CWRm

GREG ALBRECHT

"Have I truly accepted Christ?"

Q When I asked for salvation at a younger age, a part of me wondered if I was truly accepted by Christ. I held to some bad theology and thought I'd committed the unpardonable sin in the past. I literally cried for forgiveness (wondering, "Is it even possible for me!"). But I was still not 100% completely convinced Jesus' sacrifice would apply to my particular sin.

I believed in him entirely as the King and Source of salvation. I believe he died for our sins. I also looked to him in faith and begged for his help.

So was asking that enough to be saved? Was it turning to him?

Or because I didn't trust completely that his sacrifice covered *me* and *my* sin, was I falling short of actually believing in him for salvation, even though I invited him into my life if he was willing? I hope that just turning and asking him is enough, but I'm confused.

A It seems your main question is "was Jesus' sacrifice able to forgive my particular sin?" That question extrapolates the worries we may have, and reasonable doubts as to why God might not have forgiven, restored and redeemed us. Worries and concerns like:

1) What if I believed some "bad theology" at the time
2) Was just asking enough to be saved, if I still had doubts?
3) Did I trust him *enough*—or did I fall short?

Your concerns and worries are based on responses and actions that *you* have taken or not taken. Concerns and worries that we have about God forgiving us often center on whether *we* "did enough" at the time.

> **The gospel of Jesus Christ insists that the relationship to which God invites us is based on HIS goodness, not our own.**

Let me assure you—no, neither you, nor I, nor anyone ever "did enough" when we asked God to forgive us. That is why, of course, we asked God.

Our confusion is indeed a matter of trust, and our confusion often flows out of performance-based, legalistic assumption about how God relates to us.

Christ-less religion gives us the notion that our performance, duties and/or actions are at least in part responsible for what God does. If that's the case, then we are all sunk!

But the gospel is good news, not bad news. The gospel says God forgives us even though we did not, do not, nor ever will, do enough to deserve it, understand it, appreciate it or fully embrace it.

The gospel of Jesus Christ insists that the relationship to which God invites us is based on *his* goodness, not our own. Even the act of turning to God or asking to receive forgiveness is a gift we receive from him, for the Bible insists that humans are not naturally disposed to ask God to forgive them. That is, if you like, the only thing we need to do—ask for and accept his forgiveness.

You mention the term "unpardonable sin"—the only unpardonable sin is believing that God will not pardon sin.

It's unpardonable because God does not force us to receive his pardon.

He offers his forgiveness and pardon, and we must accept it—we must accept that he is big enough and good enough to do what we cannot. So yes, Jesus' sacrifice is able to cover all our sins—*all*. It is "big" enough, "strong" enough and "righteous" enough.

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him."
—1 John 5:14-15 ❑