

Homologeo

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Promise (Bible Doctrine) + Faith = Faith-Rest Life

2 Peter 1:12 Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you *already* know *them*, and have been established in the truth which is present with *you*.

2 Peter 1:13 I consider it right, as long as I am in this *earthly* dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder,

2 Peter 1:14 knowing that the laying aside of my *earthly* dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

2 Peter 1:15 And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

Some doctrines, like eternal security, are important to teach repeatedly to “remind” you of its importance and so that you will be able to call it to mind when challenged.

Let us start today’s lesson with a reading from L. S. Chafer’s book *He That Is Spiritual*. It is available on-line in the public domain¹.

“1 John 1:1 to 1 John 2:2 is the second major passage concerning the Father's dealing with His children who have sinned. John, the expert witness with regard to the blessedness of unbroken communion and fellowship with the Father and with His Son, writes these things that we also may have fellowship. "God is light," or perfect holiness. If we should say that we have fellowship with Him and are, nevertheless, walking in darkness (sin), we lie and do not the truth. On the other hand, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Sinless perfection is not demanded by this passage. It is not a command for the Christian to *become* the light, or what God alone is: it is rather that there may be an immediate adjustment to the light which God has shed into the life by the Spirit. He has required of us *confession*. When He convinces us of sin, or is grieved by sin, that sin is to be dealt with *at once*. The passage goes on to state that there is only one condition for the cure of the effect of sin in the believer's life: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). It is not *mercy* and *kindness*. He is *faithful* and *just* to forgive, and it is all granted on the one condition of *confession*. He is "faithful" to His child; for we are dealing always and only with our Father (1 John 2:2). He is "*just*" because the atoning Blood has been shed to cover the condemning power of every sin (John 5:24). Thus in perfect righteousness the Father's forgiveness is exercised toward His child.”

¹ <https://lewissperrychafer.org/Spirituality.pdf>

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

“Divine forgiveness is never an act of leniency. God can righteously forgive only when the full satisfaction of His holiness has been met. The root meaning of the word forgive, in the Scriptures, is remission. It represents the divine act of separating the sin from the sinner. Human forgiveness is merely a lifting of the penalty: divine forgiveness is exercised only when the penalty, according to the terms of His infinite righteousness, has first been executed on the sinner, or his Substitute. This was true in the Old Testament: "The priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him" (Leviticus 4:35). The forgiveness was possible with God, only when there had been a full atonement for sin. So in the New Testament, or after the sacrifice has been made at the Cross for us, we are told that the Blood of Christ *has* become the sufficient atonement for our sins. "This is my Blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). All divine forgiveness whether toward the unsaved or the saved, is now based on the shed Blood of Christ. His Blood answers the last demand of a holy God. When we were saved He forgave us "all trespasses" (Colossians 2:13). This is *judicial* forgiveness and means the removal of the grounds of condemnation *forever*. There is still parental forgiveness to be exercised toward the sinning child. It is not exercised in order to rescue the child from destruction and condemnation; but it is exercised in order to restore him from a state wherein he is out of fellowship, into the full blessing of communion with the Father and with His Son. It is wholly within the family circle and the restoration is unto the full enjoyment of those blessings. It is not restoration to *sonship*,—of that the Bible knows nothing. It is restoration to *fellowship*.”

“The defilement of a Christian may be forgiven and cleansed on the one condition of a confession which is prompted by true heart-repentance. We are not forgiven our sins because we ask to be forgiven. It is when

Homologeo 1 John 1:1-2:2

we confess our sins that we are forgiven. It will not do to substitute prayer for confession, though prayer may be the means of expressing a true sorrow for sin. Multitudes are praying for forgiveness who have made no confession of their sin. There is no Scripture for the child of God under grace which justifies such a substitution.”

“The truth embodied in this passage cannot apply to unsaved people. They are forgiven as a part of their whole salvation when they *believe*. The child of God is forgiven when he makes a full *confession*.”

I want to stress the difference between judicial forgiveness and “parental forgiveness.” One refers to eternal forgiveness of sin. The other refers to temporal forgiveness which allows for fellowship.

The key word that Chafer uses is “confess.” This is from the Greek word *homologeo*. Having grown up in the Catholic Church, the word confess years ago meant something a bit different than what I understand it to mean from the Bible now. Some pastors like to use the word “to name” a sin. The obvious question then becomes, “What if I don’t know the name of the sin?” So, before we delve into 1 John 1:9, let us study the Greek word *homologeo*. It has several meanings. I am going to use a particular lexicon² as a guide on this journey. That is to the point out the spectrum of meanings.

² F Wilbur Gingrich and Bauer, W. (1957). *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

Here are the five different meanings according to the Bauer & Gingrich lexicon³:

Promise, assure

Agree, admitted

Confess in both judicial language and in religious and moral usage

Declare (publicly), acknowledge, confess something

Praise.

1. Promise, assure

Promise that God made to Abraham Acts 7:17

Stephen gave his testimony before the Sanhedrin just before they stoned him in Acts chapter 7. He gave the history of Israel and the promise of God to Abraham. God is said to assure Abraham of the promise. This assurance is referred to by the Greek word *homologeo*.

Acts 7:17 “But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured (homologeo) to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,

This is an interesting usage since it is God that is “confessing/assuring.” God agreed with Himself.

Promise with an oath Matthew 14:7

³ F Wilbur Gingrich and Bauer, W. (1957). *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Page 571

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

Extensive verses are quoted from Matthew here to give the context. This emphasizes the intensity of the word *homologeo* in this passage. Herod is agreeing to something he wanted to do but refused to do previously because he was afraid of how the people would respond. Because he gave his word as a promise he did it anyhow. He did it because of his promise (*homologeo*) plus oath.

Herod was Herod Antipas, king/Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea⁴. He wanted to kill John the Baptist because of things he said. But he did not want to kill John the Baptist because he feared the people who thought of him as a prophet. The term might be cognitive dissonance.

Matthew 14:3 For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip.

Matthew 14:4 For John had been saying to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.”

Matthew 14:5 Although Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded John as a prophet.

Here Herod is ambivalent. He wants to put John the Baptist to death but is afraid of an uprising if he does. The people regard John as a prophet.

There is a recurrent theme in the gospels. The people see the truth. But, the religious leaders try to hide the truth.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herod_Antipas

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

We saw last week that a crowd watched Jesus heal a blind man. That was a clear indication that He was the chosen one of God, the Messiah. Yet, the Pharisees rejected Jesus out of their intense hatred of Him. Here in Matthew the people correctly identify John the Baptist as a prophet. But Herod, because of his hatred of John, wanted to kill him. Interesting parallels.

Matthew 14:6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before *them* and pleased Herod,

Matthew 14:7 so *much* that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked.

The word promised (*homologeo*) is amplified by the use of an oath. The word for "oath" is also used of a "vow." Not only did Herod promise, but he vowed to keep his promise.

Matthew 14:8 Having been prompted by her mother, she *said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist."

Matthew 14:9 Although he was grieved, the king commanded *it* to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests.

So we have two uses of the word *homologeo* to indicate a promise. Note that in the second one, Herod agrees to something he was hesitant to do previously. But now, he promised with an oath. He agreed to give her what she wanted.

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

2. **Agree, admitted. Hebrews 11:13**

Hebrews chapter 11 is the hall of fame of Old Testament believers.

Hebrews 11:13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises (not our word), but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed (*homologeo*) that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

The word for promises is not the word *homologeo*. The words “having confessed” is a translation of the word *homologeo*. I would prefer a translation as “admitted” rather than “confessed.” Or even “acknowledged” or “declared.”

3. **Confessed. In judicial language make a confession.**

Confess Acts 24:14

Per GotQuestions.org: “Felix was the governor of Judea and Samaria when the apostle Paul was arrested in Jerusalem for preaching the gospel (Acts 23:35). Because a mob was planning to kill Paul before he could come to trial, the Roman commander hustled Paul away in the night, accompanied by two hundred soldiers, to Caesarea so that his case could be heard by Governor Felix (Acts 23:23–24).”

What follows is an excerpt from Paul’s defense of his actions in front of Felix. Governor Felix will make a determination based upon Paul’s argument.

Acts 24:14 But this I admit (*homologeo*) to you, that according to the Way which they call a

sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;

“Admit” or even “declare” is a better translation than “confess” in my opinion. Even, acknowledge is OK. I am perhaps a bit prejudiced against the word “confess” since I associate the Catholic use of that word which is not how I understand “confess” today.

Religious and moral usages 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:5 provides the context of “God is light.”

1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

The “confess” of 1 John 1:9 is embedded in five “if..then” statements. In the syntax, the “then” is omitted as being understood. These “if” statements are “third class.” If + subjunctive. That means maybe we will, maybe we won’t.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

John introduced us to fellowship in verse 3, “so that you too may have fellowship with us.” It is John’s wish and purpose that we have fellowship with him, Jesus and the Father. So John gives us five conditional statements related to this fellowship. This first one is a negative.

1 John 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Here is the positive. Walking in the light as He is in the Light. Remember from the verse 5. God is light and in Him is no darkness (1 John 1:5). The work of Jesus on the cross, the Blood of Christ, paid for all sins. In this case, it not only paid the eternal penalty but it is efficacious to cleanse of sins when we sin and become “unclean.” John is alternating negatives and positives.

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Sin is in the singular pointing to the existence of a sin nature. Each one of us, as believers, continue to have a sin nature. We also have the ability to chose whether we are dominated by the sin nature or by the Holy Spirit. Choice. We have to recognize the existence of our own individual sin nature.

1 John 1:9 If we confess (*homologeo*) our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

A positive. Here is the remedy for individual acts of sin. All we have to do is acknowledge our sins. We don't have to know the name of the sin. We have to realize that what we did was sin. Of course, knowledge of sin comes from study of the Bible.

Again, God is not being lenient. Faithful to His character. Righteousness.

Homologeo
1 John 1:1-2:2

Many throw out 1 John 1:9 as if it were an incantation or amulet. This is a promise from God. It must be combined with faith as per Hebrews 4:1-2. Promise plus faith.

1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

The final negative. Here is the action side of the sin nature. Verse 8 says we each have a sin nature. Status. It is there. This verse says that we will commit acts of sin. We are sinners. The recovery system is acknowledging sin in faith leading to a continuous faith walk and dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

4. **Declare (publicly), acknowledge, confess, also confess that one is something Romans 10:9, 1 John 4:2/2 John 7**

Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

Romans 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses (*homologeo*), resulting in salvation.

Context. Context. Context.

Romans 9-11 deals with Israel.

Words have multiple meanings which depend upon context. Paul uses the word “justification” to refer to phase 1 salvation. He is using “salvation” in this passage to mean deliverance of the nation. Remember both in the

Homologeo 1 John 1:1-2:2

Hebrew and in the Greek, the words translated “to save” also mean “to deliver.”

From Robby Dean:

“According to these verses, in order to be saved (contextually meaning to be delivered from a physical catastrophe), Israel will need to respond to Jesus’ claim to be the God-Man Messiah. As a nation, they must reverse course and publically admit Jesus is the Sovereign God and then they will be delivered. Rom 10:9-10 is not talking about personal justification, but emphasizes the final rescue of national Israel on the basis of their recognition of the deity of Christ and His substitutionary atonement for their sin. Paul states this as a universal principle to show that in the same way that confession of Jesus as God and trusting Him leads to the national deliverance of Israel, so this same trust in Jesus by all, including Gentiles, can lead to their deliverance from God’s wrath, divine judgment in time, as well⁵.”

This quote is taken from a paper written by Robby Dean. See the footnote for a link to that paper. It contains a thorough examination of this passage.

5. Praise Hebrews 13:15

Hebrews 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise (*homologeo*) to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

From Robby Dean:

“The sacrifice of praise to God is simply recognizing that God gets the credit for what God does in our life, and we don't take credit for it. We

⁵ https://deanbibleministries.org/dbmfiles/notes/believe_confess.pdf

Homologeo 1 John 1:1-2:2

express our gratitude and our thanks to God for what He has done and what He has provided for us. This is expressed audibly, which is why it is called in the next phrase "the fruit of our lips." This is an appositional phrase that defines what the sacrifice of praise is. It is something that is stated. It is not something that is simply quietly acknowledged in silent prayer but something that when we're in conversation with people or we are in certain kinds of settings with other believers where we can express verbally and audibly our thanks, our gratitude to God for what He has done for us.”

“Then this is further expanded in the next phrase "giving thanks to His name." The phrase there for giving thanks is a participial clause and a participial clause that is related instrumentally to the main verb which is "let us offer." Let us offer by – and it's not giving thanks. That word is not there. It is a word that some of you have heard many, many times. It is the Greek word *homologeo*, which means to confess, to acknowledge, to admit something. So what he is saying is "therefore by Him that is Christ let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God that is the fruit of our lips by acknowledging His name" – by acknowledging His name. Whenever we read something of this nature related to His name that always relates to His character and bringing the focal point in any situation or circumstance back to the fact that it is God and His character of love and grace that has provided this for us.⁶”

6 <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/hebrews-menuitem/message/215-sacrifice-and-service/read>