

1.6.B.(3-4).Prayer: Confessing Sins. Mark 1:4-6, 1 John 1:5-10.

Dear Newborn Disciple, have you ever seen a newborn child being held in its mother or father's arms? Keep this picture in your mind, for this is a glimpse of how precious you are in the eyes of the Lord God, who is now your Heavenly Father!

Now, imagine that child being held, so precious and beloved. And, the child *soils itself*—maybe wetting its diaper or unleashing a load of poop! What is the parent's response? Is it anger, or frustration, or disgust? If the parent is a good parent, none of these things cross or take root in the mind. Instead, the parent simply cleans up the child, knowing that the infant will be miserable in its unclean diaper.

In this way, learn to draw near to your Heavenly Father and your Lord Jesus, especially when you realize that you have sinned against them! As

your spiritual parents, their only focus is to help clean you up and help you get on with your life!

Verse.

⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a **baptism** of **repentance** for the **forgiveness of sins**. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, **confessing their sins**. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. (Mark 1:4-6).

Background:

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that **God is light**, and in him is **no darkness** at all. ⁶ If we say we have **fellowship** with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice 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 cleanses** us from all **sin**. ⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we **confess our sins**, he is **faithful** and **just to forgive us** our sins and to **cleanse us** from all **unrighteousness**. ¹⁰ If we **say we have not sinned**, we make

him **a liar**, and his word is not in us. 1
John 1:5-10.

1. (Know) God is Light: No darkness at all (1 Jn. 1:5)

“You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 1 Peter
1:16a

When you are born into God’s family as his Son or Daughter, you have the great privilege of knowing him. To draw near to him, to talk with him, to sit with him, and to listen to what he has to say to you!

Even though he is your Heavenly Father and is the safest person, you should know that God is “light”—there is no “darkness” of sin in him at all. We call this pure sinlessness his “holiness.” God is *holy*, because nothing in creation—not in heaven nor in earth—nothing is comparable to God. For, God is at the Head of all things, exalted, as far

from creation as the heavens are above the earth. Yet, in his “holiness,” He invites you and me to be like him in his holiness, to share this life of his. He says to us, “You shall be holy, because I am holy!”

2.(Pray) Fellowship: Walk in the Light with God and Brothers. (v.7).

So, it is important that you live a holy life. Not because it makes you better than anyone else, but you are to be “holy” so that you can live your life in “fellowship”—in sharing life—with God and with the people of God.

To walk in “the light” is to walk in the very presence of God. To experience his nearness by his Spirit that he pours out.

So, learn to draw near to God, to the Lord Jesus, to experience the closeness of being in the “light” with them. In the light, you will start to experience the spiritual reality of the Kingdom as a

place of “peace,” “joy,” and fruitfulness in the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22)!

Let me tell you a secret to prayer. Many see prayer as a way to get what they want on this earth. But, if you spend “time alone with God,” being quiet and patient before him, instead of demanding “what you want,” take time to ask the Lord, “Lord, what do you want?” Then, pause, and listen to what he has to say.

A verse might come to mind. Or a still voice in your heart. Or, sense of knowing without words. But, you need to learn to turn your full attention to him.

That is why “sin” will be a problem that interferes with your fellowship with God. If there is a sin you commit—because God is light, the fellowship will be broken.

So, learn to call out to the Lord God, your Heavenly Father “without ceasing” 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Have a conversation in your

life with your Lord and your God, as you walk with Him in fellowship as you go through life. Even experience rest and quiet in his presence. For, his light will go before you. But, avoid the chill of darkness as you walk alone.

3. (Hide-Lie) Walking in Darkness: Lying, Practice Untruth. (v.6, 10).

So, Jesus calls you to a new life in the Light, now that you are reborn as a Child of the Light. He says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ (Mashiach), you are a new creation. The old has passed away, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In your old life in the flesh, you walked alone in the darkness—vulnerable, lonely, and starving of God’s light. So, when you choose to indulge in your sinful past life, hiding from God in the darkness, you return to your former sin and deadness, and this separates you from God and his presence. For, God must turn away from sin,

and he cannot have fellowship—that is, join himself to sin.

So, as you learn to enjoy fellowship with God, offering yourself to him to be pleasing holy before him, you will always need to make a choice in your life. Choose God, the Lord Jesus, and our family fellowship? Or, choose to live in the darkness by yourself, in the howling chaos of Satan's world?

4. (Pray): Confess your sins (v.9).

But, you are still in the flesh, and so your flesh will always seek to run from God and live in the darkness. For, the sin wants to be the most Important one in your life. So, when you do sin and fall into the darkness, what should you do?

You will instantly feel the separation, the alienation, the darkness as you stand apart from God. So, the Lord commands you to “confess” immediately when you sin.

Now, if Sin is to take back, withhold, and withdraw your life from God, to “confess” is to surrender this area of sin back to God. Give up control, and “confess” that you have sinned. Be specific, be clear, and take full responsibility.

In this way, to “confess” the specific sin that you have committed and how you have turned from God. To confess is really to surrender and give your failure and sin back to God for his forgiveness and cleansing. You give up the fleshly disobedience that you have been nurturing, and you surrender it all back to God.

5. (Know) He is Faithful and Just to forgive and cleanse us. (v.9).

Now, after you confess, what happens? We know that “confessing” is our part, but what will God do? Will there ever come a time when God will not forgive us?

No. Listen to the promise of who God is from the Word of God once more: “He is *faithful* and *just*” (v.9). that is, God is faithful, he is consistent, he will not fail to forgive you always, everytime you confess, he will forgive you!

And, not only does he forgive you, but he “cleanses you” of all unrighteousness!

Knowing this, run immediately back to God when you sin.

What happens if I continue to walk in darkness?



As I write to you, I trust that you are a newborn disciple who has found a mentor or a household of faith to belong to, which is your safest place. So, your elder disciples can help you grow in your

walk. And, I'm assuming that you have experienced the joy and cleansing of your new birth. Now, since it is a recent event, compare your new life to the old life you lived, cut off from God and dead in your Self-Rule and sin. When you lived as if you were "God" himself, you were isolated and experienced nothing but death. Likely, you were acquainted with the darkness as an evil and malevolent force that wanted to "steal, kill, and destroy" you (John 10:10). After you turned to the Lord Jesus Mashiach, you repented and were filled with the life-giving Holy Spirit!

Now, your old life, your sin, and the darkness and death was represented in the waters of baptism. Not only did they represent sin and death, but it also depicted living in a Godless World, dead and without spiritual life or hope. Picture your baptism—you step into the water, you are submerged under the water. Did the thought occur to you: "Wow, I like it under water!"

I think I will stay submerged under water!” No one who ever was baptized thought that! For, to think, “I will live here” is to die.

And, that is what it is like, as a reborn child of God, to live in your unconfessed sin, in unrepentance in the darkness.

- **Immediate Confession.** Remember, though your spirit has now been raised in Mashiach, you still have your old and sinful flesh that will tempt you. Mainly, to disobey or separate from God, to live as your own Self-important Self-Ruler. When you do get tempted and fall to sin, repent immediately! It is like falling into the water and getting up immediately! You will need to get cleaned up after be exposed to the filth, but otherwise, your fellowship with God will be restored.

- **Convicted of Sin:**

For when **I kept silent**, my bones wasted away through my **groaning all day long**.

⁴ For day and night your hand was **heavy** upon me; my **strength was dried up** as by the heat of summer. *Selah*

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalm 32:3-5

Sometimes, you may be stubborn (I hope not), and you will be like David and refuse to repent of your sin but will instead try to cover it up. Remember, God knows your very heart, and the Spirit is in you. So, the Lord will not let you rest in your sin, but his “hand” will be “heavy” upon you—this is

his conviction, which will trouble your heart until you are honest and confess your sin to him!

Beware, because as you live in rebellion against God, the choices you make will have consequences and long-term effects. For, if you sin against God and pay the penalty, you will be responsible for the penalty!

Case Study: the danger of stubborn rebellion

When I was in the Midwest for my undergraduate degree, I lived in the student dorms. I had been praying for a wife, and one night, I was very upset with God that he hadn't answered me. (Now, as I write this, as a happily married man with a beautiful family, I realize that a college-marriage would have been disastrous and would have robbed me of the blessings I have now). So, I willfully said, "I'm taking charge of my life. I'm going to harden my heart." So, I went out to a party on campus, and I started looking for a companion. And, I met a beautiful young co-ed, and we started to dance.

After some interaction, I asked her for her name and she gave me her address, inviting me over. I was shocked. Here was an opportunity to dive into the darkness and get into a sexual relationship with someone! But, the Lord's hand of conviction was pressing harder on me, and the alarms were crescendoing! Thankfully, the Lord brought me to my senses, as I knew deep sin would ruin my life. So, living in unrepentance always puts you at risk of being inescapably ensnared. If I had fallen that night, the consequences would have been irreversible.

And, listen to the Lord's answer to David, as he warns him against stubbornness: don't be like a foolish "horse" or "mule" which needs to be "curbed with bit and bridle" (Psalm 32:8-9). That is, if you are a stubborn mule, the Lord will have to use strong force, harsh 'curbs," to protect you for your own sake. That harsh treatment is called "discipline."

- **Disciplined for Sin:**

My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when **reproved** by him. ⁶ For the Lord **disciplines** the one he loves, and **chastises** every son whom he receives.

Hebrews 12:5-6

In your struggle against sin, you may fall under the deception that God does not know or he can be deceived. So, some may confess a particular sin when they fall, but not really “repent,” turn around and walk in the light again. Instead, they walk in *recurrent sin*, *habitual sin*, or just simply normalize their sin and live alienated from God. In cases of unrepentance, and walking in darkness for a prolonged period of time, hear this warning: You are exposing yourself directly to Satan’s power and the influence of his demonic, unclean

spirits who will seek to defile you! Walking in darkness is the most dangerous thing you can do.

Just remember—as a child of God, you are a threat to the Kingdom of Darkness. Satan wants to literally “steal, kill, and destroy” you (John 10:10). Now, you are walking right into his hands! What do you think will happen? And, in the last days, the line between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness will be the clear divide between life and death. Your Lord and Shepherd, Jesus Mashiach, will come and rescue you when you call, but you must not put him to the test, for that results in discipline.

So, when you choose to walk in the Darkness or when you let the darkness take root in your life or your household as a recurrent sin, then the Lord God will step in, as your Father, to “discipline” you. Often, discipline means that he will let you experience the *consequences* of your sinful actions. You will suffer apart from him. And, you

will be at the mercy of the lord of chaos, Satan, who will actively “steal, kill, and destroy” you (John 10:10). However, like Job, God will determine the level of severity that you are disciplined, but if you do not repent after a few setbacks, the discipline will become more and more painful, the losses greater and greater.

Case Study: Three examples of God’s discipline.

#1: Sinful Episode. When I was in my twenties, after keeping away from proliferating pornographic material that was filling society across all types of media, I one night was frustrated and upset with God. So, I went out and rented a pornographic videocassette. I set up a player in my bedroom with a television, and I played the tape. At first, I was surprised that I was “getting away with it.” Then, I watched the tape to the very end. Right as the tape ended, the room started to spin around, and I literally felt the floor tilt and sway. I rushed into the bathroom, clinging to the toilet and vomiting. I

stayed in that position, with the room spinning around me, from around 10 am until the morning the next day! Yet, I was being disciplined for my sin, I was comforted that God had not abandoned me but was disciplining me for my good!

#2: Years later, as I started a job with the university, I moved out of the home and lived the single life. I remember Bible, opened up on my desk upstairs, but it remained unread for almost a year. Instead, after work, I'd eat a meal and simply relax. I'd watch television, or I'd read, but not the Bible. Slowly, my heart turned from the Lord. After a year or so, I believe the Lord allowed me to get injured at a church picnic, and I broke my collar bone! I was in intense pain for months and had to move back home with my parents. But, in my pain, I turned back to the Lord for relief, and his Word became my comfort again!

#3: Living in that house, one of my roommates was a son of missionaries and had fallen away after a bad marriage breakup. Now, he lived a Godless life, even speaking irreverently about God, rejecting the Lord, and living in immorality and drunkenness. But, he lived a luxurious life—he was an airlines pilot with a sizable income, drove a fancy sports car, and lived a luxurious life. But, the Lord disciplined him, and took everything away, all at once. He wrapped his car around a tree one day, and he lost his memory, and everything else—job, car, girlfriend. Yet, in God’s mercy, he returned to the care of his parents, where I’m assuming he regained his faith! Incidentally, a while later, I saw his ex-girlfriend at church. She had turned to the Lord as well!

So, if you persist in sin, God will discipline you. You will start to lose what is valuable in your life, perhaps everything, so that you repent and return to the Lord and His Family!

- **Cast Out or Condemned:** Judged in this life or the next.

In the worst case, after continual sin, perhaps a lifetime of rebelling against God, then you will face certain judgment.

If you are a disciple of Jesus Mashiah and you refuse to repent of your sin, God will eventually have you judged by the people of God, and you will be “cast out” of fellowship into the darkness and Satan’s power.

In the church at Corinth, a man refused to repent of his sexual immorality, so Paul instructed: “Deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 5:5). In that day, and, increasingly in our Last Days, to be handed over to Satan and cast out of the protective fellowship of the Kingdom was certain death. But, Paul hoped that such a judgment would lead this man eventually to repent, even on his deathbed.

But, if you have no indication of any spiritual fruit in your life, starting with the fruit of repentance; if you have no *changed mind*, to reject and admit the vileness of your sin and a desire to be freed, but are still battling, then you very well may be “unborn,” untouched by the Spirit, and still condemned in your sins. For you, Jesus Mashiach will have made no difference, because you were unwilling to give up your sin to him and bow to his saving Lordship in the first place. For you, there is no hope except for the expectation of fiery judgment, unless you repent.

Focus:

Consider:

Question:

Further Discovery: