

1 Our need for God's love and forgiveness

Sin keeps both Christians and non-Christians from experiencing God's love. But many people are confused about what sin is.

What is sin?

It's more than cheating, lying, immoral behavior, etc. These actions are only the results of an attitude of sin. A simple definition of sin is doing what we want instead of what God wants — both in actions and attitudes.

What are the results of sin?

Read Ephesians 2:1. For non-Christians, sin prevents a **relationship** with God.

What about people who try to reach God through living a good, moral life? Are they separated from God? Why or why not?

Read 1 John 1:6-8. For Christians, sin inhibits our **fellowship** with God.



SUMMARY

All of us sin and break our fellowship with God; therefore we need to know how to experience God's forgiveness for both our actions and attitudes.

2 The basis for God's love and forgiveness

How has God dealt with our sin?

Read 1 Peter 3:18. Christ's death is the basis for our forgiveness that brings us into a proper *relationship* with God. His death is also the basis for forgiveness in our daily *fellowship* with God.

"You were dead in sins, and your sinful desires were not yet cut away. Then He gave you a share in the very life of Christ, for He forgave all your sins, and blotted out the charges proved against you, the list of His commandments which you had not obeyed. He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross." — Colossians 2:13,14

In the day when this was written, "list of sins" meant an itemized bond nailed to the prison door. It listed every crime for which the prisoner had been convicted. When the sentence was served or restitution was paid, the authorities removed the list and wrote on it, "paid in full." The prisoner used this as proof that he could never be tried again for those crimes. The person who trusts Christ's payment for sin can never be tried again. His sins have been paid in full. He has received a full pardon from God.

Based on the above verses, what has God done with your sins?

For how many of your sins did Christ die?

When Christ died on the cross for you, how many of your sins were in the future?

