

Jeremiah 31:34 says, "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Not only are we forgiven, but God chooses to truly forget our sins of the past. At that point our relationship is restored, and our prayers regain their power. Our past actions may still have consequences, but the sin itself is forgiven.

If you have confessed and surrendered a sin to God and continue to sense accusation toward yourself for that sin, it is not God's voice you are hearing. It is Satan, the accuser, attacking you. Always remember, God's forgiveness is complete. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins." Don't let Satan accuse you when Christ has set you free.

Unforgiven sin also has other consequences. We could turn around the Scripture from Psalms to say, "If I regard wickedness in my heart, I will not hear God," and it would also be true. Sin dulls our senses and isolates us from God. Look at the case of Adam and Eve: When they sinned, they didn't want to walk with God; they hid from Him.

Besides making us want to run from God, sin also makes us want to isolate ourselves from other believers. In *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:

Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from the community. The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over him, and the more disastrous is this isolation. Sin wants to remain unknown. It shuns the light. In the darkness of the unexpressed, it poisons the whole being of a person.

Sin pushes the person out of the community of believers, and being away from other Christians prevents us from receiving the benefit of accountability. It's a vicious cycle. As the saying goes, prayer prevents us from sin, and sin prevents us from prayer. If you're