

On shedding our sin before approaching the Throne in prayer

Perhaps it is best understood as this: We, having been Forgiven and thus being seen Righteous in God's eyes even now, always have access to the Throne, despite even our unconfessed sin. However, this sin is a hindrance – not because it restrains us from approaching the Father through Christ our Priest, but because God resists the haughty and the proud. We will stand before Him in prayer, yet He will not answer any insincere prayer. What does this mean?

A man can come before God, in the midst of a terrible burden of his sin, and ask God to relieve him and help him as he earnestly sets out in repentance of it. Though this man is very guilty and involved with his sin, does God answer his prayer? Yes, because the man is sincere in his request in seeking relief from what he knows is wrong – but also, quite importantly, he is *repentant*. Repentance in humility is this man's responsibility, and the change, the release, and the forgiveness is God's. **James 4:6 & 10** tells us that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. As well, this man is praying in faith and in the will of God. He has faith that God will see his sin as offensive, as well as faith that God will come to his rescue. And in that faith, he exhibits his belief by stepping forward in action, in prayer, and in repentance. Also, this request is in the will of God because this man knows God has said in His Word that if anyone would confess his sin and repent of it, God will lift his burden. This man is embracing and *living* the promise of **Hebrews 11:6** – that in faith, anyone who will approach God must believe in Him and know that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

This same issue can be seen in the sinner's prayer to God, begging Forgiveness and Salvation. Everyone who has been Saved holds several issues in common: They first believed in Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of Mankind; each recognized his sin, and in true remorse, turned in repentance in hope of Forgiveness; all came before God's Throne through Christ, because of their belief in Him, and pleaded in sincerity for Forgiveness; and each came away, believing that God is true to His Word – they are now in faith – and sat in the assurance that they are now Righteous before God.

Is this person a sinner, yet still before God in prayer? Yes. And was this person before God earnestly and sincerely in faith? Yes. And does God hear this person's prayer, and though he be a sinner, still answer his prayer? Yes. And why? Because this man came to God, on behalf of Christ's Righteousness, in true faith, and asked of God an issue that is in His Will – and we can surely believe that God answers this request.

And what of sins hindering the prayers of one already a child of God? And why should we seek to right ourselves before Christ before approaching the Throne?

Look into the issue of even the high priest going into God's Presence in the Most Holy Place – ceremonially clean, yet because of the limitation of the Law, still unable to come forward with a clean heart & conscience. Is this us as well, in our sin, yet forgiven? Saved, granted the right as sons of God to come to the Throne, yet still possible with a hard and sin-ridden heart?