**The Neutralization of Confessed Sin – BD05-01**

Shall we bow in prayer? Our heavenly Father, we ask thee now, as we come into the word, to be our guide. To give us understanding. We pray in Christ’s name, Amen.

This morning we speak about the neutralizing of confessed sin. Very briefly, picking up the story of this, that we have done so far. We have indicated there was a wall that separated man from God. And this wall consisted of several specific blocks. One was the slave market of sin. God removed that block by giving us redemption. Then, we were confronted with the penalty of spiritual death. God removed that one with expiation-our sins were rubbed out through the death of Christ. Then we had the problem of our physical birth, which gave us an old sin nature. God resolved that by regeneration. Then we had a problem being faced with the holiness of God, which consisted of His justice, and of his righteousness. The justice of God was met by propitiation, and the righteousness of God was met by imputation, so that we were given the righteousness of Christ on our behalf. Finally, we have the problem of being in Adam. God handled that by placing us in Christ.

All that remains now between man and God is the Lord Jesus Christ. And all you have to do is cross over the line and accept the fact that this act of reconciliation which is what this is, has been completed on our behalf.

**Function of Confession**

Now, one thing we learned happens when you become a Christian is that you take the old sin nature into the new life with you. All of the low, rotten, dirty things that you did when you were on the other side of the line, you are still fully capable of doing. It doesn’t make one bit of difference that you are a believer. You can still perform all of the functions of sin, just as you did before. Because they’re part of your old sin nature.

Your old sin nature, when it is in control, causes you to be a carnal Christian. And we’ve compared this to a spiritual stall. If you do not recover from this stall, it will be disastrous to your spiritual life. When the Holy Spirit is in control of your life, which means that there is no known unconfessed sin, you are a spiritual Christian. Your old sin nature produces sins, and it produces human good, and God rejects both. He died for our sins on the cross, and he permitted no human good to enter into the payment of that sacrifice.

So confession of works becomes the avenue maintaining our open relationship to God. This is possible, you see, because we are in Christ. Because you’re in Christ, there is no sin that you can commit that will ever take you from the love of God. And there is no sin that God forgot to cover from the cross. And confession of sin immediately brings you back into fellowship.

But there is another problem that has arisen to plague us on this side of the line in salvation. You will remember our diagram with the two circles. This circle is eternal fellowship. We enter this circle from faith in Jesus Christ. This circle here is temporal fellowship; this is the position of a carnal Christian. This is the position of a spiritual Christian.

The moment you’re saved, you enter the inner circle of fellowship with God, which means that the Holy Spirit fills you. This is the filling of the Holy Spirit, here. Out here, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and he’s quenched, because there is sin which you have not confessed. Upon the first sin, we’re taken out. Confession brings us back in.

But here’s where something very strange takes place. Every believer who is his own priest now, and you have a right to represent yourself before God. Every time you sin, to go to Him, and to declare that sin to Him, and the Bible says that He is faithful-He will faithfully and He will justly forgive you your sins. He will do it every time, and He does it because the wall separating you has been removed. And when God forgives a sin, He also forgets it. He says it’s buried in the deepest sea, it’s as far removed as the east is from the west.

And here is the problem that some of you sitting here may have this morning: while God has infinite forgetfulness over sins that you have confessed, you’ve got an infinite “remember-er.” And you sit here remembering the sins that you’ve committed. Right now, you can probably go through your mind and think back to that terrible thing that you did. Right now, you may be sitting here, bugged by some very terrible sin in your recent experience! Now, once sin has been confessed, we are called upon to treat it in the same way that God treats it. And when we don’t, we set up a serious problem in our lives.

**Series Sinning**

Getting an analogy from electricity, here are two lines: a positive and negative line of wire. And we have Christmas tree lights, like this. We put these lights along, and this is called parallel. That means that if any bulb burns out, the rest of them still burn, because the power is coming independent of these cross wires.

But there is another kind of Christmas tree wiring that goes like this. For your source of power. And this is called series wiring. And the current goes to here and lights this light, and then it goes to here and lights this light, and it goes to here and lights this light, and goes to here and lights this light, and one lights the next. And it goes right on down the line.

Now we’re going to talk this morning about “series sinning.” There’s a thing that tears up more Christians than anything else. You know that you’re in Christ, you know the wall has been removed, you know the position you hold, you know what confession of sin does, you know what God offers to do for you. But you have never learned how to avoid series sinning, where you are in effect lighting one sin, a new sin, from an old sin. And this can drive a Christian psychotic. And has. This can drive a Christian to suicide. And has. This can drive a Christian to total uselessness in God’s service-and it has.

**Confession and Forgiveness**

The word “confess **G1843 or G3670**”, I’ll remind you again, means “to cite a case”. This was a legal term in the Greek world. In fact, it says “**to name your sin**”. To cite a case, to name the sin. Now once the sin is named, it’s absolutely impossible for God not to forgive it. The sin has already been judged on the cross, it’s already been paid for, and God must be true to Himself. For He says, if you confess it, **He will faithfully and justly forgive it**.

**G1843** - exomologeō (ex-om-ol-og-eh'-o): (Verb) From G1537 and G3670; to acknowledge or (by implication of assent) agree fully: - confess, profess, promise.

Tense: Future

Voice: Middle

Mood: Indicative

Person: first [I]

Number: Singular

**G3670** - homologeō (hom-ol-og-eh'-o): (Verb) From a compound of the base of G3674 and G3056; to assent, that is, covenant, acknowledge: - con- (pro-) fess, confession is made, give thanks, promise.

Tense: Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Subjunctive

Person: second [you]

Number: Singular

Now God forgets it with his infinite forgetfulness, even though your friends and your wife and your family and your church members may remember it. And how bad the sin is makes no difference, because the grounds of forgiveness is Who and What God is.

Now there’s no other way to get back into this inner circle of fellowship here except through confession of sin. You can’t get in there by asking for it. And this is always a strain, I get more negative reactions when I tell people, “don’t go praying ‘God, give me my sins’”. Because He’s not going to do it. If you want your sins forgiven, you cite them, you name them. You tell God what you did. And you admit that it was sin. You can’t get your sins forgiven by a system of penance; that’s human good. So stop running around trying to do good things to please God. And you cannot get forgiveness by promising to never do it again; that’s the worst insult of all.

Who do you think God is, by getting up and telling Him “God, I promise you I’ll never do this again”? You think you’re going to con Him into it? Your friends know better than that, you don’t think God knows better than that? You may not know better than that, but you’re going to do it again. That’s sincerity, that’s what the sincere crowd goes around doing: “God, if you’ll just clean me this time, and forgive me, I’ll never do it again”.

Now, you can grow out of your area of weakness through Bible doctrine and positive response, but you can’t get out of it by promising yourself out. Confession won’t keep you from sinning, but it will create the condition so that you may grow spiritually to the point where you will lose your taste for that sin. And this is what happens: as you grow spiritually, you outgrow that sin because you lose your taste for it.

Now confession has no merit in it. It’s the same results no matter what your IQ is. And the Bible never adds anything to confess: some of you do. Some of you say confession and start attending church, you’re going to get squared away. Some of you say confess and start coming to prayer meeting and life is going to get right for you. Some of you say confess and start tithing, confess and be sorry. This is a good one: I have more people I can see convincing in the congregation, sometimes their hands are really high up in groups, and they say you really have to be sorry for it, you don’t just confess it.

**Confession and Fellowship**

The Bible doesn’t make any difference how you feel about it. It wants you to tell God what you did was sin. And that’s what it asks: no promises, and it doesn’t ask you to plead. If that bothers you, it’s because you’re not oriented to grace. And this is the greatest thing that God has ever given us, **His grace**. And it is a very difficult thing for people to get oriented to His grace.

Would you turn to Hebrews 12? We want to look at this condition of “Christian out of fellowship”. Hebrews, chapter 12, beginning in verse 12:12 “Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down in the feeble knees.” This word, “wherefore”, means in view of a principle which has been set forth in the immediate context of the preceding verses. And the context tells how God disciplines His children. For example, in Hebrews 12:6, “for whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” When God’s people step out of line, and they sin, then He brings discipline upon them, because He loves them.

**Heb 12:12**  Wherefore **G1352** lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

**G1352** - dio (dee-o'): (Conjunctive Particle) From G1223 and G3739; through which thing, that is, consequently: - for which cause, therefore, wherefore.

**Heb 12:6**  For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth **G3811**, and scourgeth **G3146** every son whom he receiveth.

**G3811** - paideuō (pahee-dyoo'-o): (Verb) From G3816; to train up a child, that is, educate, or (by implication) discipline (by punishment): - chasten (-ise), instruct, learn, teach.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G3146** - mastigoō (mas-tig-o'-o): (Verb) From G3148; to flog (literally or figuratively): - scourge.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

Also, it tells us in this context that once we accept the discipline by confession of sin, the discipline may either stop, or it may continue. But if God continues discipline after we have confessed, then the word says it is because He has changed it into blessing in order to refine us in some way (verse 11).

“Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised by it.” “Those who are exercised by it” means those who respond to it in a positive way, those who receive it as blessing. So you may stop discipline in your life by confession. Or it may continue. But if it does continue, then it is because God is bringing blessing into your life, and afterward you will discover the peaceable fruit of righteousness as the residue of this experience.

**Heb 12:11**  Now no chastening for the present seemeth **G1380** to be joyous, but grievous **G3077**: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth **G591** the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised **G1128** thereby.

**G1380** - dokeō (dok-eh'-o): (Verb) A prolonged form of a primary verb δόκω dokō (used only as an alternate in certain tenses; compare the base of G1166); of the same meaning; to think; by implication to seem (truthfully or uncertainly): - be accounted, (of own) please (-ure), be of reputation, seem (good), suppose, think, thought.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G3077** - lupē (loo'-pay): (Noun) Apparently a primary word; sadness: - grief, grievous, + grudgingly, heaviness, sorrow.

**G591** - apodidōmi (ap-od-eed'-o-mee): (Verb) From G575 and G1325; to give away, that is, up, over, back, etc. (in various applications): - deliver (again), give (again), (re-) pay (-ment be made), perform, recompense, render, requite, restore, reward, sell, yield,

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G1128** - gumnazō (goom-nad'-zo): (Verb) From G1131; to practise naked (in the games), that is, train (figuratively): - exercise.

Tense: Perfect

Voice: Passive

Mood: Participle

Case: Dative (indirect object, "to"; also location "in", "at"; instrument, "with")

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

So the place of fellowship is always a place of blessing. And confession is the idea behind this wherefore. Since blessing comes from confession, and even from discipline, he says, lift up.

Now this word “lift up” is the Greek word “anorthoo.” Now “orthoo” means “to straighten.” Like orthopedics and orthodontist, orthodoxy, and some of those other tongue twisters, it means to get something straight. And what he is saying here is not the idea of giving it straight, but giving it force to get bigger. So he is asking us, and this part on means to do it again. Reinforce, re-strengthen again, to a previous condition. The Greek word is used to rebuild a structure that’s fallen. So the idea here is to restore again the spiritual strength and vigor-to restore to fellowship. The hands which are hanging down.

**Heb 12:12**  Wherefore lift up **G461** the hands which hang down **G3935**, and the feeble knees;

**G461** - anorthoō (an-orth-o'-o): (Verb) From G303 and a derivative of the base of G3717; to straighten up: - lift (set) up, make straight.

Tense: Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Imperative

Person: second [you+]

Number: Plural

**G3935** - pariēmi (par-ee'-ay-mi): (Verb) From G3844 and ίημι hiēmi (to send); to let by, that is, relax: - hang down.

Tense: Perfect

Voice: Passive

Mood: Participle

Case: Accusative (direct object; motion toward; time: "how long")

Number: Plural

Gender: Feminine

Now this was a picture in the ancient world of people who had come to the point that they were too tired to complete more work. The hands were exhausted, so they were hanging down, and the person was no longer productive. And the comparison here is to spiritual inactivity with a Christian who is out of this inner circle; he becomes totally inactive spiritually. He opens his mouth to pray, and who listens to him? Not God. He gives his money in the offering box and he goes out the door, but he’s floating around here in the outer circle of carnality. What reward does he get from his money? Not at all. Nor does God bless in its use of the assembly. He tries to witness to somebody, and what good is his testimony? Not at all. He tries to perform some Christian service, and what blessing or reward does God give? Not at all. You are out of this circle, you are closed down.

Now this is awesome, and at the time I’ve spent in the last two weeks, I’ve seen it on the faces of people-young people, as well as adults, as gradually, the thought would close in on them: “how much of my life is a total fraud and waste? Because I never realized that unless I was here, I was nothing. And I was useless.” And there was nothing for me out there in eternity in the way of reward either.

**Hands Hanging Down**

Every now and then I hear somebody say that I think I’ve gotten to the point where I don’t have to use 1 John 1:9 too often. And you’re a very fortunate person if that’s true, because most of us have to use it pretty frequently. Some of you are probably going to have to use it before the service is over because of the way you feel about something you heard me say. And you’re going to have some ill will toward a likeable guy like myself. And you’re going to have to confess it to the Lord before you can start listening and benefiting. I might have to do the same towards you.

But don’t you ever kid yourself that you’ve come to where you don’t need this daily, on a regular hour by hour basis practically. If confession of sin is a sometime situation with you, then I can tell you friend you are way out here. And you need to go home, and do some thinking through as to how you stand with God, the Holy Spirit and start getting caught up because you’re going to be so disoriented in your thinking that you will not be able to see the truth when you hear it. You will start drawing in all of the false ideas of the world. Don’t forget the calluses that develop on the soul that make us insensitive to the mind of God, and responsive to the mind of the world.

So here you are, hands that are hanging down, and He says lift them up. Now this “lift them,” hands that are hanging down, lift them up-this whole phrase is a synonym for 1 John 1:9. This is a way of saying: “confess.”

Here are some other synonyms. In 1st Corinthians 11:31, we have the same thing described with the words, “judge ourselves.” If we will judge ourselves, we will not be judged. It’s the same thing as 1 John 1:9. Romans 6:13 says if we yield ourselves-anybody every tell you to yield yourself to God?

**1Co 11:31**  For if we would judge **G1252** ourselves, we should not be judged **G2919**.

**G1252** - diakrinō (dee-ak-ree'-no): (Verb) From G1223 and G2919; to separate thoroughly, that is, (literally and reflexively) to withdraw from, or (by implication) oppose; figuratively to discriminate (by implication decide), or (reflexively) hesitate: - contend, make (to) differ (-ence), discern, doubt, judge, be partial, stagger, waver.

Tense: Imperfect

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: first [we]

Number: Plural

**G2919** - krinō (kree'-no): (Verb) Properly to distinguish, that is, decide (mentally or judicially); by implication to try, condemn, punish: - avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

Tense: Imperfect

Voice: Passive

Mood: Indicative

Person: first [we]

Number: Plural

**Rom 6:13**  Neither yield **G3936 (a)** ye your members *as* instruments **G3696** of unrighteousness **G93** unto sin: but yield**G3936 (b)**  yourselves unto God, as those that are alive **G2198** from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

**G3936 (a/b)** - paristēmi (par-is'-tay-mee): (Verb) From G3488 and G2476; to stand beside, that is, (transitively) to exhibit, proffer, (specifically) recommend, (figuratively) substantiate; or (intransitively) to be at hand (or ready), aid: - assist, bring before, command, commend, give presently, present, prove, provide, shew, stand (before, by, here, up, with), yield.

a-Tense: **Present**

a-Voice: Active

a-Mood: Imperative

a-Person: second [you+]

a-Number: Plural

b-Tense: **Aorist**

b-Voice: Active

b-Mood: Imperative

b-Person: second [you+]

b-Number: Plural

**G3696** - hoplon (hop'-lon): (Noun) Probably from the primary word ἕπω hepō(to be busy about); an implement or utensil or tool (literally or figuratively, especially offensive for war): - armour, instrument, weapon**.**

**G93** - adikia (ad-ee-kee'-ah): (Noun) From G94; (legal) injustice (properly the quality, by implication the act); moral wrongfulness (of character, life or act): - iniquity, unjust, unrighteousness, wrong.

**G2198** - zaō (dzah'-o): (Verb) A primary verb; to live (literally or figuratively): - life (-time), (a-) live (-ly), quick.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Participle

Case: Accusative (direct object; motion toward; time: "how long")

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

The way you yield yourself to God is by confessing your sin, so that you’re in here where He can use you. Anybody ever tell you to make Christ, Lord? There are a lot of these high powered Evangelistic organizations that are going around supping up people to make Christ, Lord. And they use words that are meaningless to people. “Anybody ever explain to you how to make Christ Lord in your life?” Sure, you walk out here, you look up in the sky, and you get dreamy-eyed, and you say, “Lord from this day forward, you are going to be Lord in my life.” And there you go, making promises again you know you’re not going to keep and you know you’re not going to be able to produce. And you are in this inner circle because your sins are confessed, and He’s Lord. That’s how you make Him, Lord. That’s when He is controlling. That’s when He is running your life. That’s what it means for Him to be Lord.

So don’t let anybody con you into some imaginary emotional idea in some service, and thereby you have made Him, Lord. So when it says yield in Romans 6:13, the same Greek word is in Romans 12:1 and is translated “present your bodies.” It’s the same idea. And Hebrews 12:13, “we have made straight the paths.” Same thing, restore yourself to fellowship. In Hebrews 12:1 we have “lay aside every weight.” That means restore yourself to fellowship. The weight of sin, in Hebrews 12: 9, “be in subjection to the Father’s Spirit”. That means restore yourself to fellowship.

**Rom 12:1**  I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present **G3936** your bodies **G3696** a living sacrifice **G2378**, holy, acceptable **G2101** unto God, *which is* your reasonable service **G2999**.

**G3936** - paristanō (par-is-tan'-o): (Verb) From G3488 and G2476; to stand beside, that is, (transitively) to exhibit, proffer, (specifically) recommend, (figuratively) substantiate; or (intransitively) to be at hand (or ready), aid: - assist, bring before, command, commend, give presently, present, prove, provide, shew, stand (before, by, here, up, with), yield

Tense: Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Infinitive

**G3696** - hoplon (hop'-lon): See Rom 6:13 above.

**G2378** - thusia (thoo-see'-ah): (Noun) From G2380; sacrifice (the act or the victim, literally or figuratively): - sacrifice.

**G2101** - euarestos (yoo-ar'-es-tos): (Adjective) From G2095 and G701; fully agreeable: - acceptable (-ted), well pleasing.

**G2999** - latreia (lat-ri'-ah): (Noun) From G3000; ministration of God, that is, worship: - (divine) service.

**Heb 12:13**  And make straight **G3717** paths for your feet, lest that which is lame **G5560** be turned out of the way **G1624**; but let it rather be healed.

**G3717** - orthos (or-thos'): (Adjective) Probably from the base of G3735; right (as rising), that is, (perpendicularly) erect (figuratively honest), or (horizontally) level or direct: - straight, upright.

**G5560** - chōlos (kho-los'): (Adjective) Apparently a primary word; “halt”, that is, limping: - cripple, halt, lame.

**G1624** - ektrepō (ek-trep'-o):

From G1537 and the base of G5157; to deflect, that is, turn away (literally or figuratively): - avoid, turn (aside, out of the way).

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Passive

Mood: Subjunctive

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**Heb 12:1**  Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside **G659** every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset **G2139** *us,* and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

**G659** - apotithēmi (ap-ot-eeth'-ay-mee): (Verb) From G575 and G5087; to put away (literally or figuratively): - cast off, lay apart (aside, down), put away (off).

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Middle

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

**G2139** - euperistatos (yoo-per-is'-tat-os): (Adjective) From G2095 and a derivative of a presumed compound of G4012 and G2476; well standing around, that is, (a competitor) thwarting (a racer) in every direction (figuratively of sin in general): - which doth so easily beset.

**Heb 12:9**  Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected **G3810** *us,* and we gave *them* reverence **G1788**: shall we not much rather be in subjection **G5293** unto the Father of spirits, and live?

**G3810** - paideutēs (pahee-dyoo-tace'): (Noun) From G3811; a trainer, that is, teacher or (by implication) discipliner: - which corrected, instructor.

**G1788** - entrepō (en-trep'-o): (Verb) From G1722 and the base of G5157; to invert, that is, (figuratively and reflexively) in a good sense, to respect; or in a bad one, to confound: - regard, (give) reverence, shame.

Tense: Imperfect

Voice: Middle

Mood: Indicative

Person: first [we]

Number: Plural

**G5293** - hupotassō (hoop-ot-as'-so): (Verb) From G5259 and G5021; to subordinate; reflexively to obey: - be under obedience (obedient), put under, subdue unto, (be, make) subject (to, unto), be (put) in subjection (to, under), submit self unto.

Tense: second Future

Voice: Passive

Mood: Indicative

Person: first [we]

Number: Plural

Now it says about these hands, to lift up these hands, you understand that this is not literal. This is an analogy, and every now in the tongues crowds you walk into church, everybody is up there waving their hands, like they don’t know where the room is, they want to go do something. This is not what this scripture means. So get over this notion, and this hypocrisy, and this fraud, which is perpetrated on people who are ignorant of Bible doctrine.

When he says “lift up your hands”, he’s using this as an analogy of hands that have become useless because they’ve lost their strength, they’ve lost their capacity to work, and you lift them up in the context here by restoring yourself to fellowship through the confession of sin. Then your hands become useful once more in the Lord’s service.

And the same thing for your knees. Feeble knees. In Hebrews 12:1, we’re told to run the race with patience that is set before us. And you can’t run a good race with feeble knees; confession makes the knees strong. The next verse, Hebrews 12:13, is a call for restoration, make straight paths for your feet. That means to make straight wheel tracks, to remain in fellowship in order to travel right.

And that’s what divine discipline is for, it’s to motivate us to restore ourselves to fellowship and to the production of divine good.

**The Purpose of God**

What’s the purpose? Make straight wheel tracks for your feet, less that is laid be turned out of the way. So that **if you remain spiritually lame it will cause you trouble in relationship to God’s plan for your life**.

So a Christian has to turn to the center circle before God’s plan starts functioning in his life again. Now I don’t know how long maybe you’ve been out of that inner circle. But until you get back in it, you are not functioning under the plan of God for your life, and that’s frightening.

When you know that there’s a perfect guideline in the hand of God that functions automatically through your mentality and your emotions and your feelings; when you are phased in with God, and then to think of going it on your own and making decisions for your life. Deciding who you are going to marry, deciding what courses you are going to take in school, deciding what profession you are going to follow in life, deciding where you’re going to spend your vacation, deciding whether or not you’re going to work in Bible School or not, or summer camp or not. **Every decision you make-it’s your business decisions**, it’s frightening to think that you would make those when you could be phased in and tied in to the thinking of God.

Instead you go it alone. Now that’s what He says, “make your wheels straight.” **You follow straight tracks so that you will not be turned out of the way, out of the plan of God.**

**Sin and Restoration**

Now it’s volition that takes you into sin, and it’s deciding to confess your own volition that brings you back in. And this turned out of the way, by the way, means: to swerve. Just to make a sudden, jerking swerve. And he calls upon us to be healed, which literally means to be restored, back here into this inner circle.

And now we come to the point of the morning. This restoration can be frustrated by you, the believer. Notice in verses Hebrews 12: 14 and 15, “Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord looking diligently. Lest any man fail of the Grace of God, lest any root of bitterness bringing up trouble you, and by it many be defiled.”

**Heb 12:14**  Follow peace with all *men,* and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

**Heb 12:15**  Looking diligently **G1983** lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness **G4088** springing up trouble **G1776** *you,* and thereby many be defiled **G3392**;

**G1983** - episkopeō (p-ee-skop-eh'-o): (Verb) From G1909 and G4648; to oversee; by implication to beware: - look diligently, take the oversight.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

G4088 - pikria (pik-ree'-ah): (Noun) From G4089; acridity (especially poison), literally or figuratively: - bitterness.

**G1776** - enochleō (en-okh-leh'-o)(verb) From G1722 and G3791; to crowd in, that is, (figuratively) to annoy: - trouble.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Subjunctive

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G3392** - miainō (me-ah'ee-no): (Verb) Perhaps a primary verb; to sully or taint, that is, contaminate (ceremonially or morally): - defile.

Tense: Aorist

Voice: Passive

Mood: Subjunctive

Person: third [they]

Number: Plural

Now the effect to confession of sin is to wipe out the sin, and to bring you back into Fellowship with the Lord. But, it is possible for you to go to series sinning, having confessed the sin. Now God says, “I’m through with it. I’ve canceled it out.” But you are not through with it.

Perhaps the discipline continues. And what do you do? You get bitter toward God because the discipline is continuing, and immediately you have lit another light in the chain of sin.

Or perhaps you remember the sin, and something-times goes by, and something happens in your life, and you say, “Oh, I know why this trouble is here. Years ago I did this, and now God is doing this to me. Years ago, I had an abortion. Years ago, I was immoral. Years ago, I stole this thing. Years ago, I said this monstrous lie, I slandered this person. And now God is bringing this upon me.”

Now look what you’re saying. God says, “If you confess your sins, I will forgive.” The Bible says that what is forgiven is forgotten-it is totally removed. And you are looking into the face of God in a blasphemous way and telling Him He still remembers what He says He forgave. And you’re lighting a sin from an old sin. And consequently, you’ve jumped right back out of this inner circle, you’re right back into sin.

And there are Christians who are constantly series sinning. They never get to the point where they settle down into this inner circle for any length of time, because they don’t know how to forget sin as God has forgotten it.

**Series Sinning-Bitterness**

In this context, we have the example of bitterness. The mental attitude sin of bitterness. Bitter, because you did not neutralize the sin that you confessed. And consequently, the problems are mounting for you.

There are several ways by which you can run sins in a pattern in your life. Let’s look at a few. These almost become habits that we have to change.

First is the way of bitterness, Hebrews 12:15. **Bitterness means that you have a sin that involves someone else, either God or people**. You’re bitter over someone for some reason. You’re bitter over the fact that discipline is continuing after confession, because your mental attitude is such that you’re out of fellowship with God. But what bitterness does is start off with bitterness, now you’re out of fellowship. **Bitterness leads to vindictiveness**.

Now you’re not only bitter, but you create another mental attitude sin. You have a desire to get even. That leads to an unforgiving spirit. Now you’ve added another sin in the chain. And the result is that this leads to antagonism.

This antagonism can be expressed in two ways: by opening up in **hostility**, or by **withdrawal-isolation** from someone**.** Finally, the antagonism leads to revenge tactics**.** And you proceed to get revenge. Now your revenge may take the form of your tongue. And so you gossip, and slander, and judge-another series of sins.

Or your revenge may take the form of open sins. So you may socially ostracize somebody. You may find out what hurts that person, and that’s what you do. You find what bugs that person, and that’s what you do. The result is that the Christian becomes a monster, self-willed. And when this begins to move in on you—because it does, you’re so far out of fellowship that you begin to find substitutes in your life for real relationships to God. Some people go to booze, some people go to tongues, both of which give you a bad hangover. And both of which are substitutes for a true relationship with God, the Holy Spirit.

You may follow this chain reaction of sitting through bitterness because of something you did not neutralize in a sin you have confessed. Someone has done something to you, or you reacted in a way that was wrong, and you confessed it, and instead of forgetting it and neutralizing it, you continued with the bitterness of the experience. And you lead down the chain.

**Series Sinning-Guilt**

Another way is guilt association; we’ve been talking about that a little bit, guilt association. Now guilt association affects your soul. In your self awareness, you are conscious of yourself, and you have the conviction that there is a sin that is forgiven, but is standing in your way. Your mind remembers the sin which has been forgiven, but you associate it to troubles that come to you later. Your emotions are depressed because you have feelings of guilt. Your will, you’re seeking to make up for things … that God is holding against you. Your conscience is ill at ease because it violates the values and standards that you have. Now, all this adds up to a guilt complex.

See, this is how guilt becomes a complex, because it affects the various facets of your soul. And since all the soul is infected, a person can’t enjoy anything in life. Because what you’re doing is waiting for the next blow to follow. You know that anything that comes into your life, you’re sure that boy, something is going to hit me. That sin is still there, you told God that “what I did was wrong”, but now He’s going to bring this judgment, this burden, this into my life. And so you can’t enjoy a thing, because you’re living under a guilt complex and a guilt complex is a very grievous sin. It’ll keep you so far out of that inner circle, you’ll never get back in.

This kind of a person is always off-balance because of these mental-attitude sins, and he may even go psychotic. Do you see, this is why when you go to a psychiatrist, and people are mentally off-balance, they want to know what’s bugging you down inside. They call that a guilt complex, and the psychiatrist tries to get at your guilt complex. What does he want to do? He wants to move it, because he knows that nobody can live-God never made you to live-with the guilt complex, or with inner tensions of failure. And so the psychiatrist says, “well, let’s try drugs, let’s try shock treatment. Let’s try chemical reorganizations of your structure.”

But the Word of God says “**if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness**.” And then if we neutralize that sin, as Philippians 3 says, “**forgetting the things which are behind, and pressing on toward the mark and the prize in Christ Jesus**.”

**Php 3:13**  Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended**G2638**: but *this* one thing *I do,* forgetting **G1950** those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

**G2638** - katalambanō (kat-al-am-ban'-o): (Verb) From G2596 and G1983; to take eagerly, that is, seize, possess, etc. (literally or figuratively): - apprehend, attain, come upon, comprehend, find, obtain, perceive, (over-) take.

Tense: Perfect

Voice: Active

Mood: Infinitive

**G1950** - epilanthanomai (ep-ee-lan-than'-om-ahee): (Verb) Middle voice from G1909 and G2990; to lose out of mind; by implication to neglect: - (be) forget (-ful of).

Tense: Present

Voice: middle or passive deponent

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Singular

Gender: Masculine

You forget the paths that you go on, then you have no guilt complexes. Then, there is nothing eating away at the facets of your soul.

But if you don’t, you’ll build yourself a real good case, and it may be more than your physical structure can stand.

**Series Sinning-Public Confession**

And there’s another way by which you can build, which you can have series sinning. And that’s public confession. Public confession is an attempt to ease your guilt complex again.

We have today a very popular thing called group therapy, where people get together-it’s an old thing-people get together and they sound off on their most vile sins to one another.

And this is done to relieve their guilt complex, but it doesn’t work. Naming your sins in public makes you a gossip about yourself. And if you’re itching to get up here in order to confess to the believers your sins, it will result in you being a gossip about yourself and the result will be it will cause division among the people of God. And it will cause them to sin, and anyone that you mention in the process of your confession will be slandered. And nobody can forgive you but God, because you’re your own priest. Therefore, telling it to other people is disastrous to them and to yourself.

Years ago after the close of a service, we were singing the closing hymn, and I’m not in the habit of giving some big invitation for people to cop out with a public move in order to make up for their ignorance of doctrine. And as we started to sing this first verse, a man moved out of his seat and down the aisle, and in tears came down the aisle, all broken up. I had no idea what it was that had moved him in the service, but something had brought a convicting spirit, the Spirit of God for sin in his life. And he came up and said, “I’ve been such a sinner, I must confess.” I said, “Not here, you don’t. Sit down.”

And there are people every now and then that want to get up, and they want to ease their guilt complexes by telling us all about the things that are wrong with them. And this is vicarious sinning, and there are some people who like to sit around listening to other people’s sins because they get a kick out of it. That’s the same ones that go to the dirty movies, because they get a vicarious kick out of it.

Now you can light all series of sins if you go mouthing off to other people about your sins, so keep them to yourself, and tell them to God, who is the One who could do something about it, and you don’t have any ground for guilt complexes then.

**Series Sinning-Judgment of Intent**

And there’s another way of lighting a series of sins, and that is by taking God’s place in judging, trying to pass judgment on the motives of people, trying to condemn them, or hurt them, or to discipline them. So you judge somebody, you don’t like the clothes he wears, you don’t like the cosmetics she wears, you don’t like the person’s personality, you don’t like his mannerisms. Well, you’re not the judge of that. The only cases you have to judge are what the Bible calls “open sins”.

The principle with Christianity that a lot of Christians have not yet learned is “**live and let live**.” And we as Christians have not learned how to mind our own business yet, and proceed to be our own priests, and to let God do the judging that needs to be done.

Now I want to tell you something about those of you who might be trying to be the keepers of, and paragons of, the virtues of righteousness, that you play a very hazardous game. Because here’s what happens: you brings judgment upon a person’s motives, for whatever reason, and that’s a mental attitude sin. **The Bible forbids you to judge people’s motives**. And consequently, you bring misery and discipline upon yourself. That’s discipline number one.

Discipline number two is that this usually leads to open sin, because you start gossiping, you start telling people about it, you start discussing it with somebody, if no more than at home. And now you’ve entered sin number two; now you’re under discipline for sin number one, that you judge, and you’re now under sin for discipline number two, that you’ve compounded it by openly speaking about it.

And here’s the stinger, because there’s a third one in that; that is, the very sins that you have named, whether they be true of the person or not true. And you see, the sad part about this, if you missed the boat, and what you say is not true about that person at all, then you have really brought unnecessary trouble on your head. But whether what you say is true or not true, that sin that you’ve mentioned has a discipline in the eyes of God. In Matthew 7:2 tells us something very fascinating about what happens to the discipline that you name, of the sin that you name, that you gossip about concerning other believers: “for with what judgment he judge, that shall he be judged. And with what measure it shall be measured, to you again that shall be measured to you” is what the Greek says.

**Mat 7:2**  For with what judgment **G2917** ye judge,**G2919** ye shall be judged: **G2919**  ye judge **G2919**, ye shall be judged **G2919**: and with what measure **G3358** ye mete, it shall be measured **G488** to you again.

**G2917** - krima (kree'-mah): (Noun) From G2919; a decision (the function or the effect, for or against [“crime”]): - avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, + go to law, judgment.

**G2919** - krinō (kree'-no): (Verb) Properly to distinguish, that is, decide (mentally or judicially); by implication to try, condemn, punish: - avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: second [you+]

Number: Plural

**G3358** - metron (met'-ron): (Noun) An apparently primary word; a measure (“metre”), literally or figuratively; by implication a limited portion (degree): - measure.

**G488** - antimetreō (an-tee-met-reh'-o): (Verb) From G473 and G3354; to mete in return: - measure again.

Tense: Future

Voice: Passive

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

And here you have an amazing statement in the Word of God, that’s in the way that you judge, and the sins that you judge people for, with that measure of discipline you will receive.

So here’s somebody who may be guilty or not guilty, and you presume to judge. So you’ve got mental attitude sin. You’ve begun to make an overt gossip of it, you’ve added more sin and discipline, and then you’ve added a third layer of discipline because God says “I’m going to take the discipline that is deserving for that sin, whether that person is guilty of it or not, and I will lay it upon your own shoulders.”

So how do you like that? So cause yourself a lot of trouble, running around telling other people about the sins of other people, and you’re taking their discipline on your shoulders, as well as the discipline that they get, because that’s exactly what Matthew 7:2 means.

**Series Sinning-Sharing Grievances**

And there’s another way of lighting a series of sins that forever keep you out of the inner circle, even though you have confessed: that is, the way of discussing your grievances with outside parties. You discuss your problem with somebody else outside. Now, you do this to gain their sympathy; you do this to gain the support of your views; you’re trying to build your happiness on somebody else’s unhappiness. And what happens is that you lead a bunch of Christians into scheming. And there’s nothing more loathsome than a bunch of maneuvering, scheming Christians in the local church.

Now, you start going to somebody else with your propositions of insight, and this is what you do: You talk to somebody who says … “live and let live.” Then you get mad at them. Your anger rises at them.

How come you’re grievous? Why aren’t you saying the same things I’m saying? And they don’t want to share the discipline that you’re bringing on yourself. And another way, one more, to series of sinning is the way of blaming someone else. You place responsibilities on your own sin on another person. You’re in this situation because somebody else caused you to be there. And so you set up a nice root of bitterness for you to set up a nice chain reaction for your sins.

**Series Sinning-Pseudo-Love**

And the final way of lighting a series of sins is the way of developing imitation pseudo-love. When you have this mental attitude of bitterness, or any of these mental attitude sins, you distort love toward God, toward individual of the opposite sex, and towards your friends. You can’t respond with true mental attitude love, which is love free of ill will mind, because you don’t have a relaxed mind.

And you’re also overly sensitive. If somebody doesn’t pay attention to you, you’re hurt. If somebody doesn’t thank you for something that you did that was really fine, you’re hurt. If somebody is a little preoccupied Sunday morning after church, or just a little tired and doesn’t feel like talking and they don’t talk to you, you’re hurt. And you have a pseudo-love. And it shows in your sensitivity.

**How to Stop Series Sinning**

Now, series-sinning can be stopped. It’s stopped by confession: God forgives, and when mental attitude sins come, you can confess them before they become open sins. But the ultimate answer, you see, is to grow spiritually.

We’re going to be talking in the very near future about these Sunday mornings about what it means to be spiritually mature. Do you know what it means to reflect the glory of God? I’m getting very tired of how many words I hear form the Word of God that are precious words that are meaningless symbols in the mouths of preachers and the ears of Christians.

But to reflect the glory of God means something very specific that **you can just put your finger on and say “I reflect the glory of God/I don’t reflect it”-to be light in Christ**. Do you know what that means? That’s a real nice phrase. We’re going to go over some very, very specific facets that make up spiritual maturity. And when we’re through, if you’ve listened and you paid attention, you’re going to know how you stand. And the result will be your light can be revolutionized in the matter of your spiritual growth and development. Because if you have this, you’ll not be inclined to series sin. You’ll not be inclined to developing guilt complexes. You’ll believe God, and you’ll forget it the way He does, and you’ll go on.

Anybody ever give you the cliché, “if you’ve got a problem, just put it into the Lord’s hands”? Do you know what that means? You know what it means to put a problem into the Lord’s hands? Isn’t that a sweet phrase? And just about nobody here this morning could say just what that means, except a flowery little idea that floats around in our minds.

But there’s a very definite way by which you can put things into the Lord’s hands; we’re going to learn how to do it. And it is more than words, and it is more than a cliché; it takes some Bible doctrine understanding, and it takes some positive volition. And you’re not going to- and you and I aren’t going to know how to do anything and place anything into God’s hands **until we know something about the Word of Truth.**

**Review**

So here’s what we’ve said this morning: while the wall has been removed, while we now stand in a perfect relationship in Christ, while sin-the old sin natures comes to us in our Christian life, we can control this thing and we can say no to it. But when we do say yes, our confession restores us to full standing with God. He has covered every sin, He forgets, and there is no ground for complexes. If you are forever going back to something that you’ve done that you’ve confessed and pretend that God still remembers it and you start lighting sins from that, and go down the series, you will never stay in that inner circle of fellowship, and your light will someday, when you stand in heaven, prove to have been a hopeless, empty, hollow fraud. You could do that if you want to. Or you can enter the grace of God, and get oriented to grace, and say “God, I thank you for what you’ve done”-and move on from there.

Our Father, we do thank Thee, that Thou art the God of all mercy, and that Thy grace has been exercised on our behalf. We pray that Thou will take the words of Scripture and give us new conviction and deeper understanding that Thou art a God whose word is reliable. And when you say we are forgiven, and it’s forgotten, it is forgiven and it is forgotten. Now our God, if there is someone here this morning who, down to the depths of his being, has a guilt complex over something that’s happened in the past, perhaps something it is even difficult to put the finger on, we pray that Thou will alert them to that problem. We pray that each of us would make the confession even now that needs to be made: we have been guilty of lighting one sin in a series to another. And we pray that Thou wilt open our hearts to confess this-confess the sin of guilt complexes and to remove all barriers between ourselves and Thee. We want the Lord Jesus Christ to be Lord in our lives, and only as we move into that inner circle of temporal fellowship can this be true. So we pray, our God, the Word of God will bear its fruit this morning in our lives for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971

Annotated Hebrew and Greek words and morphology by Robert Jameson (pupil of Berean Memorial Christian School and member of Berean Memorial Church).