

## March 24

**1 John 1:9 (AMPC)** If we [freely] admit that we have sinned *and* confess our sins, He is faithful and just (true to His own nature and promises) and will forgive our sins [dismiss our lawlessness] and [continuously] cleanse us from all unrighteousness [everything not in conformity to His will in purpose, thought, and action].

Roger was about to leave for work when he decided to take out the trash. He deposited the trash in the trash can before getting in the car. Before he drove off, he retrieved the trash bag and put it in the car. He dragged that trash around with him all day. It hampered his meetings and his lunch, but he would not let go of it. When he returned home that evening, he decided it was time to throw out the trash for good. However, as he stood over the opened trash can, Roger hesitated. He would begin to throw away that trash only to pull it back. He simply could not put away the trash and walk away.

Carol and I love the Calvin and Hobbes cartoons. I was rereading one of the books when I came across a strip where Calvin insults Susie, the girl next door, and makes her cry. He converses with Hobbes, his stuffed tiger Calvin brings to life with his imagination. Calvin is bothered that he upset Susie so Hobbes suggests he apologize. After hesitating, Calvin tells Susie he is sorry. Susie admits Calvin hurt her feelings, but she forgives him. Calvin immediately feels better, glad that the incident is over, and runs off to play. I immediately thought that should be our reaction when we ask Jesus – or anyone - for forgiveness. If we admit and confess our sins, Jesus forgives us and cleanses us. That should be the end. However, how many of us act like Roger by carrying around the trash of guilt and remorse? How many of us replay our mistakes and seek forgiveness over and over? When we honestly repent, Jesus forgives us and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. We should stop carrying around the “trash” of our failures, weaknesses, sins, etc. This does not mean we return to our old ways. It means that we let the trash stay in the trash can to be thrown out. Then, like Calvin, we rejoice in the Lord for His faithfulness, compassion, and forgiveness.