

New Believers Bible Study

11. Understanding Sin and Forgiveness : Grasping the concept of sin, repentance, and the forgiveness offered through Christ.

Understanding sin is crucial in comprehending the depth of forgiveness through Christ. Sin, as defined in Scripture, is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4), separating humanity from God's perfect standard (Romans 3:23). Repentance, acknowledging and turning away from sin, is fundamental for reconciliation with God (Acts 3:19). Through Christ's sacrifice, forgiveness is made available to all who repent and believe in Him (Ephesians 1:7). Jesus emphasized the importance of forgiveness, teaching that we must forgive others as God forgives us (Matthew 6:14-15). This understanding leads to a profound realization of God's grace and mercy, inspiring gratitude and a desire to live in obedience to His will (Romans 6:1-2). Thus, comprehending sin, repentance, and forgiveness reveals the depth of God's love and the transformative power of His grace in the lives of believers.

1 John 3:4

states, "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness".

This verse underscores the concept of sin as the violation of God's law, indicating that sin involves actions or attitudes contrary to His righteous standards. It emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's commands and highlights the necessity of understanding sin as rebellion against His authority.

Matthew Henry's commentary on 1 John 3:4

Emphasizes the significance of sin as lawlessness, highlighting its nature as a violation of God's law. He likely elaborates on the idea that sin represents a departure from the divine standards of righteousness and moral order established by God. Henry's commentary likely delves into the implications of sin as an act of rebellion against God's authority, emphasizing the need for repentance and obedience to God's commands. This interpretation underscores the importance of understanding sin not merely as a moral failing but as a fundamental

New Believers Bible Study

breach of relationship with God, requiring reconciliation through Christ.

Romans 3:23

states, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (NIV).

This verse serves as a fundamental reminder of the universal human condition. It declares that every individual, regardless of background or circumstance, has fallen short of God's glory due to sin. Here, sin is depicted not merely as isolated actions but as a pervasive reality that separates humanity from the perfection and holiness of God. This acknowledgment of universal sinfulness lays the groundwork for the understanding of the need for redemption and forgiveness through Christ. It humbles individuals, leading them to recognize their dependence on God's grace for reconciliation and restoration to a right relationship with Him.

Matthew Henry's commentary on Romans 3:23

Likely delves into the profound theological implications of this verse. He may emphasize that "all have sinned" includes both Jews and Gentiles, highlighting the universality of human sinfulness. Henry might also discuss the significance of falling short of the glory of God, indicating that humanity's sin not only separates individuals from God but also prevents them from fully reflecting His image and purpose in their lives. Additionally, he may underscore the sobering reality that no one can attain righteousness or salvation through their own efforts, underscoring the necessity of relying solely on God's grace for redemption. Overall, Henry's commentary would likely offer insights into the profound implications of Romans 3:23 for Christian theology and understanding of salvation.

Acts 3:19

reads, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord" (NIV).

This verse captures the essence of repentance as a vital step towards forgiveness and restoration with God. In his commentary on Acts 3:19, Matthew Henry might emphasize the urgency and significance of

New Believers Bible Study

repentance in the life of a believer. He may elaborate on the call to turn away from sin and towards God, highlighting the transformative power of genuine repentance in bringing about forgiveness and spiritual renewal. Henry might also discuss the promise of "times of refreshing" as a result of repentance, pointing to the spiritual joy and restoration experienced when one is reconciled with God. Overall, his commentary would likely underscore the importance of repentance as a foundational aspect of the Christian faith, leading to forgiveness, renewal, and spiritual vitality.

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Ephesians 1:7

states, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace" (NIV).

This verse encapsulates the central message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry's commentary on Ephesians 1:7 would likely focus on the profound significance of redemption and forgiveness made possible through Christ's sacrificial death. He may delve into the theological implications of redemption, emphasizing that believers are liberated from the bondage of sin and reconciled to God through the shedding of Jesus' blood. Henry might also highlight the lavishness of God's grace, which surpasses human understanding

New Believers Bible Study

and provides forgiveness that is freely offered to all who believe. His commentary would likely underscore the foundational role of Christ's atonement in the Christian faith, emphasizing the richness of God's grace and the assurance of forgiveness for those who trust in Him.

Matthew Henry's commentary on Romans 3:23

Likely elaborates on the profound truth encapsulated in this verse. He would emphasize the universality of sin, pointing out that every individual, regardless of their background or status, is affected by sin's pervasive influence. Henry might delve into the implications of falling short of God's glory, highlighting the inherent separation it creates between humanity and their Creator. He would likely emphasize the sobering reality of sin's consequences, leading to a broken relationship with God and the inability to attain righteousness through one's own efforts. However, Henry would also likely emphasize the overarching theme of hope found in the gospel message, which offers redemption and reconciliation through faith in Jesus Christ. Overall, his commentary would aim to deepen readers' understanding of the human condition and the transformative power of God's grace in overcoming sin and restoring humanity to a right relationship with Him.

Matthew 6:14-15

Is part of Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, where he addresses various aspects of spiritual life and personal conduct. In these verses, Jesus emphasizes the importance of forgiveness.

Let's break it down:

1. **Forgive others** : Jesus starts by urging his followers to forgive those who wrong them. Forgiveness is a central theme in Jesus' teachings, reflecting God's mercy and grace towards humanity. When someone sins against us, whether through actions or words, we are called to let go of resentment and extend forgiveness.
2. **God's forgiveness** : Jesus then highlights the reciprocal nature of forgiveness. He suggests that if we forgive others, God will also forgive us. This implies that our forgiveness of others reflects our

New Believers Bible Study

understanding and experience of God's forgiveness towards us. Just as we receive forgiveness from God for our own shortcomings and mistakes, we are to extend that same forgiveness to others.

3. **Consequence of unforgiveness** : Conversely, Jesus warns about the consequences of harboring unforgiveness. If we refuse to forgive others, Jesus says that our heavenly Father will not forgive us. This underscores the seriousness of holding onto grudges and refusing to extend grace to others. It's a reminder that forgiveness is not optional for those who follow Jesus; it's an essential part of living out the values of the Kingdom of God.

In summary, Matthew 6:14-15 teaches that forgiveness is a fundamental aspect of the Christian faith. By forgiving others, we demonstrate our understanding of God's forgiveness and experience the freedom that comes from releasing bitterness and resentment. However, failure to forgive can hinder our own experience of God's forgiveness and disrupt our relationship with Him. Therefore, Jesus encourages his followers to embody forgiveness in their lives, reflecting the mercy and grace of God.

Matthew Henry's commentary on Matthew 6:14-15

Would likely explore the profound teaching of Jesus regarding forgiveness. He might begin by emphasizing the context in which these verses are set, following Jesus' model prayer, commonly known as the Lord's Prayer. Henry might highlight how Jesus' instruction on forgiveness immediately follows the petitions for daily bread and forgiveness of debts. He may then delve into Jesus' clear directive that forgiveness is a non-negotiable aspect of the Christian life. Henry might explain that just as God graciously forgives those who repent and seek His mercy, believers are likewise called to extend forgiveness to those who have wronged them. He might also stress the consequences of withholding forgiveness, emphasizing how it not only hinders one's own spiritual growth but also affects the effectiveness of one's prayers. Overall, Henry's commentary would likely underscore the transformative power of forgiveness, both in individual lives and in fostering unity and reconciliation within the body of Christ.

New Believers Bible Study

Romans 6:1-2

"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"

This passage is part of Paul's letter to the Romans, where he delves into the theological implications of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Let's explore the verses and their explanation:

1. **Questioning continuing in sin** : Paul begins by posing a rhetorical question: "What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?" He is addressing a hypothetical objection that might arise from his previous discussion about God's grace being sufficient to cover all sins. Some might misinterpret this as a license to continue sinning since grace abounds.

2. **Rejection of sin** : Paul emphatically responds to this hypothetical objection with "By no means!" or "Certainly not!" in some translations. He dismisses the idea that grace provides a justification for persistent sin. Paul asserts that believers are no longer slaves to sin but have been freed from its power through their union with Christ.

3. **Dying to sin** : Paul then presents a theological truth about the believer's identity and relationship to sin. He states, "We are those who have died to sin." This indicates that through faith in Jesus Christ, believers have undergone a spiritual transformation. They have been united with Christ in his death and resurrection, symbolically dying to sin and being raised to new life. This spiritual death to sin signifies a break from its dominion and control over their lives.

4. **Living in sin** : Finally, Paul questions the logic of continuing to live in sin despite having died to it. He asks, "How can we live in it any longer?" This rhetorical question underscores the incongruity of a Christian persisting in a lifestyle characterized by sin when they have been spiritually liberated from its power. The new life in Christ calls for a departure from the old life enslaved to sin.

New Believers Bible Study

In summary, Romans 6:1-2 emphasizes the transformative power of God's grace in the lives of believers. It rejects the notion that grace provides an excuse for indulging in sin and instead affirms that believers have died to sin and have been raised to new life in Christ. This passage challenges Christians to live in alignment with their new identity and to reject the bondage of sin, embracing a life of holiness and righteousness empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew Henry commentary on Romans 6:1-2

"In the former chapters the Apostle had been discoursing concerning justification by faith, and had been showing that we are justified by faith without the works of the law; not for the sake of our good works, but for the sake of Christ's merits; and he had shown the fulness and freeness of the grace of the Gospel, and the glorious liberty of the children of God under the dispensation of the Gospel, notwithstanding the strictness of the law. But here he takes occasion to answer an objection, which the corrupt hearts of men are apt to make against the doctrine of free grace; and that is the objection of a licentious and profane life. If sin, says the Apostle, be an occasion of the grace of God to abound, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound. If it be for the glory of God to pardon sin, then the more sin we commit, the more we glorify God by giving him occasion for his pardoning grace to shine forth. This objection the Apostle had occasion to consider and confute; for it was no new one; it was an objection made against the doctrine of free grace in the first ages of Christianity, as appears by what the Apostle says, Rom. 3:8, 'And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say) Let us do evil, that good may come; whose damnation is just.' But the Apostle gives a direct answer to this objection in the next words, 'God forbid!'—'By no means!' For, though grace does much more abound where sin has abounded, yet this is not just an argument why we should continue in sin. Though sin has abounded to our advantage, yet that is no reason why we should go on in sinning; for we are dead to sin, v. 2. Dead in sin, dead to the law; that is, we are delivered from the power of it, as a man is freed from the service of a master by his death. Now, if we be dead to sin, how can we live any longer therein?"

New Believers Bible Study

QUIZ: (Fill in all the blanks)

71. Sin, as defined in Scripture, is the transgression of _____ law (1 John 3:4).

72. Repentance, acknowledging and turning away from sin, is fundamental for _____ with God (Acts 3:19).

66. Through Christ's sacrifice, forgiveness is made available to all who _____ and believe in Him (Ephesians 1:7).

73. Jesus emphasized the importance of forgiveness, teaching that we must forgive others as _____ forgives us (Matthew 6:14-15).

74. This understanding leads to a profound realization of God's grace and mercy, inspiring gratitude and a desire to live in _____ to His will (Romans 6:1-2).

75. Comprehending sin, repentance, and forgiveness reveals the depth of God's love and the transformative power of His _____ in the lives of believers.