

# ONLINE 2

## FORGIVEN AND FREE: GETTING RID OF GUILT

We all make mistakes in our friendships. We need to face our mistakes and put things right to keep our relationships healthy. If we want to enjoy God's friendship all day, every day, we need to know how to sort things out when they go wrong.

Close your eyes, and imagine you're looking at God.

How do you think he feels about you right now?

When you become aware that you've done something wrong, how do you deal with it?

1 PETER 3 v 18

Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

Did Jesus' death cover sins

- (i) before the cross?
- (ii) from the cross until today?
- (iii) from today until he returns?

If Jesus has already forgiven our sins past, present and future, why do we still need to confess them?

When we receive Jesus into our life we become a child of God. This is a permanent, secure relationship. God doesn't stop being our father, but sin messes up our daily friendship with him.

### OUR RELATIONSHIP AS GOD'S CHILDREN

Established once for all  
Permanent reality  
We can't mess it up

### OUR DAILY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

Needs to be maintained  
Moment by moment  
Blocked when we sin

The effects of sin and guilt are extremely destructive in the Christian life. They undermine our ability to enjoy God's love and to trust him, and we turn back to our own efforts and resources. Through Jesus, God has provided a way to set us free from both sin and guilt, so we can enjoy his love and forgiveness continually. In the next section we'll look at how to put things right when we mess up.

### JOHN 3 v 19-20

Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed

### 1 JOHN 1 v 5-10

5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

How is John using the metaphor of light and darkness here?

What does light do?

Why do we hide from the light?

What does it mean to walk in darkness?

How does this affect our fellowship with God?

What does it mean to walk in the light?

How is this related to our fellowship with one another?

How often do you need to confess your sins to God?

How can we be sure we're forgiven?

What is John saying about God in v5?

What does God promise in v7?

How does "walking in darkness" affect our relationship with ourselves? What are the implications?

What is God's promise in v9? What is the condition?

Without showing others, ask God now to make you aware of anything wrong between you and him, and write down the specific things he shows you. The devil tries to make us guilty with general accusations (e.g. you're selfish) and we need to reject what he says. When the Spirit convicts us of sin he's always specific (e.g. in this specific situation you had a selfish attitude), so confession needs to be specific. Give him time to show you everything in your life that's not right with him. It's important to agree with God's way of seeing us. Confession means agreeing with what God says:

- Agreeing with him when he tells us what we have done wrong.
- Agreeing with him that what Jesus did on the cross was enough to pay for our sin completely.
- Trusting that God will continue to help us change and become more like him as we turn away from our sin.

When you've finished your list, write 1 JOHN 1v9 all over it. Thank God for his forgiveness and destroy the list. You may also need to put things right with another person if you've wronged them. After you've confessed your sins, remember that any guilt you still feel comes from the devil so feel free to reject it. (PSALM 103v12, PSALM 32v5).

Confession is about experiencing friendship with God because of the forgiveness that was paid for 2,000 years ago on the cross. It is already yours. It is not our act of confession that makes us clean, but what Jesus did for us. By confessing our sin as soon as we become aware of it we can experience God's love and forgiveness continually.