

We all need to have our sins forgiven.

As I was travelling through Asia recently, I talked to young men from Japan, Laos, Myanmar, and India. I asked each one of them, “Do you have a spiritual belief?” They replied in various ways. Two were Buddhist, one was a materialist and the other believed in a mixture of religions. One thing they all had in common was the awareness that we all fall short at times, and no matter how hard we try, we still do things we wished we had not done. I asked each one, “Do you know you have forgiveness of your sins?” Each one said to me, “I do not know my sins are forgiven”.

Sin is falling short of the standard of righteousness that God has given in His Word, the Bible. The ten commandments are an example. God has put within each of us a conscience, or inward voice of right and wrong. If we go against our conscience it becomes hardened and insensitive to wrong doing.

Where can we find forgiveness of our sins?

There are many religions in the world but **most of them do not offer forgiveness of sins.** One day I talked to a Hindu man, Kamlesh. He told me that he had studied the religions of the World and only one offered forgiveness of sins. His words to me were, “I have a great respect for

Christianity because it is the only religion that offers forgiveness of sins”.

I have just returned from Myanmar where there are many people who are Buddhist.

As I travelled around and talked to members of the Buddhist religion, I asked them if their religion offered forgiveness of sins. They told me that Buddhism does not offer forgiveness of sins.

Today there is a general recognition that we have all fallen short in many ways and in many things. Many struggle hard to improve their behaviour and not do hurtful things to other people. We can all look back in regret at some of the things we have done, and say, “I wish I had not done that”.

We all need to have our sins forgiven so that we can know God.

Struggling hard to improve, and wishing we had not done wrong things, is not enough to forgive our sins.

One day I was walking the roads of India on the outskirts of the city of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. A young Indian man, his name is Srinu, came up behind me and asked if I was a Christian. I said I was. I asked him if he had a spiritual belief and what he was doing to get to heaven. He told me of all the things he was doing as a Hindu, such as going to the temple, offering the sacrifices, helping needy people and being baptised. I asked him how many of those things he needed to do to have his sins forgiven. He said, “I do not know”.

Our sins are a barrier between us and God. We can not know God until our sins are forgiven.

God is without sin. He is holy, good and true. God has never done something wrong. God has always acted in love for the highest good of others. God has always spoken the truth in love. He has always been just, righteous, merciful and truthful.

Before we can come to God and be accepted by Him **our sins need to be forgiven.**

If we could come to God with our sins unforgiven, then God would be accepting and approving of our sins. God is holy and can not do that. He can not be mixed up with sin and wrong behaviour. If He did then He would become unholy and unclean like us.

Neither can God say, “Let’s just forget all your sins and wrong behaviour”. He can’t just turn a blind eye and be just.

God is the Source of all unending life and truth. It is His goodness, righteousness, mercy truth, love, justice, authority and power, that is the source of all eternal life.

Sin is going against God’s character of love, righteousness, goodness, truth, justice and mercy. **For this reason sin produces death.** All life comes from God’s goodness of character. Death is eternal separation from God, His goodness and life.

How God has provided forgiveness of sins for us.

Because God is just and can not turn a blind eye to sin, He had to find a way to forgive sins that was just. He can not deny Himself. His justice required payment, or punishment for sin, before He could forgive.

For men and women to be able to receive forgiveness of sins someone had to pay the price for their sins. That Someone had to be without any sins of their own. The only Person who could do this is God Himself.

Because God's nature is love He desired to provide forgiveness of sins for men and women. Out of God's own heart of love, He chose to come to earth, Himself, in the Person of Jesus Christ, live a perfect sinless life, show us what God is like, and then give up His life as a sacrifice and payment for our sins on the cross. He did this about 2000 years ago, as recorded in the New Testament Gospels. Three days after His death and burial, He arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven to the throne of God where He had come from.

At the end of this age He will come again as the Judge of all people and decide where they will continue to exist. This will be either in His presence, peace and life, or in the place of torment called "hell".

This is why forgiveness of our sins is a vital issue for all of us right now.

How can we receive forgiveness of our sins?

What God has provided for us we need to receive.

The way we receive forgiveness of our sins is firstly through **knowing** what Jesus Christ has done for us by His death and resurrection. We have to know the truth. Christ died for our sins. 1Corinthians 15:3.

For our sins to be forgiven, we have to **acknowledge** the sins that need forgiving and ask for forgiveness, and turn from them.

When we **believe**, with thankful hearts, in Jesus Christ's death on the cross for our sins, in His resurrection from the dead, and receive Him as Lord, the mercy of God flows into our lives and cleanses away all and every sin we have ever committed.

At this point a **living relationship** with God is established and we become His children. He gives us His eternal life. Water baptism into Christ, baptism with the Holy Spirit, and fellowship with other believers, help to establish our relationship with God.

To go on in the way of fellowship with God He gives us His boldness **to tell others** how He has brought us out of sin into salvation.

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We All Need

Our

Sins Forgiven

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