

1 John 1:8-10

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. *NKJV*

When we look at the person who places their faith in Christ and receives complete forgiveness of their sin, we are assured with the promise that the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross was enough to pardon all of our sins. At the point of salvation the believer places his full trust in that gracious pardon. The new relationship with God has begun. But just because the sin is pardoned does not mean that it is now absent from our lives. While we live here on this earth we will continue to battle against our desires to please ourselves more than God. In this relationship with God we understand that even though forgiveness has been applied to our sin we will continue to sin—although we now have a desire to please and obey God where once we only desired all of the time to please ourselves.

When we fail to please God with our choices as His children we sin, and sometimes we act like the ostrich who hides his head in the sand instead of approaching God in our relationship in order to restore the joy of our fellowship with Him.

Did you know that ostriches don't really hide their head in the sand? While it is a very rich and descriptive idiom and widely used, the fact of the matter is that ostriches have three main strategies when attacked.

"They can run away, they can kick, or they can try to hide (eg, when nursing the eggs). When hiding, they will sometimes lay flat on the ground, with the long neck and head also on the ground. In the rippling heat haze of their native Africa, they can look just like a grassy mound.

*The myth that an ostrich will stick its head in the sand, in an effort to hide, may have begun with that great Roman thinker, Pliny the Elder (23-79AD). Before his death, Pliny had almost completed one of the earliest comprehensive encyclopaediae. His *Natural History*, in 37 books, was a remarkable attempt to summarise all the knowledge known to the Romans. He claimed that he covered some 20,000 topics, which he partly got out of some 2,000 books, which in turn were written by some 100 authors. His *Natural History* remained a fundamental source of knowledge to the West through the Dark Ages.*

So what did Pliny have to say of ostriches? In Book 10, Chapter 1, he writes, ...they imagine, when they have thrust their head and neck into a bush, that the whole of their body is concealed". Historians assume that this single sentence is the root of the myth about ostriches burying their head in the sand. There is one interesting ostrich behaviour that comes close to burying their head in the sand. When ostriches feed, they sometimes lay their head flat on the ground to swallow sand and pebbles. The hard grit helps them to grind their food in their crop. From a distance, the ostrich looks like it's burying its head in the sand."

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2006/11/02/1777947.htm>

It seems that Ostriches don't act like their myth! Christians ought not live in a myth either. They are to acknowledge that they do willfully sin against God and that in the security of a relationship with Him

their joy may be restored through their confession. They thrive in a relationship where once their sin is exposed they are reminded that it is also pardoned. They don't enjoy knowing that because of their sin they have withdrawn themselves from a close walk with God. **Although the true Christian does not have ground to fear losing his relationship with God because of his sinful failure, he can lose the joy of the closeness that is experienced while walking in harmony with God in Truth.**

The mark of a true Christian is that they long to stay close to their Savior without anything between. Someone who walks in the light does not want to walk in the shadows. A Christian is a "good confessor." They live a life of openness before God careful to maintain a right relationship with Him based upon His pardon that has already been received but careful not to allow anything that would break the sweetness of the fellowship that he has with God.

Psalm 32:1-5

- ¹ Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven,
Whose sin *is* covered.
- ² Blessed *is* the man to whom the LORD does not
impute iniquity, And in whose spirit *there is*
no deceit.
- ³ When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through
my groaning all the day long.
- ⁴ For day and night Your hand was heavy upon
me; My vitality was turned into the drought of
summer. Selah
- ⁵ **I acknowledged my sin to You, And my
iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will
confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**
NKJV

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why are we tempted to hide from God instead of running to Him in honest confession?**
- 2. Is fellowship with God in Truth sweeter than walking in the darkness of our sinful choices? (see Psalm 32:3-4)**
- 3. Explain "Good Christians are good confessors":**
- 4. Was all our sin atoned for at the cross? Or was it just the sins that we committed up until we placed our faith in Christ?**
- 5. Since our sins were forgiven at the moment of our salvation, why is there need for any confession after our salvation?**
- 6. But, the first question we ought to ask ourselves is, of course, what have we done with our sin. There must be a point in everyone's life where they acknowledged that God was the Judge and Jesus was their Savior. Have you received the forgiveness of God by your repentance and turning to Him for salvation through faith in His grace alone?**