

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Acts 8:18-23**.
- B. Much emphasis is placed on what a non-Xian must do to be saved. The plan of salvation as we know it applies to all accountable people.
- C. But what should the Xian do when he/she sins? What does the Bible teach that a child of God should do when sin has once again come between them and God?
- D. This lesson is about what a Xian should do to be saved from their sins.

I. FIRST, REPENTANCE.

- A. Sin is direct disobedience or willful neglect of the will of God (Jas. 4:17).
- B. There must then be a change of life and mind. This is repentance (Lk. 13:3,5; Mt. 3:8).
- C. Our repentance toward God is always necessary. It also may become necessary to make things right with a brother or a brother sins against us:
 1. Before we can worship God (a vertical relationship) we must have our lives right with others (a horizontal relationship), see Mt. 5:23,24.
 2. We have been given a 3-step process of trying to make things right if a brother sins against us; go to him, bring witnesses, before the church (Mt. 18:15-17).
- D. When we want to be right before God, in fellowship with Him as His Son we will do whatever it takes to make things right.
- E. Xians need to repent.

II. SECOND, PRAYER.

- A. We may ask God in prayer to forgive us our sins. This is how Jesus taught us to pray. We must forgive others also (Mt. 6:12).
- B. We may ask God for His forgiveness for those sins we are truly repenting of. We cannot ask God to forgive our willful sin (Heb. 10:26,27; 1Jn. 5:16).
- C. In our scripture reading Simon was guilty of sin and was told that he must repent of his ungodly attitude, actions, and life; and then pray for forgiveness. The sinner cannot utter the Lord's model prayer and then hope for the forgiveness of sins. The example is that of Xians being able to pray for forgiveness (Ac. 8:18-23).
- D. Xians need to repent and pray.

III. THIRD, RESTORATION.

- A. Before my brother-in-law was converted he argued that if baptism is really essential then we need to do it on a regular basis to have the continual washing away of sins. No one else does that, so it is not essential.
- B. The fallacy of the argument, as he now knows, is that after the initial forgiveness of sins if we walk faithfully we have continual forgiveness.
- C. Two ways to walk (live) as mentioned in 1Jn. 1:6-7:
 1. Walk in darkness (sin).
 2. Walk in light (faith).
- D. This walk in the light means restoration. Restored are the relationships that matter most. The vertical relationship with God and the horizontal relationship with others.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The law of pardon for a Xian is to repent of past sins making things right with a brother you have sinned against or a brother who has sinned against you.

- B. Secondly, one can pray for the forgiveness of sins.
- C. Thirdly, restoration takes place as one now begins again to walk (live) for Jesus.
- D. A good rule of thumb is to make repentance, prayer and restoration as public as the sin itself.
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.