

# Consider the Cost

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Have you ever been shopping with a blank check? Have you ever been given the opportunity to shop and purchase anything you wanted knowing the bill was being paid in full by someone's blank check? Probably the answer is "no" for most of us but we have all at least considered such an opportunity at some time or another.

In our spiritual lives, sin is something none of us can afford. We could never pay enough to atone for sin. This is why we must rely upon the blood of Christ to pay for our sins. When we realize we have sinned, we are commanded to follow God's plan of salvation to obtain the benefits promised by the blood of Christ. If we have already been obedient to God through baptism, and realize we have sinned, we are commanded to repent of the sin and pray for forgiveness. Often in our prayers we conclude with "forgive us of our sins". Do we consider this privilege of forgiveness of sins as a sort of "blank check" for the things we do wrong? If we do, we belittle the cost of that privilege.

Certainly the blood of Christ is able to atone for ALL sins (Col. 1:14), but we must not be flippant or lax in our attitude toward sin. When we pray for forgiveness of our sins, do we consider the **Commitment** we made when we agreed to put Christ on in baptism; consider the **Commandments** or expectations of us by God; and consider the **Cost** of our sins paid by Christ?

## Commitment

When one becomes a Christian, a commitment to Christ is made.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says "**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**" Christians have made a commitment to be a new creature in Christ. We have committed to run the race of Christianity. Hebrews 12:1 "**...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,**"

Christians have made a commitment to put Christ first (Matthew 6:3, 10:37, 22:37).

Jesus said in Matthew 10:38 "**And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.**"

As Christians we have already made the commitment to take up our cross and follow Christ by doing the work of the church, such as visiting/caring for the sick, studying/teaching God's word, treating others as we want to be treated. We should be honoring our commitment to be Christ-like.

## Commandment

What is the expectation of God concerning our commitment to a new walk of life?

There is no doubt God expects us to keep His commandments "**If ye love me, keep my commandments.**" John 14:15, but have we considered to what extent He expects this?

In the Old Testament we know that God expected His people to keep his commandments, Deuteronomy 4:2 "**Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD**

**your God which I command you.”** Let us examine how strictly God expected compliance with his word.

We remember Moses was chosen by God to lead God’s people out of Egypt. Moses was, for the most part, an obedient servant of God. It was he who was chosen to go before Pharaoh; it was Moses to whom the Ten Commandments were given and the rest of the old law. Yet, we know in Numbers 20:8 God told Moses to speak to the rock for water to come forth. Moses disobeyed and struck the rock. God did not overlook Moses’ sin. He was forbidden to enter the promised land even though he spent over 40 years leading them in the wilderness.

Remember Achan from Joshua chapter 6 and 7? He was an Israelite who compassed the city of Jericho as commanded by God. He was evidently faithful to obey God’s commands as to how to take the city of Jericho because he would have been required to march around the city, following the commands of God, as did the others to be given victory by God. Yet, in Joshua 6:18, God told them not to take of the goods of the city. In Joshua 7:20-21 Achan confessed to taking goods from the city. God commanded in Joshua 7:15 to burn the guilty party and all he had with fire. In verse 25 of chapter 7 we find Achan and his family were stoned and burned with fire.

David was a man after God’s own heart (I Sam. 13:14, Acts 13:22). Though David was very faithful in his service to God, we know he sinned with Bathsheba. (II Sam. 11:3-4). In spite of David’s good service, his sin did not go unpunished. In II Sam. 12:10 18 David’s punishment was announced by God. The sword would not leave his house, his wives would be given to his neighbor, and his child by Bathsheba would die.

There are many other examples of God’s demand for strict adherence to His commands that we can learn from. God expected diligence in obedience to His will in the Old Testament; we now are under a better covenant (Heb 8:6) and there is no reason to assume He expects anything less than diligence in obedience to His will.

Romans 6:1 **“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”**

**2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”**

James 1:27 **“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”**

## **Cost**

What is the cost of being able to ask for our sins to be forgiven?

For us to have the great privilege of praying “forgive us of our sins” the blood of Jesus Christ had to be shed (Hebrews 9:11-14). God had to send His only begotten Son to die for us (John 3:16).

Just this past Sunday, a memorial service was held for Shane Ruiz, a young man lost at sea while on a mission trip in the Dominican Republic. Sitting in the memorial service held for Shane Ruiz and listening to the words of his father, Joe Ruiz, helped to put this

sacrifice in perspective. While grieving the loss of his son, Mr. Ruiz praised God for his love for us, recognizing, in his own loss, just a little bit of how God must have felt sending His only Son to this earth and watching him die on the cross. (Mr. Joe, your example even in your time of great loss has been an encouragement to many. God bless you and your family).

Christ had to be willing to give up the glory of heaven, give up his divine image, (Philippians 2:6-7) to come to this earth, be forsaken by his friends (Matt. 26:56), be despised and rejected of men (Isa. 59:3, Matt. 27:38,39), be betrayed and denied (Matt. 26:48-75), and be mocked (Luke 23:11). He had to endure a terrible beating, wear a crown of thorns, and suffer the death of the cruel cross while being ridiculed and made fun of as He died. The Father in heaven had to watch as his Son endured these terrible things. – All so that you and I can pray “Father, forgive me”.

As Christians we have all made a commitment to follow Christ. We know God expects us to FULLY obey His Commandments and is not happy even with what we may think is the smallest of infractions; According to I Cor.10:13 we have no excuse for sin.

Failure to be diligent in the pursuit of a sin-free life is to be care-free or lackadaisical about our service to God. Failure to be diligent in our Christian duties is to take for granted the COST of the great privilege of praying “forgive us of our sins”. The Hebrew writer states those who fall away from the word of God “**crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh**” (Heb. 6:6). What a shame to not realize the COST of the forgiveness of sins

God doesn't take sin lightly, therefore we should not be satisfied with our level of service but we should press diligently for perfection as did Paul. Philippians 3:14 “**I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**”

Let us consider the cost of the privilege of praying “Father, forgive me” every time we do so. Let us not simply look at the blood of Christ as a “blank check” to live comfortably at a standard less than the one He requires of us.

1 John 1:7 “**But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**”