

WEEK 3: HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE FORGIVEN

We will focus our study this week on the fifth assurance we can have as a believer – the assurance of the forgiveness of sins.

Memory verse for this week: Ephesians 1:7 (Write it out below in your favorite version.)

DAY 1: YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN**LOOKING UPWARD**

1. Are there any sins that are unforgivable? Explain your answer.

LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD**Colossians 1:13-14**

2. As you observe what God has done for us, make note of the two verb phrases used in verse 13. What does the use of these verbs imply?

3. What is the domain of darkness?

4. How do we appropriate redemption and forgiveness?

Colossians 2:13-14

5. What observations do you make from this passage about your status before coming to Christ?

6. What does it mean that we were “dead in our transgressions”?
7. List all that God has done for us concerning our sins according to Colossians 2:13-14.
 - Circle all the verbs. Mark any other words that stand out to you and explain why.

Ephesians 1:5-8

8. List your observations from this passage. Ask the questions what, why, who, how.
(For instance, what did He do? What does it mean that He predestined us?)
9. What characteristics/attributes of God are evident in this passage? Describe Him.
10. Is there a difference between redemption and forgiveness? If so, what?

LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

- Are you struggling with guilt from a past sin? Do you believe that He has forgiven you and covered that sin? Or do you still feel you must “do penance” and “beat yourself up” for a sin in your past? He has paid the ultimate price for all your sins. It is finished, your sins are paid for. You may still “feel” guilty, but walk by faith in God’s Word, not by your feelings. God’s Word says your sins are forgiven! Your feelings don’t change that truth.
- Is there a recurring sin you can’t seem to break free from? Ask the Lord to give you victory over that sin in the power of the Holy Spirit living within you. Be accountable to a friend. Stay away from situations that would tempt you to sin. You may want to meet with a counselor to help you walk through this and break free.
- Write or pray a psalm of thanksgiving to Him for all He has done for you.

DAY 2: THE BASIS OF FORGIVENESS

LOOKING UPWARD

1. On what are you basing your forgiveness? Why?

LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD

2. According to these verses, what is the basis of your forgiveness?

Matthew 26:28

Ephesians 1:7

Hebrews 9:13–14

Hebrews 9:22

Hebrews 10:19

3. Do works play any role in our redemption according to these verses?

4. Why is there no forgiveness without the shedding of blood? Why is blood necessary?

5. As you read Hebrews 10:10-14, answer the following questions:
- a. Verse 10 begins with "By this will ..." Looking back at the context, to what is "this will" referring?
 - b. What does sanctification mean?
 - c. How are we sanctified?
 - d. When does your sanctification begin and why?
6. According to Hebrews 10:12, 18, why is there no need for continual sacrifices for our sins?
7. According to Hebrews 10:19-25, what do we receive and experience as a result of what Jesus has done for us?
8. As a result, how are we to respond (vv. 22-25)?
9. Why would these imperatives be important for us to do?

LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

- Draw near confidently to God today with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.
- How would you evaluate your response to God and others in light of what He has done for you?
- In what areas do you need to improve? How will you go about doing that?
- Are you wavering in any area of your faith? "Hold fast the confession of your hope without wavering."
- What are some practical ways in which you can stimulate someone to love and good deeds this week?
- "He who promised is faithful" (Heb 10:23). Write down ways you have seen God's faithfulness in your life recently. Praise Him.

DAY 3: WHY DO I STILL SIN?

Sometimes we think that as a Christian we should no longer sin, and we get discouraged when we continue to see sin in our lives. The longer I walk with the Lord, the more sin I see in my life – often times, sins that are more subtle –pride, jealousy, envy, insecurity, introspection ... to name a few.

LOOKING UPWARD

1. What exactly is sin?
2. How does Scripture define sin?
3. Why do you still sin as a Christian?

LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD

Galatians 5:16-25

4. What is the root issue of sin? What does that mean?
5. What are the two opposing sides in this struggle?
6. Paul instructed the Galatians in verse 16 to walk by the Spirit. How would you know if you are walking in the Spirit or not?
7. As you look over the deeds of the flesh in verses 19-21, how would you divide them into groups or categories? How are they related?

8. As you look over the fruit of the Spirit in verses 22-23, what do they have in common?

9. In what ways do the fruit of the Spirit differ from the deeds of the flesh?

LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

- How have you seen the two "opponents" battle in your own life?
- Which of the characteristics in verses 19-23 are evident in your life?
- Be honest with God. With what areas of the flesh do you still struggle? Which side is winning the battle in your life – the flesh or the Spirit?

DAY 4: HOW DO I DEAL WITH SIN?

We have established that, as believers, we are forgiven because of Christ's blood that was shed for us. However, as believers, we still sin. So, the question arises, how do I deal with sin? God does not want us to be a slave to sin, but longs for us to be free from sin and its devastating guilt.

LOOKING UPWARD

1. How do you deal with sin in your life?
2. How does it affect your life when you ignore sin and do nothing about it?

LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD

1 John 1:9

3. What exactly does it mean to confess sin?
4. Are we forgiven because we confess? Why or why not?
5. Why do we need to confess sin if we are already forgiven?
6. Does this verse mean we are only forgiven for the sins we are aware of and specifically confess? Explain your answer.
7. Why do some still feel guilty after they confess their sin?

8. How do the following verses affirm that you are forgiven, regardless of your feelings? What stands out to you from each verse?

Isaiah 53:6

Isaiah 1:18

Psalms 103:12

Romans 4:7–8

Romans 8:1

Colossians 2:13

1 John 2:12

Isaiah 43:25

9. What does it mean that God “will not remember your sins”?

LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

- Are there any unconfessed sins in your life today? If so, write them down on a piece of paper. Then prayerfully confess them to God. Write out 1 John 1:9 and Isaiah 43:25 across the paper. Then tear it up and throw it away. Let it be a visual reminder to you that **ALL** your sins are forgiven (past, present, and future). Thank God for His forgiveness.

DAY 5: WHY NOT GO AHEAD AND SIN ALL I WANT?

LOOKING UPWARD

1. Do you lose your salvation when you sin? Explain your answer. (You may need to look back at Week 2 on Assurance of Salvation.)
2. How does sin affect your relationship with God?
3. If you have salvation by faith, and know you have eternal life, why not just go ahead and sin all you want to?

LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD

4. The Bible gives us several reasons why we shouldn't just keep sinning once we are a Christian. The first reason is found in John 14:15: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." Why and how is this true?
5. A second reason we shouldn't just keep sinning once we become a believer is because we will be miserable. Describe the struggle going on within Paul in Romans 7:15-25.
6. What is the solution to this struggle?
7. According to Hebrews 12:6-11, another reason to not continue sinning is because God will discipline you. In what ways does God discipline His children when they sin?
8. Why does God discipline us according to this passage?

9. What other observations can you make from this passage concerning discipline?

LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

- How do you feel when you sin?

- Meditate on Psalm 130. Write out your thoughts from this Psalm. Thank Him for His forgiveness. Don't treat His forgiveness as "cheap grace."