

Discussion Questions

Make a list of the different symbols for the world's major religions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism/Taoism, and so on. Why is the cross the symbol that most associate with Christianity?

Though most people are willing to say, "I'm not perfect," few are willing to accept that such imperfections separate them from God. Why?

In our modern world, what has taken the place of "sin" in our vocabulary and thinking? What is the result?

Designate someone in the group as a reader and have him or her find Isaiah 53:6 in the Bible. Have everyone else in the group extend their left hand, palm up, and have them place an object in the open palm. Explain that the left hand in this exercise represents our life and the object represents the sin that we carry. Have the members of the group extend their right hand, palm up, and explain that the right hand will represent Jesus in this exercise. Have the designated reader read Isaiah 53:6. When the reader gets to the line, "and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all," have everyone transfer the "sin" from their left hand to their right hand. When the object is in their right hand, they should return their left hand to the original position, palm open and empty.

In Chapter 19 (pages 175-182), Tom wrote that, because Christ carried away the sin of those who belong to him, God can release us, restore us, and receive us. Review that chapter and answer these questions: From what can God release us? To what can God restore us? Where can God receive us?

Most believers have a story of the life-events that led them to place their trust in Christ. Ask the believers in the group if they are willing to tell their story.

This Week's Assignment

Read Chapters 20-22 in *The Anchor Course*

The Anchor Course



“I Believe in the
Forgiveness of Sins”

Your Life: A Brief History

Colossians 1:21-23(Msg)

You yourselves are a case study of what he does. At one time you all had your backs turned to God, thinking rebellious thoughts of him, giving him trouble every chance you got. But now, by giving himself completely at the Cross, actually dying for you, Christ brought you over to God's side and put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence. You don't walk away from a gift like that! You stay grounded and steady in that bond of trust, constantly tuned in to the Message, careful not to be distracted or diverted.

PAST: "I was _____ from God."

Verse 21, "At one time you all had your backs turned to God, thinking rebellious thoughts of him, giving him trouble every chance you got."

Luke 18:10f—

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Mark 2:17 (NLT), "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call sinners, not those who think they are already good enough"

PRESENT: "I am _____ to God's side."

Verse 22, "But now, by giving himself completely at the Cross, actually dying for you, Christ brought you over to God's side."

Use the space below to copy the illustration used in the talk:

FUTURE: "I will be _____ before God."

Verses 22-23, Christ...put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence."
