

Continual Cleansing and Perpetual Forgiveness

John Isaac Edwards

False doctrine is being taught in these words: “The first epistle of John, chapter 1, verse 7 reads: ...but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. The Greek verb for cleanses is present tense, meaning that there is a continual cleansing from sin. Forgiveness is likewise something that is a constant reality; it is a perpetual condition as we walk in the light. To repeat, we do not have to ask God for forgiveness to invoke the cleansing process because we have already been cleansed through a covenant with God. If we have been immersed into Christ, we have put on Christ, and have been justified by our Creator. The propitiation covers all sins: those committed prior to the covenant relationship, sins committed since we believed and were immersed, and sins that will be committed in the future. No sin is excluded” (p. 60). Further, “According to John (1 John 1:7), both sins we are unaware of even sins we commit willfully are covered by the blood of Christ” (p. 61). These quotes are from a book entitled, “A Call to Unity: A Critical Review of Patter-nism and the Command-Example-Inference-Silence Hermeneutic” by Barry L. Perryman, Ph.D.

If forgiveness is a perpetual condition and Christians are continually cleansed from sin without having to ask God for forgiveness...

The Apostles Did Not Know It. After Simon believed and was immersed, he sinned and was told, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity” (Acts 8:20-23). If the doctrine of perpetual forgiveness be true, the Lord failed to inform the apostles of it, for Peter told Simon to repent of his sin and pray to God for forgiveness.

Repentance Is Unnecessary. If forgiveness is a constant reality, then there would be no need to repent of anything. Yet, Simon was told, “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness” (Acts 8:22). The Bible teaches the need for repentance. Jesus said, “...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). Paul preached, “God...now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30). Repentance is a turning from sin unto God as demonstrated by the people of Nineveh when they “repented at the preaching of Jonas” (Matthew 12:41; Jonah 3:10).

Confession Is Needless. If this teaching be true, why did James say, “Confess your faults one to another...” (James 5:16)? Those

who read 1 John 1:7 and teach that the Christian is continually cleansed from sin, without any conditions on his part, fail to read 1 John 1:9 which says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The blood of Christ continues to cleanse our sins as long as we confess our sins. No confession, no forgiveness. It’s just that simple.

Prayer Is Pointless. If we do not need to ask God for forgiveness, I wonder why Simon was told, “...pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (Acts 8:22)? James said to “pray one for another” (James 5:16). Why did he say that, if the doctrine of continual cleansing, without asking God for forgiveness, be true? What would be the point in praying for forgiveness, if “we do not have to ask God for forgiveness”?

Church Discipline Is Done Away. Why did Paul command the Corinthians, “...put away from among yourselves” the fornicator in their midst (1 Corinthians 5)? I thought forgiveness was a perpetual condition and that we are cleansed without asking God for forgiveness. You can toss 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 out the window, if this teaching be true.

The Impossibility of Apostasy Is a Reality. If this teaching be true, then a person could “continue in sin” (Romans 6:1) and be continually cleansed without asking for forgiveness and go to heaven when he dies. One could not sin as to be eternally lost. If not, why not?

Dr. Perryman has written a new prescription for forgiveness. This shows where not holding “fast the pattern of sound words” (2 Timothy 1:13) leads!

God’s Second Law of Pardon

John Isaac Edwards

When a Christian sins (and they do), he receives pardon from God through:

Repentance. When Simon sinned after becoming a Christian, he was told, “Repent...” (Acts 8:22). Repentance is not just for the alien sinner (Acts 2:38), but also for the Christian who sins.

Confession. James said, “Confess your faults one to another...” (James 5:16). 1 John 1:9 records, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins...”

Prayer. Simon was not just told to repent, but “Repent...and pray...” (Acts 8:22). The erring Christian must pray for forgiveness.

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