**CONFESS SINS, WHO SHOULD?**

We will briefly look at one use of the word “confess”. It is found in two of Israel’s tribulation epistles, written to Israel, by two of Israel’s twelve apostles.

**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.

Don’t miss the pronouns in that verse, and to whom those pronouns refer.

**James 5:16** Confess your faults one to another,

and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man

availeth much.

This use of the word “confess” means to admit something, to own up to something, to acknowledge. After we briefly discuss this first meaning of the word “Confess”, we will consider in more depth this other meaning, to “declare one’s religious faith”.

Let’s first look at the use of “confess” in **First John 1:9** above, for it is very telling of the differences in God’s dispensing of salvation and forgiveness to different people groups for God’s higher purposes, that He made these advances in revelation as you go along through history. And the people groups ARE different, as seen in **Leviticus 20:26**.

**Leviticus 20:26** And ye shall be holy unto me:

for I the LORD am holy,

and have severed you from other people,

that ye should be mine.

That means that the people God was speaking to had to be different from the rest of the people by being holy. Let’s look at:

**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.

If you are familiar with studying to be approved and not ashamed, It rings a bell, raises a red flag. What “unrighteousness” do those have who have been imputed, or accredited the “righteousness of God”? There is a conflict or contradiction there.

If John was writing that to us here today, then it would be an error of self-contradiction.

There are no errors in the King James Version of the Holy Bible. If there were errors in the Bible, then you could not trust it to show you the way to be saved today from being dead in trespasses and sins. But the King James Bible is pure and can be trusted to tell the truth about your eternity, and where you will spend eternity, based on your choice of believing the gospel that God has offered you, or dispensed to you. The apparent self-contradiction is that **First John 1:9** says that our sins are forgiven, **IF** we confess our sins.

There are a couple things to notice in **First John 1:9**. The first thing to ascertain is ‘who is the “we”’ in **First John 1:9**? Is First John spoken to us? The other thing to ascertain is whether God has placed us Gentiles under **works** and **conditions** that He requires us to fulfill before He saves us? It was not until after **Acts 9:5** that Christ began revealing to Paul for us the gospel of our salvation for today. Study Paul’s thirteen epistles of Romans through Philemon to find out if the gospel that Christ dispensed through Paul ever required fulfilling any conditions other than to believe what Christ said in the gospel of Christ/gospel of the grace of God.

However, **Ephesians 1:7** (through **1:15**) says to those who are now already saved (**1:12**, **15**), that they already have forgiveness of sins (**1:7**). Those who are saved in this dispensing of God’s salvation are saved by believing that “Christ died for our sins”, was buried, and rose again the third day. Also, the Bible says that we are saved by following the way that Paul got saved.

**1 Corinthians 11:1**  ¶Be ye followers of me,

**even as I also am** of Christ.

**1 Timothy 1:16**  Howbeit for this cause

I obtained mercy, that **in me first**

Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering,

for **a pattern** to them which should

**hereafter** believe on him to life everlasting.

Since Paul was an unforgivable sinner having sinned Israel’s unforgivable sin, how could he be saved? How was he saved? Paull’s sins could not be merely overlooked, or hidden, or even excused. The righteous judgment against Paul’s sin had to be executed, just as the righteous judgment against Adam’s sin had to be executed upon the bearer of the animal skin with which God clothed Adam. In the same way, God’s righteous judgment against Paul’s unforgivable sin was carried out on Jesus Christ on the cross. Christ stepped in between God’s wrath, and us, the objects of God’s grace who believe the gospel of the grace of God.

So, how are we to follow Christ’s pattern shown in Paul first? Paul told us that he **received** to himself the gospel of Christ that he **believed** to be true.

**1 Corinthians 15:3**  For I delivered unto you first of all

that which **I also RECEIVED**, how that

Christ died **for our sins** according to the scriptures;

Yes, he believed the gospel of salvation was true. But, he also believed that it was true **in his case**, true **for his situation**, and true **for himself**. In other words, Paul “RECEIVED how that Christ died for” Paul’s sins. As we saw in **First Corinthians 11:1**, we are to follow Christ in the way that Paul followed Christ. So, like Paul, each of us needs to admit that ‘Christ died for **my sins**’ as part of the “Christ died for **our sins**’

Among other things, by including **my sins** as part of “**our sins**” in “**Christ died for our sins**” we find that right there within the gospel of Christ is a **CONFESSION** that I have sins that I can’t fix, and the Saviour said that he fixed them all, He died for them, and I received that salvation, justification, forgiveness, and quickening. Look at the wording of **Ephesians 1:7** to gospel believers.

**Ephesians 1:7** In whom

**WE HAVE** REDEMPTION through his blood,

the **FORGIVENESS** of sins,

And that verb carries over. (**WE HAVE THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS**)

according to the riches of his grace;

It is **not** according to my behavior. Did you get that? It’s “according to the riches of his grace”.

Regarding the apparent self-contradiction between First John 1:9, and Ephesians 1:7, if we keep the context in mind, there is no self-contradiction. The thing to look at here is the pronoun “we”. We must identify the difference in the pronoun “we” in **First John 1:9**, from the pronoun “we” in **Ephesians 1:7**. The group that John wrote to in First John was called the “circumcision”, and in **Galatians 2:9**, John pledged to go to (including to write to) only the circumcision, that was believing Israel, the small part of Israel that believed. Look at what **Paul** wrote in Galatians 2:9.

**Galatians 2:9**  And when James, Cephas, and John,

who seemed to be pillars,

perceived the grace that was given unto me,

they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship;

that **WE SHOULD GO UNTO THE HEATHEN**,

and **THEY UNTO THE CIRCUMCISION**.

“**They unto the circumcision**” designates John’s authorized audience. You will find that those Hebrew tribulation epistles from Hebrews through Revelation were written only by those from the circumcision group. Since John was party to that **Galatians 2:9** agreement, we know that he limited his writing to the circumcision, not to us.That also means that John wrote his epistle of **First John**, to the circumcision, not to us in the uncircumcision.

However, the group that Paul wrote to in **Ephesians 1:7**, and in all of Romans through Philemon, was the heathen, the **UN**circumcision, us Gentiles, called the heathen in **Galatians 2;9.**.

**Galatians 2:9**  … they gave to me and Barnabas

the right hands of fellowship;

That **we should go unto THE HEATHEN**,

Only Paul is the apostle **OF THE GENTILES** (**Romans 11:13**), the minister of Jesus Christ **TO THE GENTILES** (**Romans 15:16**). Only Paul writes to us Gentiles, the uncircumcision, the heathen,

**Ephesians 3:1**¶For this cause I Paul,

the prisoner of Jesus Christ **FOR YOU GENTILES**,

To whom does Paul write? He is writing to the Gentiles, the uncircumcision, the heathen.

**Romans 11:13**  For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as

I am the apostle of the Gentiles,

I magnify mine office:

**“I speak to you Gentiles”.** In His earthly ministry, we see over and over that Christ was NOT sent to Gentiles. He was sent to the circumcision to confirm the promises.That was all before Christ’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension back to heaven, from where he revealed to us through Paul, His new pattern of saving people.

Only Paul is the apostle of the Gentiles, the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

**Romans 15:16**  That I should be

the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles,

ministering the gospel of God,

that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable,

being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

The difference between John’s forgiveness instructions to Israel, and Paul’s forgiveness instructions to us Gentiles proves that God dispensed to us different instructions than He dispensed to Israel. There was a difference. Things that are different, are NOT the same. If you do not include the differences in the dispensings, you will not be able to understand how God is operating today, or what your conditions you are under. God is God and He sets the rules and conditions.

Those two dispensations have different forgiveness instructions, different salvation instructions, and so, different gospels. **Now that** we see that God sent different forgiveness instructions to us Gentiles than He sent Israel, we can also see that John’s instructions to Israel are perfectly in line with the rest of the Bible’s instructions to Israel. Israel’s acceptance with God was conditional. They had to have faith. We have to have faith. But, Israel had to have faith that produced good works. We have to have faith in the gospel of the grace of God, without trusting in our own works at all.

If you examine Israel’s faith hall of fame, **Hebrews chapter 11**, there are about 29 incidents of faith mentioned. That is a high concentration of faith incidents.mentioned in one place. But, as you go through the same verses, you find 74 works that their faith produced. That is more than twice as many mentions of **works** as mentions of **faith** that produced those good works. We can see much evidence that Israel not only was to do good works, but that Israel was to have faith that produced those good works. Here are a list of verses that emphasize that fact: **Matthew 6:15, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 10:22, Matthew 23:1-3, Matthew 24:13, Mark 16:16, John 1:12, Acts 2:38, Acts 10:35, Acts 21:20, Hebrews 10:26-39, James 1:22-27, James 2:10-26, First John 2:17, Revelation 2:26.**

However, throughout Paul’s epistles to us Gentiles, his instructions are consistent that we must believe the gospel, NOT ADDING WORKS to our trust in God, that He will graciously save us through our faith in the blood of the cross since Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. We find the guarantee of that in God’s word, in:

1 Corinthians 15:1  ¶Moreover, brethren,

I declare unto you

the gospel which I preached unto you,

So, Paul said he is going to declare unto them a gospel, the same gospel he preached to them when he was there with them in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 15:1  ¶Moreover, brethren,

I declare unto you

the gospel which I preached unto you,

which also ye have **RECEIVED**,

Paul acknowledged that they have “received” that gospel, not just believing in vain that it is true, but receiving it, applied to their need of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:1  … the gospel which I preached unto you,

which also ye have **received**,

and wherein ye **STAND**;

By telling them, “wherein ye stand”, Paul is reminding them of their new standing with God, their new position of being “in Christ”.

1 Corinthians 15:2  By which also

ye are **SAVED**,

So, Paul is going to declare the gospel of salvation that “saved” those who believed it in Corinth. Take notice that verse 2 is not talking about some wrested, private interpretation. Paul is **NOT** saying, now “ye are saved”, but at some time in the future, you might not be saved if you believed in vain. Paul is saying you are saved in truth, not saved in vain. Paul is **NOT** saying to be careful to never let Paul’s gospel slip out of your consciousness. Paul **is** **NOT** saying that becoming eternally saved is by keeping in memory what James, Cephas, or John preached. Then “ye have believed in vain”.

You’re saved if you keep in memory what Paul preached, not what Peter preached. It is vain to believe **James 2:24** as if it was written to you, or about you. Believe the Hebrew epistles, but believe them to be written to whom they claim to be written, the circumcision. James was inspired of God to write that **to** the circumcision, not **to** us. According to **James 1:18, James 2:24** was part of the salvation instructions given only to the circumcision. We can know that by:

**James 1:1**  ¶James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

**to** the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

Who was James writing to, and for, and about?

**“to** the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.”

It’s not our instructions. You are disbelieving the Bible to take what the Bible says was written to the twelve tribes of Israel, and try to claim it was written to you as your salvation instructions. That is fatal. Our instructions come only through Paul, Christ’s only apostle of the Gentiles. When deciding to “receive” Paul’s gospel of eternal salvation, Paul said,

“keep in memory what I preached unto you,

unless ye have believed in vain”.

Christ only revealed our gospel of salvation to Paul, so he is emphatic that today, God saves people that believe the gospel that Paul preached. Paul began this topic by telling them and us, that he is going to declare again the gospel that saved them when they believed it in Corinth. What are our salvation instructions? This is it.

1 Corinthians 15:3  For I delivered unto you first of all

that which I also **received**,

You have to do more than mental assent, believing it is true. You have to receive it applied to your need of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:3  For I delivered unto you first of all

that which I also received,

how that **Christ died for our sins**

There are “OUR SINS” again, “MY SINS”. When you receive this gospel, you are CONFESSING that you have sins that are part of the “OUR SINS” that Christ died for. You are admitting that you have past, present, and future sins that need God’s forgiveness

1 Corinthians 15:3  For I delivered unto you first of all

that which I also received,

how that **Christ died for our sins**

according to the scriptures;

1 Corinthians 15:4  And that

he was **buried**, and that

he **rose again** the third day

according to the scriptures:

And that is it. Don’t go adding stuff to it. Certainly don’t go adding your own **opinions**, or your own **philosophies**, your own **theories**, your own **interpretations**, or your own **works** to it.

Paul writes other inspired scriptures telling us consistently of God’s grace in our salvation, uncontaminated by our putting any confidence in our works. Still holding on to your own good works would change and contaminate the gospel. By believing in a changed gospel “ye have believed in vain”. If you think being water baptized, or leading a good life makes you **CLOSER** to being saved by **faith in the blood** of Christ’s cross, then you are changing, polluting, and contaminating the gospel into a perverted gospel as in **Galatians 1:6-9**. Then, “ye have believed in vain”. If you still partly trust works that you do as part of your salvation, just to be on the safe side. THAT IS NOT THE SAFE SIDE! That is polluting God’s gracious offer to save you by Himself. That is making it belief in vain, useless.

**Romans 3:19-28, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-11, First Corinthians 1:18-24, First Corinthians 15:1-6, Second Corinthians 5:14-21, Galatians 1:3-12, Galatians 2:16-21, Ephesians 1:6-14, Ephesians 2:4-18, Philippians 3:7-9, Colossians 1:3-6, First Thessalonians 2:13, Second Thessalonians 2:13-15, First Timothy 1:14-16, First Timothy 2:3-7, irst Timothy 4:10, Second Timothy 1:9-14, Titus 3:4-7,**

Anyone that takes the time to read those two groupings of Bible verses can see that the writings of Israel’s twelve apostles contain reference to Israel’s future salvation by FAITH, and WORKS, and ENDURING to the end, so that in the end, they would be saved (**Acts 3:19-21**).

However, all Paul’s scriptures rightly dividing out what is for the Gentiles show that our salvation is only by faith alone, not perverted with our prideful, or fearful additions of our works to help God save us.

Since Christ died for OUR SINS, and since you CONFESS that YOUR SINS fit into the “OUR SINS” that Christ already died for, then, according to **Ephesians 1:7** you have “the forgiveness of sins” if you have ever received that **forgiveness and salvation**.

With that is mind, we should not distrust the Lord by asking Him to forgive what He has told us that He already forgave when we CONFESSED that we had sins that required the death penalty, which He received for me, and I was crucified with Christ.

Believing the gospel includes believing the Lord who promised us the benefit of the gospel. If we do not believe that He forgave us, when He said that “we have the forgiveness of sins”, then have we truly believed the gospel of salvation.

How can you get that kind of love? God is love. Are you in Christ? Believe Paul’s gospel of the grace of God to be baptized by one Spirit into the one body of Christ.

Always look to Paul’s epistles and sermons to know God’s instructions to, for, and about us Gentiles believing the gospel to be baptized into the body of Christ.

**THE END**