The Scribes did tell the truth when they asked the rhetorical question, "***Who can forgive sins but God alone?***"

Steven Cole said, “*Again and again during the life of Christ, the same dilemma was to reappear. If he were not divine, then he was indeed a blasphemer.*”

Jesus asked, “*Which is easier, to forgive this man’s sins, or to heal the person?*”

This shows us Jesus had the power to perform either task.

However, in this case, the two issues were actually just one, so Jesus speaks to the heart of the matter and forgives the man.

This man’s paralysis was related to sin in his life, and Jesus, as God in the flesh, could heal and forgive the man of his sin.

The man’s eternity was more important than his physical state.

Wiersbe says, “*Forgiveness is the greatest miracle that Jesus ever performed. It meets the greatest need; it costs the greatest price; and it brings the greatest blessing and the most lasting results.*”

Jesus has the **authority** and power to heal people and to forgive sins, so He tells the man to get up, pick up his bed, and walk.

If Jesus could not heal and forgive, this would have been a cruel order to tell the man to ***arise, take up your bed, and walk.***

But Jesus not only forgives us our sins; He gives us His Spirit, who alone has the power to change our lives.

Jesus does not change and heal people just for the sake of saving them from judgment; He transforms us into new creations

Jesus would say, “*You were carried in, but now that you are healed, walk out by the power of God!*”

Read ***Mark 2:12***.

In the original language, the word “***amazed***” means, “*These people were totally blown away by this miracle.*”

William Barclay, talking about the Scribes, said, “*On their own stated beliefs, the man could not be cured, unless he was **forgiven**. He was cured; therefore, he was forgiven. Therefore, Jesus’ claim to forgive sin must be true.*” (Barclay)

The Bible is clear that the ultimate goal of all the works of God is to display God's glory.

The term “***glory of God***” in the Bible refers in general to the beauty of God's manifold perfections.

The Lord’s Glory is displayed in His power, wisdom, mercy, and justice; each one is awesome in its magnitude and quality.

II. Regret compared to repentance.

Read ***Mark 6:16-20***

Warren Wiersbe said, “*Herod Antipas had married the daughter of King Aretas IV and then had divorced her so he could marry Herodias, the wife of his half-brother, Philip.*”

John the Baptist spoke out against Herod’s **illegal** and immoral marriage to Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife.

When John preached about repentance, he did not worry about the rich or powerful. John simply called sin “sin,” even against Herod, who could have had him killed for saying such things.

Herod, after being rebuked publicly by John the Baptist because of his sin, imprisoned John, rather than **killing** him.

At this time, a lot of people believed John the Baptist came from God as a prophet of God, and Herod himself feared public opinion, but he did not **fear** the Lord.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. NKJV

The words “***fear of the Lord***” mean reverence and respect or being in awe of God.

By placing John in jail, as a just and holy man, Herod protected him from being killed. Herodias, Herod’s new wife, was not as **forgiving** as Herod; she wanted to have John the Baptist killed.

Re-read ***Mark 6:20***

What things did John the Baptist do that made Herod believe he was just and holy, which in turn, made Herod protect John?

Herod witnessed how John lived his life. Herod also heard John preach about the kingdom of God, and Herod knew that what John preached was the truth.

William Lane said, “*More weak than cruel, Herod listened to John with an undeniable fascination.*”

*John's words left him perplexed and in anguish. Yet he found a strange pleasure in the **authoritative** preaching of this holy man, whose stringent life gave added power to his probing word" (Lane).*

Herod listened to John's words because his life was an example.

Mark 6:26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. NKJV

Let's talk about the difference between regret and repentance. Regret and repentance within our lives are often confused. They often begin in the same way, through pain or remorse.

Regret can easily masquerade as repentance, because they both have similar characteristics, but how a Christian deals with them is completely opposite.

Regret can happen when we face **consequences** for our actions, and sometimes we are simply sorry when we get caught doing something wrong.

2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted, but the sorrow of the world produces death. NKJV

Repentance does not save us, but a true repentance is one of the proofs that we are saved and being led by the Holy Spirit.

Bob Flayhart said, *"Repentance says, 'I want to stand on Christ's record of righteousness and not my own.'*

*It trusts that your failures, no matter the extent, are not fatal and ultimately the only failure is to **not** surrender your fears, guilt, sorrow, and sin to the love and goodness of Jesus.”*

Repentance should be part of the normal Christian life.

Our proper response to the knowledge that Jesus already knows about our sin is to swallow our pride, turn from our sinful behavior, and **run** to Jesus.

Unfortunately, guilt and shame often cause us to stay away from the Lord, but we are broken and deeply loved Children, with a Father who is waiting for us to turn back to Him.

Pain, heartache, and trials are universal to believers and unbelievers alike, but sometimes the Lord allows pain in our lives to lead us into repentance.

Repentance is for our hearts as much as it is about the Lord. The enemy of our souls would love to have us live in guilt and regret because we will be rendered useless for the kingdom.

When self-condemnation and guilt take up residence in our hearts and minds, we become too self-focused and will not be **effective** witnesses for Christ.

III. Lust leads to a bad decision.

Read *Mark 6:21-23*

When Herod's birthday was celebrated, Salome, the daughter of Herodias, came in before the king and his attendants and pleased them with a **seductive** dance.

In his excitement over his stepdaughter's dance, Herod promised to give Salome whatever she desired.

Some men may blame the girl for her seductive behavior, but of course, these men at the birthday celebration failed to guard their eyes, hearts, and minds from lust.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world.

1 John 2:17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. NKJV

1. The first temptation is the lust of the eyes.

One lesson both men and women can glean from this passage is about dressing modestly, but there is another lesson here about being careful what we allow our eyes to gaze upon as well.

Men are visually attracted and can stumble because of what they see. Men are similar to trout, who, when they see a shiny necklace on a woman, their eyes follow it like a fishing lure.

However, just because men are visually attracted does not negate the fact that a man has a responsibility to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

2 Corinthians 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, NKJV

Job spoke of this struggle: ***Job 31:1 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?"***

2. The second temptation is the lust of the flesh.

Think about the narrative in ***Genesis 39***, where Potiphar's wife wanted Joseph, and her flirting turned into sexual advances.

Genesis 39:10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.

Joseph showed remarkable faithfulness towards God, Potiphar, and himself by resisting this temptation for so long.

Joseph knew how greatly his sin would affect others because sin has a ripple effect; oftentimes, we want to deny the harmful effects our sin will have on ourselves and others around us.

1 Corinthians 10:13, No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. NKJV

When Potiphar's wife enticed Joseph, he said no; ***he refused***.

Sometimes it just comes down to refusing and saying no to sin, even if we **feel** like saying **yes to the temptation**.

Joseph did what we are all supposed to do when faced with this kind of situation: he **fled** the situation and ran away.

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. NKJV

2 Timothy 2:22 makes it clear to flee also youthful lusts.

3. The third temptation was the pride of life.

The pride of life is anything that leads to arrogance, pride in self, boasting, taking credit for something the Lord has done, and anything that stands in the way of our obeying the Lord.

1 Peter 5:5 "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble."

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, NKJV

Think about how the all-powerful God of the universe will resist the proud.

How can the Lord resisting a person affect them?

How many times have we done things we have regretted because of decisions we made from the flesh?

Galatians 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. NKJV

Herod, Herodias, and Salome showed how these cause damage.

Herod lusted with his eyes; Salome lusted in the flesh, and Herodias had pride, not wanting to be **corrected** for her sin of adultery.

However, ultimately...

All three of these things, ***the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life***, described Herod and negatively affected his **decision-making**.

When Salome danced provocatively, Herod had to give her what he promised her, even though he was sorry he had made the promise.

IV. Lust leads to death.

Read ***Mark 6:24-29***

Remember, earlier we said that Herodias wanted to have John the Baptist killed, but Herod actually protected him from being killed because John was just and holy?

After Salome spoke with her mother, Herodias, she came to the king with a request to give her John the Baptist's head on a platter.

Corrupt as he was, Herod was **sorry**, as he realized John didn't do anything worthy of death by calling Herod out for his sin.

Herod was between a rock and a hard place, and so he commanded that John should be beheaded.

David Guzik said, *“The immediate reply of Herodias showed that the mother had this planned out all along. She (Herodias) knew her husband, and she knew the **situation**, and knew she could get what she wanted this way.”*

The Apostle Paul said in ***Romans 7:8*** ***“sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. Apart from the law, sin was dead.***

Romans 7:9 ***I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.***

Romans 7:10 ***And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.***

Romans 7:11 ***For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.” NKJV***

Sin will always take you **further** than you want to go, and it will always cost you **more** than you want to spend.

The head of John was given to Salome, and she gave it to her wicked, adulterous mother.

Notice, *Mark 6:26*, “*And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her.*”

Mark Wessel said, “*The depth of distress experienced by Herod for John the Baptist is expressed graphically by being ‘greatly distressed’.*”

This is the same word used to describe Jesus’ agony in Gethsemane.”

Herod did not want to kill this just and holy man, but, in his foolishness, he made a vow to his stepdaughter because of the lust within his heart.

How did it all end for Herod?

According to the historian Josephus, Herod was defeated in battle and was exiled by Aretas, his ex-father-in-law.

Salome also reportedly decided to join Herod and Herodias in exile rather than be alone. As Salome was passing over a frozen river, the ice broke, and she sank up to her neck and **died**.

Some commentators say Herod and Herodias later committed **suicide**, so lust killed again. Lust can also kill within our lives; it can kill relationships, intimacy, and other things as well.

V. Be led by the **Spirit**.

When we are **not** led by the Spirit, and feelings of guilt begin to take over, the result is embarrassment or self-condemnation.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. NKJV

As Christians, when we experience **guilt** or condemnation, we do not have to stay in that state because Jesus has already paid for our sin on the Cross at Calvary.

We must keep short accounts with the Lord when it comes to our sin.

A true Christian is not going to be disowned by the Lord when we sin, but when we sin, we build **walls** up in our hearts that can negatively affect our relationship with God.

God doesn't change or move; we do.

Malachi 3:6 "For I am the LORD, I do not change; NKJV

So, when we repent, we have a change of mind about our sin, and we head back to God.

1 John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

1 John 3:19 And by this we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our hearts before Him.

1 John 3:20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

1 John 3:21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. NKJV

We said, repentance boils down to one thing: a **U-turn**.

Repentance is when we agree with the Lord about our sinful behavior; we turn from our sin and turn to the Lord instead. It's a **180-degree** turn from sin to God.

When we repent and allow the Spirit to direct us, we will experience healing and **transformation** from the Lord who longs to be in relationship with us.

Repentance clears our conscience and deepens our relationship with the Lord. There's not a thing to regret about that.

VI. Sin after salvation.

Can a true born-again believer sin after salvation?

Even though believers will sin after our spiritual rebirth, the Lord declares us as cleansed and righteous because we are covered by the blood of Christ at salvation.

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. NKJV

There is some confusion amongst believers from the teaching of ***1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins.***

When the Apostle John was writing to believers in ***1 John 1:9*** about confessing our sins, he was speaking of agreeing with the Lord about our sin.

“***Confess***” in ***1 John 1:9*** is the Greek word *homologeō*, which means to **acknowledge**, or *to say the same thing as another, i.e., to agree with, assent* (Outline of Biblical Usage).

Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. NKJV

Forgiveness is the removal of our offense against the Lord.

The Greek word translated as “forgive” means to “send away” or “remove the debt.”

John 1:29 describes the atoning work of Christ as the “***Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.***”

Through receiving forgiveness by placing our faith in Christ’s death and resurrection, people receive a complete pardon.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

Hebrews 9:25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another —

*Hebrews 9:26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
NKJV*

Because Jesus is fully God and fully man, He pardons our past, present, and future sins at the moment we trust Him for salvation.

So, after we have been saved and we sin, why is it important to agree with the Lord that our actions were sinful and for us to repent from those sins?

Allow me to demonstrate this with my son Mitchell. My son Mitchell will never stop being my son. He looks like me, he has my DNA, and there is no doubt he is my son.

If my son Mitchell were to kick me, he would not stop being my son; however, there would be a problem within the relationship because of his actions.

When we sin, we build walls between ourselves and the Lord. The Lord doesn't put up walls; we do.

When we get saved, the Lord tears down the walls of separation between Him and us. By failing to keep short accounts with our sins, we put walls up in our **relationship**.

Ephesians 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Ephesians 2:15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,

Ephesians 2:16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. NKJV

By refusing to keep short accounts with our sin, the enemy begins to accuse and attack us until we repent and tear down the walls between ourselves and the Lord.

Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down." NKJV

Besides the enemy accusing and attacking us, our own consciences will attack us as well.

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

1 Timothy 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. NKJV

Read *Romans 13:1-5*

When we keep short accounts between us and the Lord we have a clear conscience, and we experience the peace of God in our lives.