

THE proof of satisfaction [*i.e., that we have thoroughly repented of our sins and corrected ourselves*] and pardon [*of our sins*] is for us to have expelled the love of them from our hearts. For each one may be sure that he is not yet free from his former sins as long as any image of those sins which he has committed or of others like them dances before his eyes, and I will not say a delight in – but the recollection of – them haunts his inmost soul while he is devoting himself to satisfaction for them and to tears. And so one who is on the watch to make satisfaction may then feel sure that he is free from his sins and that he has obtained pardon for past faults, when he never feels that his heart is stirred by the allurements and imaginations of these same sins. Wherefore the truest test of repentance and witness of pardon is found in our own conscience, which even before the day of judgment and of knowledge, while we are still in the flesh, discloses our acquittal from guilt, and reveals the end of satisfaction and the grace of forgiveness. And that what has been said may be more significantly expressed, then only should we believe that the stains of past sins are forgiven us, when the desires for present delights as well as the passions have been expelled from our heart.

St John Cassian, *Conference of Abbot Pinufius*, ch. v,
NPNF, Second Series, Vol. XI, p. 498



ROM. 2:15 SOMEONE WAS ASKED, ‘When will a man know that he has received the remission of his sins?’ He answered, ‘When in his soul he becomes conscious that he has completely hated them with his whole heart, and when he governs himself in his external actions in a manner opposed to his former way of life. Such a man, as having already hated his sin, is confident that he has received remission of his sins by reason of the good witness of his conscience which he has acquired, after the saying of the Apostle, “A conscience uncondemned is a witness of itself.”’

St Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetical Homily 28*, p. 266

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