

# Maintaining Joy

by Jim Wilson

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of confession and obedience in maintaining the joy of salvation and effectively sharing the Gospel.*

**Duration:** 50:47

**Scripture:** Psalm 19:12-13, Psalm 32:8-9, Psalm 51:12-13, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Joy"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of restoring the joy of salvation. He uses the analogy of two people who both know the gospel, but one carries it around in a bucket and shares it with others, while the other person overflows with joy and spreads it wherever he goes. The speaker emphasizes the need to confess and repent of sin in order to restore joy and receive forgiveness from God. He warns against making excuses, hiding, and passing the blame, as these are the devil's substitutes for true confession. The speaker encourages listeners to confess their own sins rather than focusing on the sins of others, as true confession leads to the restoration of joy.

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## Transcript

Thank you for coming everybody and so let's open in prayer this morning and then we'll get started. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you again for another beautiful day. Your grace is renewed every morning and the fact that the sun rises is a reminder that you pour forth your blessings and your goodness upon us so we give you thanks this morning.

Father, thank you that we can gather together, hear your word expounded, and learn how to maintain the joy that you so freely give. And so we thank the time here that you've brought Jim to speak. We pray that you'd bless him with working of your Holy Spirit and that our hearts might be open not only to hear but to be obedient.

And so we thank for these things in Jesus name, amen. All right, so one last thing I just wanted to again offer my appreciation and thanks to have Jim here and be able to be here to work with him and again the talks that we're having today, the ones we had last night on bitterness, and the ones we'll have today on how to maintain joy, a relationship with parents, restitution, and loving your enemies are practical obedience-oriented talks and certainly talks that that changed my life and my ability to walk more closely with the Lord Jesus. So Jim, if you come up and... Father in heaven, we're meeting in together in the name of the Lord Jesus.

We pray that you'd guide us in what we say, how we say it, and how we receive it. In Jesus name, amen. There are two basic texts on joy and we won't, other than mentioning them now, we probably won't mention them later.

The first one is the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience. Love is the first fruit, or maybe the complete fruit, and joy and peace are all subsets of love. But the basic means of joy is being in Christ.

Just receiving Christ makes you a beneficiary of love and joy and peace and patience. Those things just come with the territory of being a Christian. They were things you cannot fabricate when you're not a Christian.

You cannot try to have joy. You cannot try to have peace. You either have it or don't have it.

Now if you're a Christian, you have experienced love, joy, and peace. You say, but I don't have it anymore. The other basic teaching on joy is in Philippians 4.4 and 1 Thessalonians 5. It says, Rejoice in the Lord always, or rejoice evermore.

So we have the fruit of the Spirit which just comes with grace, comes with salvation, and then we have the command. Now we do not carry out this command by some sort of effort on our part. We just put into effect the joy that we have by fruit.

So this isn't difficult. Now it seems difficult because many of us have lost the joy that we had when we first became a Christian. When I talk to people, Christians, and ask them questions, I find there are three basic things that they'd like in their life.

They'd like to have the joy that they had when they were first saved. They would like to be guided by the Holy Spirit. They'd like to know the will of God for their life.

And they would like to win others to Jesus. Three things. They'd like to have the joy.

They'd like to have guidance. And they'd like to see others come to Christ. Those are just normal desires for Christians.

And today we'll talk not just how to maintain joy, but also how to have the guidance of the Lord and how to win others to Jesus. All come with the same cause. If you turn with me to Psalm 32.

This is a wonderful Psalm. Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him, and whose spirit is no deceit.

Blessed means something wonderful from God. And this blessing includes joy. Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven.

So the first cause of joy, or important cause of joy, is all of your sins are forgiven. You're no longer walking around with this burden of unforgiven sin. So when you pass from death to life, your transgressions are forgiven and blessed you are.

Blessed is a man whose sin the Lord does not count against him. He does not because you've received righteousness from God. So your joy is caused by all of your sins being forgiven and by being indwelt with the Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit is joy.

Then it says something quite the opposite. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me.

My strength was such as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you. Well, let's just talk about that for a minute.

When I kept silent, something opposite to blessing happened. My bones wasted away. I groaned all day long.

Day and night the hand of the Lord was heavy upon me. My strength was sapped as in the heat of summer, dried up, wasted away, groaning all day long. And its cause is when I kept silent.

Now what's the keeping silent? Well, we find it out in the next verse. Then I acknowledge my sin to you. Keeping silent was not acknowledging sin.

And when no acknowledgement of sin, heavy hand. No acknowledgement of sin, groaning all day long. No acknowledgement of sin, sapped as in the heat of summer.

Bones wasting away. Have you ever felt dried up? It's opposite of joy, opposite of blessing. It's when you keep silent.

Then I acknowledge my sin to you. In other words, I ended my silence and did not cover up my iniquity. I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

And soon as the guilt of your sin were forgiven, blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven. You go back to verse 1. So when you're converted, you're blessed, your transgressions are forgiven, and then you accumulate sin after a Christian and heavy hand. Then you acknowledge sin, your sins are forgiven, and you're back in the blessing of the Lord.

So the first thing for the blessing is confession of sin. You already have it just by being in the kingdom. Because when you were born again, as with me, 20 years of sin disappeared.

And I began to accumulate sin, unconfessed sin. And I lost the joy I had when I first became a Christian. We jump ahead in the 32nd Psalm, verse 8. I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go.

I will counsel you and watch over you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, but must be controlled by bit and bridle, or they will not come to you. Speaks of two kinds of guidance here.

The guidance of the Lord's. I've been, King James says, I will guide you with my eye. I will guide you with my eye.

Very sensitive guidance, very sensitive direction. Then he tells us how not to be guided. He said, do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, but must be controlled by bit and bridle, or they will not come to you.

Two ways of guidance. One is the sensitive guidance of the Lord's eye upon you. And the other is when God puts a bit in your teeth and a bridle in your head and gets you in the will of God, not with sensitive guidance.

Now this is all based upon confession of sin. So the first thing you see with confession of sin is the blessing of the Lord. No confession, heavy hand.

The first thing you see is guidance with his eye. And the other, if you don't, is a bit in your teeth and a bridle in your head. And have you ever been bit and bridled into the will of God? That's, you end up in the will of God, but it's a hard way to get there.

Because you don't want to go. You're not sensitive to the guidance of God. The third thing was the winning others to Jesus.

Look at Psalm 51. You probably know this Psalm well, and the whole Psalm is just great, but I'm going to jump in verse 13. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

Then I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners will be converted. Well, that's what we want. We want sinners to be taught the way of the Lord.

We want them to repent and turn back to him. But it says, then will I teach transgressors your ways. Oh, when is the then? We go back to verse 12.

Well, actually the first 12 verses, but I'll just point out verse 12. When is the then? Restore to me the joy of your salvation. And grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will be converted. When is then? When the joy of the Lord's salvation is restored to me. When the joy of the Lord's salvation is restored to me, I'll be able to teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will be converted.

Let's suppose you have two people given to evangelism. One knows the gospel very well, and he carries it around in a little bucket. We assume it's water.

He carries this gospel around in a little bucket, and shares the gospel with people. Well, the other person doesn't have a bucket with the gospel in it. He just overflows with joy, and every place he goes, people get wet.

Because, now as a person who is clear with the message, but he shares it in dribblets. He's not a fountain of joy. Restore to me the joy of your salvation.

Then I'll teach transgressors your ways, and then sinners will be converted. We have a problem when we want to see people come to Christ, and we've lost our joy, but we know the message, and we love the people, and we know that if we share it with the present down position with a heavy hand upon me, it probably won't be effective. So what do I do? I fake joy.

I fake it. I pretend that everything's wonderful and great, and we remember what it was, but it isn't anymore. Well, the only the major reason is you had joy when you first received Christ.

All your sins were gone, and that's the last time they were all gone. You didn't confess all your sins when you received Christ. You couldn't possibly.

You would confess Jesus Christ as Lord, and all your sins were forgiven. But after you're a Christian, then you're responsible for your actions, and 1 John 1 9 goes into effect. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness if we confess.

God's faithful all the time, but he doesn't operate on a position that we get to be forgiven with and hang on to our sins. Let's suppose every time we sinned, we had more joy, or joy didn't disappear. The scripture says the chastening of the Lord.

There's no joy in the chastening of the Lord. It's Hebrews 12:11. I think there's no chastening.

The chastening of the Lord is not joyous, but grievous. So when I'm chastening is when I need chastening. Now, the reason for chastening is not to make me pay for the sin, it's to bring to my attention that I've lost my joy, and confession will bring it back.

So I gave you these scriptures first, and I want you to remember Psalm 32, Psalm 51, 1 John 1:9, and I'm not going to go to some extra biblical teaching. What I'm going to say now is not inspired. It's just a visual aid.

I'll provide the audio. That's what this is. Where do we go? Down here, the first 20 years of my life.

Oh, let me say this. The timeline here of this x-axis is measured in time, and the farther you are over here, the older you are. I'm off the chart.

Okay, the y-axis is measured in joy. I was coming along here with zero joy for 20 years. Actually, it was probably down here someplace, but we just say no joy.

In October 18, 1947, I received Christ, and immediately I had joy up to here. I remember the day. I was riding a bus back to Annapolis from Baltimore after a football game.

I'd received Christ after the game, and I was so joyful, I wanted to sing all the way back to Annapolis. My problem was I didn't know any songs, but I was filled with joy, and I just assumed that this joy would just increase like that. In fact, our graph should look like this.

The older we get, the more joy. Okay, next graph. For a while, as time went on, my joy did increase.

Here, it increased because of forgiveness. Here, it increased because of obedience, but then one day, I lost some of my joy. I didn't know where it went.

I didn't know how to get it back, so I was wondering where it went. Time went on, and I lost some more joy, and it kept going. Well, this turned out to be three years of accumulated, unconfessed, unrepented, unforgiven sin.

I kept losing my joy, but during this time, I didn't want the saints to know I'd lost my joy, so I would fake it. Sunday morning, I'd sing songs, shake hands, smile, and pretend I was up here. It never occurred to me that all the saints were down here.

We were all faking it on Sunday morning. I'll give you an illustration. There's a Sunday morning program.

It's called Getting the Kids Ready for Sunday School. One kid's reading the Sunday Funnies. One kid can't find his socks.

Dad's still in bed, and by the time everybody goes out the front door, nobody's in any condition to go to Sunday school, and the awful part of it, mom has to teach Sunday school, so she fakes it. She's been out of shape, just getting ready to go, and dad's faking it, and the kids don't care. Well, then you multiply this

by everybody else who gets ready for Sunday school, and that's why they have Sunday school quarterly, so you got something to turn to.

Now, there's another problem during this time. Since we ought to be up here, and we're faking it up there, after a while, it gets too hard to fake all the way up to here, so we only fake it here. We're really down here someplace, faking it to here, it ought to be up here, and you can tell it.

She can go to another city and visit a church, and the singing is just awful. You think you're at a funeral. So, people that live there don't know it.

That's the way it's been for so long. They can't fake it all the way up to the top. Well, the pastor notices poor singing, so he gets a new song leader, or he gets a praise band, or he gets a real cheerleader up in front.

The journey doesn't improve the singing, but you can't hear the congregation now, because the praise band is making all the noise. So, you think, Israel, what we're doing is covering up the problem. I'm not saying we shouldn't have a good song leader or a good praise band.

I'm saying it covers up the problem. The real solution is get the saints back in the joy of the Lord's salvation, and you won't be surprised about the change in the singing. People will be glad to sing.

They won't be lying when they sing, oh, how I love Jesus. It'll be that real. So, what has to happen is each person has to have their joy restored.

Well, there's something else. The church down here doesn't know they're down there, and they find out they're down there because somebody happens to get converted in the church. Don't ask me how, but he's getting saved, and he's bouncing along in the joy of the Lord up here, and all the saints look at him, say, obviously young, emotional, probably charismatic.

When he gets mature like the rest of us, he'll be down here with us. That's one thing. It brings it to their attention that things aren't well.

The other thing that makes people realize that they're not where they're supposed to be is one of the deacons runs off with the organist. Everybody says, how did that happen? How did that happen? How did two godly people do that? Well, it didn't happen that way. It happened like this.

Psalms 19, 13. Keep your servant also from willful sins, may they not rule over me, then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression. How to stay away from great transgression? Willful sins.

Keep yourself from willful sins. Stay away from little sins. Stay away from this slippery slope.

If you're walking in the light up here someplace, the devil isn't going to try to tempt you with a big sin. He won't even bother, but if he can get you bent out of shape on a lot of little ones, then the big one doesn't seem like such a bad idea. Keep your servant also from willful sins, may they not rule over me, then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

You stay away from innocence of great transgression by keeping little sins confessed up to date. Okay, in 1951, I was converted in 47. I was in the Sea of Japan or on a ship in the Sea of Japan, reading a book that a missionary gave me called The Calvary Road.

I mentioned this book last night. It was a book written by Roy Hession, an evangelist who had lost his joy, but he learned and still had all the words of evangelism. And some Africans from the East African Revival came to England and he was convicted of these sin and restored in the joy of his salvation.

He wrote the book, I think in 49. I read it in 51 and I realized that was my problem. Three and a half years of accumulated unconfessed sin and I confessed sin and got back up on top.

And then, as I confessed sin in 1951, I got back up here and then I started obeying and then I'd sin again. And when I sinned, I was disciplined by God, took away my joy and I waited two weeks and then confessed. Obeyed God, sinned, waited two weeks and then confessed.

Sometimes it wasn't two weeks, it was just maybe to bedtime. Now, these are the first three sentences here. Confession, forgiveness, joy.

On graph one, it said sin, discipline, no joy. The reason God disciplines us is to bring it to our attention so that we will confess, so he will forgive, so we'll have joy. And I learned that, but then I learned it in delayed things.

I didn't accumulate three and a half years, I just learned it in waiting two weeks. And I lived like this for about four years, four or five years. Next graph.

So here I was sinning, waiting two weeks, sinning, waiting two weeks. And then in 1956, I think, I read another book. It was the result of the East African Revival called Continuous Revival by Norman Grubb.

Same message, confess your sins. But I had to clean house again. Because in effect it said, don't wait two weeks.

If God can forgive 20 years at one instant, if he can have three and a half years of accumulated sin, if he can forgive two weeks worth of sin, he can forgive one minute's worth of sin. So I would sin, be disciplined, lose my joy, confess my sin, be forgiven of my sin immediately. I think I have a reputation, I'm not really sure of it, you can tell me otherwise, that I pretty much walk in the joy of the Lord.

But it's not because I haven't sinned in these last 50 years, it's I've just got a low tolerance for discipline. I don't like it. And the discipline ends as soon as I confess.

So 1956, 2008, 52 years of walking in the light. Now, I won't say I haven't done some delay here in here. These haven't always been instant, sometimes a day, sometimes two weeks.

But I know the truth. I don't like the discipline of God. I don't like the no joy.

And I'm a transparent person. Even if I'm not in joy of the Lord, some of you know this already, but I'll illustrate it. God made me this way.

I'm not making a face. All the lines in my face go down. I look like I'm angry or mad or sad or something, but I don't look joyful.

But somehow, people don't see that. Because what's on the inside shows on the outside, even though the outside is... But whether they see it or not, I can't stand it. I can't stand the discipline of God and no joy.

So this is instant confession. This is walking in the light. 1 John 1.5, God is light, in him there is no darkness at all.

Verse 7, if we walk in the light as he is in the light, how is he in the light? No darkness at all. If you're walking in the light as he is in light, and I'm walking in the light as he is in light, it says we have fellowship with one another. We can't help but have fellowship with one another.

But if one of us is not walking in the light, any fellowship we have is fake. Then it says we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing from all sin. It's continually, it's instant cleansing.

It's like getting dirty in the shower. As fast as you get dirty, you get clean. There are two ways of being clean.

One is don't sin, the other is get forgiven. But one of those or both of those have to be in effect. Obedience is holiness and forgiveness is righteousness.

Same quality, but one is righteousness is given from God to clean up the dirt, and holiness is where you don't get dirty. So we walk in holiness and righteousness, obedience or forgiveness, but in both cases, joy. I'm now going to give you, I think, 13 ways to stay miserable.

First one. First thing I do when I sin, I say to myself or maybe other people too, it was really right. It was really right.

It's self-justification. It was right, it was right, it was right. I say it all day long, it was right.

Now, as long as I'm saying it's right, I'm really admitting inside it was wrong. For if it were really, really right, would I go around saying it was really right? No, I wouldn't have to. I don't go around explaining to myself why I told the truth.

So if I justify myself, it's my first clue that I was in sin. But as long as I justify myself, I'm not confessing. No confession, no forgiveness, no forgiveness, no joy.

No forgiveness. The hand of the Lord is heavy upon me. My moisture is turned to the drought of summer.

My bones wax all through my roaring all day long by keeping silent or saying it was right. The second thing I do is excuse it. The excuse doesn't say it was right.

The excuse says it was really wrong. And right after I say it's really wrong, I say but. As soon as God hears the but, I don't get forgiven.

He doesn't need the song and dance. He doesn't need all the conditions. I thought it was okay to do this wrong thing.

But as long as I'm excusing, I'm not forgiven. The third thing I do is I hide. I cover up.

Did Adam and Eve hide? Did it do them any good? No. As long as I'm hiding, even from God, I am not confessing. No confession, no forgiveness, no forgiveness, no joy.

The hand of the Lord is heavy upon me. Moisture turned to the drought of summer because I'm hiding. Now all these are lies from the enemy.

These are the devil's substitutes for confession. Knowing that confession is accepting the forgiveness from God. The fourth thing, pass the buck.

Did Eve pass the buck? Okay. Did Adam pass the buck? Okay. Now Adam did a much more sophisticated job of buck passing than Eve.

Eve said the serpent deceived me. That was a true statement. The serpent had deceived her, but she's still blaming the serpent.

But notice the sophisticated difference. Adam said, the woman, you gave me God, she gave it to me. Do you remember who gave me the woman? If you fellas need to memorize it, it's Genesis 3.12. I can confess Bessie's sins all day long and my joy doesn't come back.

And when I confess hers, her joy doesn't come back. Confessing her sins doesn't bring her joy, it doesn't bring me joy. In fact, if I confess it out loud, it might get even worse.

I have my joy restored when I confess my sin. This is back to what we were talking about last night. We got to see the hideous wickedness of the sin and acknowledge it and take complete responsibility for it.

And God gives complete forgiveness for it. Put it off. That's what I did for three and a half years.

That's what I did for two weeks. That's what I do for 10 hours. Let's suppose I'm walking in the joy of the Lord and I have a collision with my dear wife at eight o'clock in the morning.

As soon as it's over, I realize that I was in sin. And I tell God, God, I will not justify it. I will not justify it.

I will not excuse it. I will not hide it. I will not blame Bessie.

I will confess it honestly and openly tonight when I go to bed. So what kind of day do I have? You don't know? Well, pretty good. I heard one person say bad and I've known him for 35 years.

So it's probably telling you the truth that I have a bad day because I entered the day unforgiven and I'm a sitting duck for any other temptation that happens during the day. I'm not up to handling it. So when I have instant confession, I'm up to the next temptation.

In other words, when I follow instant confession, I sin less. When I don't follow it, I sin more because I'm not walking in the light. I'm not prepared to handle the temptation.

So then I put off confession to bedtime and that's what happens to my day. I get honest with God at 11 o'clock at night and confess all three dozen sins and God in his goodness forgives me for all three dozen sins and consequently I have eight hours of joy in the Lord sound asleep. Peace with God.

Love, joy, peace right in here. Unconscious. I have another collision with Bessie and put it off to bedtime.

Get honest with God and confess all three dozen sins and have eight more hours of joy in the Lord sleeping. But now God is faithful. Now look, I could confess it right away and my day would have gone like this.

I wouldn't have had a miserable day. But there's something else. When I ruin the day, I go to number five or six, whatever, and I vague turns.

I go to bed at night and I say, God, please forgive me for anything I might have done today and roll over and go to sleep. And I have eight hours down at the bottom because this vagueness, this generality. Let's suppose I confess in a vague term to God and God said, Wilson, you're forgiven.

I said, really? He said, don't do anything tomorrow. Don't do what tomorrow, God? He said, you're the one that did it today. Why don't you tell me? I mentioned last night the three things that are necessary.

Knowledge of what you've done, admission of what you've done, and with the intention of forsaking what you've done. But if you won't admit what it is, you don't know how to forsake it. Let's suppose I have a temper problem and I lose it once a day.

And I go to bed at night and say, please forgive me for anything I might have done today. I don't want to confess that losing my temper is sin because I might need it tomorrow. And I know that I've got to forsake whatever I'm confessing.

In the last couple of years, I met a man, I hadn't met him before. He told me his wife left him after 35 years, took the children and went to Wyoming. He was sick.

I said, well, what's the reason? Well, he said, I had a temper. He said, I've had the temper for 35 years. And well, he said, if I lose my temper, I'd lose it for two hours, not 10 minutes or not one minute.

And he said, she just left. So we told him this truth and he cleaned house. And it was just amazing.

Jesus, just amazing. He said, my wife's never coming back. Can't see the kids.

I said, well, let's have God have her telephone you. She said, I said, that's why we're asking God to do it. Not because it's normal or rational or anything like that.

That's why we're asking God to do it. Well, the next day she called in the morning and he is so hysterical on the telephone because he knew this was answered prayer. That she called me in the afternoon to ask for an explanation.

Why this guy lost his temper for 35 years or so. And then he said, I'd like to go see the children to me. He said that.

I said, well, let's. He said, she said, she could come to Wyoming and see the but to bring all of her stuff. So he'd load up the pickup truck with all her stuff and drove to Wyoming.

Well, before he left, I said, let's pray that she'll come back with you. She told me to bring her stuff. And he got there and it was going to unload.

No, don't unload it. And she came back with him. And this kept going on like that.

And so one day she was taking the kids down the long driveway to where the bus picked up the kids for school, got down to the bottom. When one of the kids realized he hadn't brought his book or his lunch or something, she knew she had to go back. Since he backed up to turn around and backed into a ditch that she couldn't get out of.

And she didn't know what to do. Well, just then the neighbor came by and the neighbor, her husband hadn't spoken to for years. He was so bitter toward the neighbor.

But while she was gone, he went and confessed all of his sin to the neighbor. But she didn't know this, but the neighbor got a chain and pulled her out. She knew she had to tell her husband, but she knew what would happen.

But instead he bought her a dozen roses. Now, this is what I'm getting at is the wonderful grace of God on confession of sin. And it doesn't make any difference how gross or how bad, as long as you recognize how gross and how bad it is and confess it without any explanations.

I mentioned euphemisms. Do not confess sin in euphemisms. White lie is a euphemism for we can say I misled.

Yeah, you lied. Don't use word to make it sound not so bad, so God will, you're making it easy for God to forgive you because it wasn't that bad. Do not use euphemisms.

If it's adultery, don't call it an affair. If it's homosexuality, don't call it gay. These are nice sounding words for something gross.

You call it what it is and God forgives the grossness, but call it what it is. The major euphemism for sin, generic, is the word mistake. You hear it all the time.

People say, well, everybody makes mistakes. That's saying everybody's incompetent. That's saying everybody thinks two plus two is five.

That's a mistake. But we want to be accused of incompetence rather than immorality. I didn't know it was three million dollars.

I didn't know she was married. Claiming that things were a mistake, they're not. It was sin.

I was speaking to an intervarsity group at Utah State one time, many years ago, and I forget what the subject was, but question answer period, a fellow spoke up and he said, suppose a fellow lived a very immoral life before he was converted, and then he received Christ and living a pure godly life, and he meets the right girl. Does he tell the girl about his previous life? Does he tell the woman about his previous life? So I went to answer the question. I'm not going to tell you what my answer was, but I got interrupted before the answer, because a woman jumped up on this side before I answered the question, and she was thinking from the woman's viewpoint, and she says, suppose a girl's made a mistake.

Well, I just chopped her off. I said, mistake my foot. It was sin.

We cannot minimize sin. When you minimize sin, you get really less than minimized forgiveness. You don't get any at all.

Do not use euphemisms, mistake, or any other kind when you're confessing sin. Next one. I've had many people say this to me, including my youngest son.

I remember when he was 15. I was making a trip to the East Coast, going to make a trip, and I knew he had to have a tour talk. He came into my little study, and he knew what kind of lecture he was going to get, so he just decided to preempt it.

He said, Dad, if I started confessing sins right now and continued for the next 10 years, it would only bring me up to mediocre. I said, Gordon, if I were you, I'd get started. I called him.

I called home from the East Coast. I wanted to talk to Bessie, but he picked up the phone. He didn't want to get off the phone, and I couldn't get him off.

I said, Gordon, what do you want to talk about? He said, Dad, I want you to know that my room is spotless. I said, what's the explanation for that? He said, well, you know, Dad, when you're clean on the inside, it's easy to be clean on the outside. Oh, I said, it didn't take you 10 years, did it? Now this is, I've had other people say it would take me 10 years.

Now this is the devil's attempt to keep from getting started. He said, but it was, there were too many. Okay, assume there were a lot, but you can confess them a lot faster than you can commit them.

It took you 10 years to do them, but it doesn't take you 10 years to confess them. But it's the devil's attempt to keep you from confessing. Get started.

I can't remember them all. Well, that's probably true. That's not probably true, but that's not your major problem.

Your major problem is the ones you do remember. So you start, but this is, again, the enemy's attempt, well, since I can't remember them all, why bother with any of them? You start confessing the ones you do remember and you be forgiven. Your joy will come back up and your memory will get better.

Now, suppose you really can't remember anything after much confession. You can't remember anything else. Okay, then you can have verse 12 of Psalm 19, who can discern his errors, forgive my hidden faults.

Or 1 John 1.9, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, which sins? The ones we confessed. But then it says, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In other words, after we confess everything that Hebrew reveals to us, He cleanses us from everything else.

But you can't expect the cleansing from everything else unless confession takes first. Oh, nobody's perfect. I didn't allow my children to use those words.

They weren't teaching their father theology. I'm only human. You know, Dad, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

So you've already proved that one. You don't have to keep on proving it. But this is an enemy's attempt to justify sin.

Nobody's perfect. Well, Dad, suppose I'd be perfect. That'd be awful.

Well, our biggest problem is that we don't believe the scripture says, be ye therefore perfect. See, well, perfect doesn't mean perfect. Well, whatever it means, it says just as your Father in heaven is.

So whatever the standard is, it's just like your Father in heaven is perfect. Be ye holy for I am holy. These are commands.

They are be commands. So don't give you this stuff of nobody's perfect. That may be true, but that's not language that the Bible uses.

Yes, it tells us all of sin, but that's to get them forgiven. It's not a truth about believers. I'm going to do it again.

So why confess? This is a favorite one. How do you know you're going to do it again? Well, I've done it every day for six years. Of course, I'm going to do it again.

The reason you've done it every day for six years, you didn't confess it every day for six years. If you'd confessed it every day for six years, you would have disappeared out of your life five years ago. Confession helps future obedience.

No confession helps future disobedience. Now, this is a lie of the devil. If you're going to judge your future based on your history, forget your future.

It's only going to keep on going downhill. No, but your past is forgiven. Could be.

Then you look to the future like a forgiven past. I'm too proud to make restitution. Actually, I think I'll cover this one in the talk on repentance and restitution.

So I'll hold that one off because I'll talk too long on it. Better dust we already covered last night. Well, it looks like we're finished, unless you can think of some other excuses that the enemy gives you to keep from confessing.

These are lies of the enemy to keep you down at the bottom. None of them are true. You probably recognize at least some of them in your life.

And it's not the primary means of getting joy. It's a primary means of getting joy back. The primary means is the fruit of the spirit.

The primary means is obedience. This is a secondary means. It takes away the joy, takes away the chastening.

And these lies, and there are others like everyone does it, they're lies. Even if they're true, they're lies. Because the enemy has given them as reasons to sin or reasons not to confess.

When you start practicing this just a little bit, your friends and family, may not recognize it right away, because you've been.

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