

Psalms 32 - A Deeper Examination of Sin and Forgiveness

A sermon by Nathan Leal



By Nathan Leal

(Note – this sermon is not just for non-Christians, nor is it only for those who are struggling with their salvation. This message is for everyone who wants to be an overcoming disciple of God. It goes deep into an examination of sin and forgiveness. My prayer is that this message blesses you and helps to strengthen and encourage you in your walk with God.)

Today, we are going to examine the topic of sin and forgiveness. It is going to be an in-depth study that will bless you. So please grab your Bible and take a lot of notes. And my hope is that this information will be a blessing and a help to you. After you have listened to this program, please share it with your loved ones and your friends. If you know someone who be struggling in their walk with Christ, share this message with them.

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To begin, I want it to be known that this sermon is not just for non-Christians, nor is it only for those who are struggling with their salvation. This message is for everyone who wants to be an overcomer and a disciple of God.

[In part one of this written topic](#), we examined the beginning of Psalms 32, where we broke down the importance of repentance. We also looked at how dangerous it is to harbor sin, and procrastinate against repentance. The [audio sermon is available at this link](#).

Today's Sermon

In the session, we are going to take a deeper look at what sin and forgiveness is.

It is very important to do this, because it is vital to have a firm foundation that is centered around Jesus. Our foundation of knowledge must understand His sacrifice on the cross that gives us eternal life. But in addition, in this life there are many benefits to understanding salvation, because it enables us to tap into the power of His resurrection and live our lives abundantly.

The amazing thing about the Gospel is that on one hand, it is very simple; so simple, that a child could understand it...

"Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." Luke 18:17

...but on the other hand, it can be very deep because it's also a great mystery. The Gospel is a mystery folks. Paul tells us this in his writings. It's a great mystery, because there is so much to learn about it. He also mentions this in Ephesians 2:7 -

"That in the ages to come, He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

This is incredible, because it means that when we are in Heaven, God is going to continue to reveal to us the riches of the Gospel throughout the coming ages. This will be forever and ever!

This means there's a lot to learn. So let's find that treasure.

Psalms 32 – A Gold Mine for Repentance.

Psalms 32 consists of eleven verses. The back story of the Psalm begins on a sad note where David gives us a glimpse of his struggle, which was a low point of his life. It included adultery with Bathsheba and all of

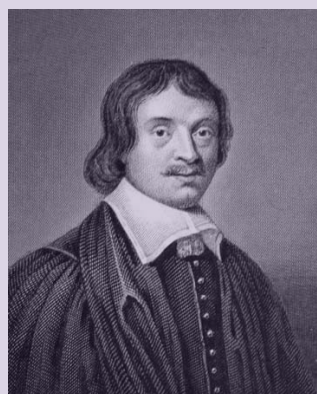
the other sins that went along with it. We covered this in the previous sermon, and as I stated back then, this Psalm provides a template for all of us to use when seeking forgiveness, but it goes deeper than that. It also explains the levels of sin, and the power of God's forgiveness.

As an aside, there is a debate among some Christians that repentance is not necessary after a person is born again. But this is not true.

Jesus said, *"When you pray, pray this..."* and then He went on to tell us about the importance of repentance and forgiveness in our daily prayers ... *"forgive us of our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."*

Psalms 32 also reveals this. Verse six says, *"for this cause, everyone who is godly shall pray to You in a time when you may be found."*

This is a key point. We must all pray to God in a time when He can be found. This means we should never delay our prayers while we have breath, because we never know if we will see tomorrow. Another thing to note, is this admonition is written for the Godly one who is a follower of our Lord. It is for the Christian – for us.



This means the godly one is not afraid to repent. Asking God to forgive us needs to be regular part of our daily relationship with Jesus. It should never be put off or delayed.

Robert Leighton, the Scottish minister who lived in the 1600s once said, *"He who promises pardon, does not promise tomorrow."*

We should never delay seeking God, because we don't know if we will have a chance tomorrow. Seeking God includes regularly approaching Him in prayer, and dealing with our baggage, and dirty laundry.

Verse nine confirms this. God says, "do not be like the horse or the mule, because they do not come to the master voluntarily."

This reveals God's heart. He wants us to come to Him on our own volition. He wants to fellowship with us, with you my friend.

Spiritual Restoration

Have you ever wondered how spiritual restoration occurs?

What I mean by that is, have you ever wondered what takes place to a human soul when the person repents and asks for forgiveness? Does something actually happen to them?

The answer is yes. Something takes place when we repent. It is supernatural. It is incredible, and it shows us how much God loves us.

When we repent, God does something to us. We will further examine this in a moment, but when a person is forgiven by Jesus, God lifts the burden of sin from them. Literally!

He does this in the spiritual realm, and when it happens, it can be felt by our spirit. I will prove this in a moment. *But the reason that we can feel it is because sin is real.* It is real folks!

SIN – The Ugly Creature

"Sin," is not just a word to give a categorical title to a person's mistake. It is more than that. Sin carries a tangible residue that can be felt by the human spirit and soul, and although it is invisible to the eye, it is not invisible to the soul, nor is its impact invisible to the human body.

Sin is a spiritual cancer. It is like a barnacle that latches onto its victims and holds them in bondage. It is ruthless and unforgiving. It is fierce and will dominate its host with a hunger that always seeks for more, but is never satisfied; nor are its victims ever satisfied.

Instead, the one who is a slave of sin will only become weary, worn-out, weathered and aged. Sin destroys. It is like a rust that oxidizes the soul and leaves a pitted, empty shell. And who wants that? I don't.

My friend, you were not put on this earth to be destroyed by Satan's attractions. You are His workmanship, created for good works in Christ. You were fearfully made by the hand of God, and He has a plan for you. So in spite of the past, and if per chance, you have failed up to this point, today is the day to turn it around.

If you are a Christian who has been struggling, this message is for you. But not just you, it is for everyone, it is for all Christians, because we must never be satisfied with where we are with



God, because until we meet Jesus face-to-face, there is always room for improvement and there is always more of Jesus to discover.

The late evangelist Smith Wigglesworth often said;



“The secret of spiritual success is a hunger that persists ... God was and is looking for hungry, thirsty people.”

So let's examine what Psalms 32 says about this topic. If you have your Bibles turn to Psalms 32. Also get a pen and paper and follow along.

It is a short chapter. It consists of eleven verses. But it reveals volumes. At the beginning, David mentions his need for forgiveness and how distraught he was before he repented. As the chapter progresses, he tells us how beautiful it is to be forgiven, and then he goes into instruction from God, where God begins speaking and tells us how we should interact with Him.

By the end of the chapter, David shares some of the comforting benefits of having peace with God and he mentions in verse seven, that God is, *“our hiding place,”* our protection, our preservation, and He tells us that while we are in the midst of a trial, we can still have a song in our heart, because we can be surrounded with His peace.

God IS our Hiding Place, my friends. He is our hope. He is the only one who can see us through as we navigate the dark days that are here. And even though there may be challenges that seek to encircle us, David tells us that we can be surrounded by praise, worship, and a testimony.

“... You shall surround me with songs of deliverance...”

Those words are not just a faith declaration. They are real! And what price can we place on God's comforting peace, when we are being bombarded by darkness, opposition and confusion? It is priceless my friends, and it is available for you.

Blessed Assurance

Some Christians struggle in their faith, because they say that they want to have security in their salvation, *they just don't feel it*, which leaves them wondering if they are – *okay with God?*

This plight happens from time to time, and what these people are really saying is, *“they want to have blessed assurance that their relationship with God is okay.”*

I have heard a number of preachers argue that when it comes to salvation, it's not about our feelings. Which is true, to a point, because our feelings can deceive us. And most of you know this. Our feelings originate in the mind of man, which is a part of our flesh. So yes, at times people can misread their feelings!

But not always.

Because sometimes our feelings do not originate in the mind. Sometimes they originate in our spirit.



Our spirits can detect things brethren. To be more accurate, *our spirits are able to perceive the disposition of a situation.*

The human spirit can sense when things are

awry, and if a person is struggling with things that are spiritual, they may say, *"I don't feel right about this or that."* ... or maybe they will say something more blunt like, *"I can't feel God anymore. Am I even saved?"*

This happens, and unfortunately, when other Christians hear those words, they may argue and say, *"salvation is not based on feelings. So don't worry about it, because as long as you believe, that's all that matters."*

Some of this is true. Salvation is not based on feelings. Instead, it's based on faith. It is based in our trust in Jesus. It is based in the faith that God forgives us. Therefore, salvation is not based on emotion. However, that does not mean that emotions will not be a part of it. In fact, from what I've observed in the Bible, feelings and emotions will often accompany salvation.



I say this because when a human who has been burdened down by sin finds forgiveness and cleansing from Jesus, something incredible happens to them, and when it does, they are going to feel it.

"What do they feel Nathan?"

Psalms 32 talks about it, so let's take a look at it. To do this, we need to examine some of the original Hebrew words that are found in this Psalm.

Now folks, it's very important to get a hold of this, so please stay with me, because having this knowledge will help Christians to understand the battle against sin and finding forgiveness. I cannot stress it enough.

What I'm about to share is one of the areas of Christianity that most Western Christians are not utilizing, and I believe that if Christians could get a hold of this information, and if preachers would preach this biblical information from the pulpits, and talk about it, and mold their salvation challenge with it, I really, really believe that the salvation experience for a lot of people would be grounded much deeper.

I also believe that if Christians were taught this information, they would be stronger and more stable than they are today, and if the information in this message was applied, we would see a more pronounced Christian longevity in people's lives meaning ... less backsliding.

If Christians understood this information, I don't think we would see the rate of people returning to the world. And like a prison parolee, we wouldn't see the high amount of spiritual *recidivism* that we do today as some of them fall by the wayside.

So getting back to Psalms 32, let's read it.

Psalms 32

1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered.
2. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.
3. When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long.
4. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah
5. I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah
6. For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him.
7. You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah
8. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.
9. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.
10. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; But he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him.
11. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Four Hebrew Words for Sin

To begin, David mentions his sin several times in verse one and two. Also, in the first two verses, David uses four different words to describe, "*sin*" and "*failure against God*," and here's what's interesting, they all have a different meaning!

Think about that. David used four different Hebrew words to describe his moral failure. Why did he do that? It is because each word describes a different spiritual trespass against God.

As I studied each of the four Hebrew words, this Psalm exploded with life and truth. This is why I want to share this information with you, and it is also why I stated that this sermon is very, very important to get a hold of. It is because it will help every Christian to understand the seriousness and gravity of spiritual violations, otherwise known as SIN!

Different Words – Why?

In verse one, David says, "**Blessed is he whose *transgression* is forgiven...**"

He goes on and says, "**whose *sin* is covered.**"

So make note. In verse one, David uses two different words. He says, "*transgression*," and "*sin*." Now hold that thought as we go to verse two.

In verse two, he says, "**Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute *iniquity*,**"

Are you keeping track of this? So far, David has used three words,

1. "transgression"
2. "sin"
3. "iniquity."

He continues and uses a fourth word, "**And in whose spirit there is no *deceit*.**"

So now we have the fourth word, "*deceit*."

When we look at the original meaning of these four Hebrew words for sin, they are all different.

Let me say that again, David used four different words for sin in Psalms 32, verses one and two.

Why did he do that? ***Think about that folks. Why?***

I find this interesting, because Western Christians use these words interchangeably, as if they all had the same meaning. But this is incorrect because the Hebrew words that David used, all have different meanings. As an aside, how many of you have ever heard Christians argue that every sin is the same? Have you ever heard this? Well, guess what my friend? That is not true.

Now, I want to be real clear with what I'm about to say so that I'm not misunderstood...

All sin leads to death! All sin is rebellion against God! All sin goes against His commandments and His principles and statutes. All sin is contrary to God's righteousness. All of it.

However, there are different Hebrew identifiers for different kinds of sin. I guess that is a better way to put it, and David mentions several of them in the first two verses of Psalms 32.

Again, please try to get a hold of this. If perchance in the future, some of you stumble, or blow it, what I'm about to share right here will help when you repent. I really believe that.

Some of you may even be struggling right now with certain sins, so this knowledge will also benefit you, because it will help to identify, categorize, and understand what's going on with your spiritual battle.

We are all in a battle against sin, but true followers of Jesus want to live righteously and obey God.

Oh to be victorious in the dark nights where, *"the spirit is willing, but sometimes the flesh overcomes the inner man?"*



Oh Lord, give victory to your people!

The Hebrew Language has Several Words for Sin

When Psalms 32 mentions sin, it uses four Hebrew terms that describe different types of sin. By the way, there are more than four Hebrew words to describe sin. We will look at a few of them here.

To begin, according to the Bible, not all sin is the same. There are different types of sin, and get this folks, some sins are worse in intensity than others. Now folks, I do not want to confuse what I just said to mean that some sins aren't bad. Because all sin is bad and all sin leads to death.

The book of Romans tells us in Romans 6:23, **"The wages of sin is death."**

Therefore all sin must be dealt with. So let's take a look at the four words for sin that are mentioned in Psalms 32.

Pesha'

In verse one, David begins with... "Blessed is he whose – (**pesha**) – transgression is forgiven."

The word, "transgression" comes from the Hebrew word Pesha' – which is translated – transgression and means – to break away. It also means the act of rebellion.

In addition, Pesha' also means; *to rebel, a deliberate act of rebellion against known law. Violated not for enjoyment, but as an act of defiance and rebellion.*

This is not just missing the mark; this isn't just an innocent mistake. It means an outright defiance like; *'I'm really doing it my way!'*

Chata'ah

David goes on in verse one and says... "Whose – (**Chata'ah**) – sin is covered."

Chata'ah – (translated sin) – this is a more general term that refers to a deliberate offense. It also means *to fall short, to miss the mark*. So now David is admitting that his actions were both *deliberate* and *missed the mark*. He goes on into verse two ...



Avon

Avon – No, this ain't talking about the Avon lady!

Verse two begins with... "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute – (**avon**) – iniquity,"

Avon – (translated iniquity) – this is a term that describes *"going astray. To make crooked."*

It also means – *Perverse, make crooked, act amiss, do wickedly!*

But more than that, it's an act of defiance or rebellion ... and also *it is acting in plain prideful stubbornness*. This is where the phrase *'stiff-necked'* comes from. It doesn't mean wicked. We will get to that in a moment.

Instead, it is when old fashioned human pride and stubbornness digs its heels in and refuses to budge. This sin is very dangerous, because *"stiff-necked,"* people are a high percentage of those who are populating Hell.

Remiyyah

Verse two continues with... “**And in whose spirit there is no deceit.**”

Rem-iyyah is (translated guile or deceit) – this term emphasizes *falsehood or even hypocrisy*. ...

This type of sin operates with lies and deceit. The deception can be towards oneself or toward others.

“**He that worketh (Rem-iyyah) deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.**” Psalms 101:7



David was Kidding Himself

In addition to David’s procrastination towards repentance, he was also operating with deceit, because for a season he was under the false idea that, after he had sinned with Bathsheba, his relationship with God was still okay. Of course, we know he wasn’t okay, and in truth, David was pushing the limits of God’s mercy. However, at the time, David didn’t want to admit this, but after he repented, he looked back and admitted that his spirit was full of deception during the season of his low point.

People who operate under this stronghold, will find it difficult to behold the truth, because when one does not fight against it, the sinful deception will prevent their eyes from seeing the truth. This results in spiritual blindness for the person, and the amazing thing is that most everyone else can see it except the person who is bewitched by it.

Now Let’s Look at an Even Worst Type of Sin...

“Ra” – A Worse Type of Sin

There is one more word for sin that is the worst of all – “**ra.**” David used the term in Psalms 51, and admitted that he was behaving with this sin. This is the worst one out of all of them, because it means – “*to commit utter wickedness and depravity.*”

It means committing an act of evil without any concern that it is wrong or goes against God’s law.

In Genesis 6:5, God uses this word to describe the condition of the world, “**And the LORD saw that the wickedness...of man was great on the earth...**”

The word for wickedness is, “ra.” ... “Ra,” means bad, bad, bad! (That’s my definition.)

The biblical definition means, “*bad, evil, malignant, unpleasant, – giving pain, unhappiness, misery to others. To be displeasing, and worse than worst, to be vicious in disposition, and wicked in ethics.*”

It is wicked folks!

It means to be wicked in general things, wicked of thoughts, wicked of deeds, and wicked of actions. It also means to cause injury, distress, and misery. To commit this type of sin is to sink into the depths of total desolation and depravity.

Translation – don't do it, my friend. It is evil.



But get this, in Psalms 51, David admitted that he had committed this type of sin. He says in verse four; “**Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil, (ra) in Thy sight...**”

Sin Has Categories?

When the high priest confessed the sins of Israel on Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement, he confessed to some of the different categories that I mentioned above. He confessed to *inadvertent sins, intentional sins, rebellious sins, and the sins of defiance and wickedness.*

Again, I'm not saying that some sins are okay, because they're not. All sin will result in spiritual death. However, it is interesting that there are different categories of sin in the

Bible. I also find it interesting that David confessed to committing several of them.

Why?

Why did he do that? The answer is easy. It is because he had to tell the truth. He had to own it. He had to take responsibility for all of them.... which were several.

At the beginning of Psalms 32, he mentions many of them, and then in Psalms 51, he admits to the utmost wicked type of sin. Which is true. He betrayed and murdered a close and loyal friend. It doesn't get any worse than that folks. But the good news is that he admitted to all of it....

Which leads me to another thought. Now folks think about this, David confessed all of his sins.

He did it in a beautiful manner. He was contrite. He was humble. He wept. He became an open book. He was poor in spirit. He admitted to all of it. His confession was very comprehensive. It was complete.



The Sinner's Prayer – Incomplete?

So this is what I am wondering about. Why does the “sinner's prayer” not resemble this? It doesn't folks.

The “*sinner’s prayer*,” is very broad, because it doesn’t really talk about sin very much. Yes I know, it mentions the word “*sin*,” but it does it in passing. It doesn’t break down the different types of sin. When a person prays it, they are not really admitting to their wickedness. They don’t admit that they have been rebellious against God.



The prayer doesn’t mention that they might have been a rat, or scoundrel, or a wife beater, or a thief, or adulterer, or a lying cheat. None of these things is mentioned in that prayer.

Usually, the only thing that a person says is, “forgive me for my sins.” But is the person conscience of the sins they are asking about? Do they understand the depravity of sin? Have they reached the point of utter hatred against sin?

Do they really want Jesus to save them from their wicked behavior? Or do they just want to become a member of the cool mega-church?

All good questions, huh folks?

Now for the record, I am not saying that people do not get saved when they pray the sinner’s prayer. I know they do. ... Well, maybe some of them.

I say this because it happened to me. I prayed the sinner’s prayer in my bedroom when I was 17 years old. But when I did, I included some of the rotten stuff that I was. I told God that I was a mess. I admitted that I no longer wanted to take part in carousing or those types of things, and it was amazing, Jesus heard my prayer and showed up in my bedroom. My life would never be the same.

Why am I saying all this? Am I implying that if someone doesn’t itemize all of their sins, they will not be saved? No. I’m not saying that. However, I am saying that for some people, there seems to be a disconnect between the sinners prayer and its purpose, because that’s the bottom line folks.

The purpose of the “sinners prayer,” is to pull a human soul out of hell, and if that’s the case, shouldn’t we make sure that the cord is legitimate?

I think so. And perhaps what I’m sharing right here might explain why so many people go to church, but they do not seem to display a change of heart.

This is the Bible folks. It’s the Word of God. And if the Bible presents an avenue toward salvation that includes more honesty in the confession of repentance, then shouldn’t we also do that?

I say yes, and that’s why we are talking about it. I also hope that this gives God’s people something to think about.

The Cleansing Power of God’s Forgiveness

Okay, we talked about sin. Now, it is time to talk about “forgiveness.” So get ready my friends,

this is a good stuff.

As we just observed, Psalms 32 uses several different definitions for sin, which is a benefit for us, because it reveals that sin is not something to be taken lightly.

Sin carries a heavy burden. It causes grief, sadness, depression, and all of the other negatives that exist in this fallen world.

It also parades itself as a glossy advertisement, but in reality, it's presentation leads its victims into a trashbin of bondage.



Sin causes bondage, my friends, and nothing in this physical world can break that bondage except the power of Christ through His shed blood.

That's what I want talk about right now. Most of you know that the blood of Jesus can cleanse us of sin. But how? Have you ever wondered about that?

Have you ever asked, "how can the blood of Jesus remove sin?"

Because after all, were talking about blood here, and a bloodstain is hard to remove from clothing and upholstery, right? So have you ever wondered how the blood of Jesus removes sin from a human soul?

The Gospel is a Mystery

Did you know that the Scriptures say the gospel was a mystery. Paul said it. He tells us the gospel was a mystery, and perhaps, while we are here on earth, the mystery will not be fully grasped, but that's where faith comes in. Even though we may not fully understand the glorious treasure of salvation, it is by faith that we believe it, and it is by faith that we receive it.

**"Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began."
Romans 16:25**

The shed blood of Jesus is priceless and His sacrifice for mankind is unspeakable in power and wonder. How many of you can remember singing the song, *"The blood never lose its power,"* or, *"There is power in the blood,"* back in the day? We sang those songs because it's true; the blood of Jesus is powerful. But how does it work? How does it remove sin?

God gives hints throughout the Scriptures, and in Psalms 32, David says something. If you have your Bible, turn to Psalms 32. Look at verse one. I want to zero in on something that David says. Let's read it.

Psalms 32:1 – **"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven..."**

When we read those words in English, they sound pretty standard ... *"It's a blessing to be forgiven of sin."* But when we look in the original text, the Hebrew word for, *"forgiven,"* is *"nasa'."*

"Nasa'," means, *"to lift up, to carry away, to take away."*

So if we were to rephrase it using the Hebrew definition, we would say, *"Blessed is he whose transgression is lifted up and carried away from him."*

I want to pause for a moment, while we think about that. The first verse of Psalms 32 tells us – it is a blessing when our sins are lifted off of us and taken away.

That's amazing! Praise God for His mercy!

Sin is a Parasite



Sin is like a sticky sludge that weaves itself into the fibers of a human body. It not only rests on the surface of the skin, it burrows into the sinew of man, it gets into the muscles, and parks itself into the deepest inner organs, from the top of the crown, to the soles of the feet. It is like a creature from a horror movie, and once it gets in, there is no doctor in the world that can remove it.

There is no earthly medicine that can make it go away. There is no natural remedy that can cleanse it, and it doesn't matter what a person does, there is no way in the natural to remove the residue of sin from a human.

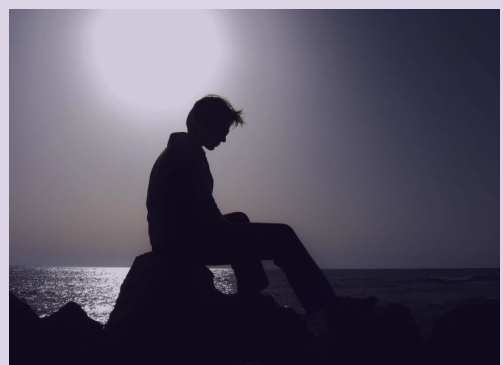
And even worse, sin's contamination is not limited to the physical body, it also contaminates the soul and pollutes the mind.

Most of you know this. Sin does not create peace. It can't. It doesn't relieve tension or stress.

Of course, sin can try to mask those things, but after the medication wears off, the mess is still there, and the sin is still there, which adds to the problem, because every time an unregenerated soul participates in sin, it just adds more layers of residue to their being.

Sin will not go away on its own, and there is no health regiment that can remove it. A person cannot remove sin by drinking apple cider vinegar or green tea.

It cannot be done folks. And how sad is it that so many people will try to do things to mask the poisonous consequences of sin. They will attend motivational conferences. They will read self-help books. They will try Eastern religion. and use meditation tactics, but if the efforts exclude Jesus and His shed blood, the endeavor is in vain. It will be a waste of money.



The efforts will also be a waste of time, because they will never reach beyond the physical realm. They will never be able to tap into the spirit of man and rescue the spirit from the residue of sin.

Blessed is the man whose sin is COVERED!

When we look at it Psalms 32:1, David tells us it is a blessing when a man's transgressions are lifted and carried away from him.

It goes on... In verse two, it says, **"who's sin is covered."**

The Hebrew word for, *"covered,"* means – *"to cover over, to conceal, to clothe."*

What does this mean? This is where it becomes beautiful. Some of you are familiar with those Christian terms which include; "garments, wedding gown, robes of righteousness, white robes, etc," but most church folks don't really think about it.

The Garments

These terms are very important, and they carry a lot of meaning. Remember what Jesus said to the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:17-18?

"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked — "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see."

Jesus mentioned the word, *"naked,"* several times in the verses above. Why? Because it appears that those who have been redeemed must be presented in a certain way, which includes having our sins lifted off of us, and then covered with garments of righteousness.

Saints of God, after Jesus lifts the sin off of us, He then covers us with garments of righteousness. Hallelujah!!

Isaiah 61:10 says;

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,"

Do you see it folks? When Jesus forgives us our sin after we have repented, He literally lifts the sin off of us, and takes it away. This means that He reaches into the deepest recesses of our being and yanks the cancer of sin from our bones, our body and our soul. He takes it away. Praise God! This in itself is a wondrous miracle!

How does He do this? I don't know, but I know



He does, and then after He lifts the sin from us, He clothes us with garments of righteousness to cover our nakedness.

This is key brethren. The process of salvation must include:

1. Repentance,
2. The lifting and removal of sin by Jesus.
3. Being covered by Jesus with garments of righteousness.

Each of these three things cannot stand by themselves. If a person wants to be a Christian, they will not attain it without repentance. Nor can they skip the lifting of sin from their body. This is why it's important to include the gravity of the sin, because if sin is not even mentioned, how can it be lifted?

After repentance is carried out, and after Jesus lifts the sin, (two vital things,) it is very important to take part in number three, which is - *to become clothed with garments of righteousness*.

A lot of folks are confused about this one, and sadly, many of them seek the salvation experience, *but they are never told about the garments of righteousness!*

My friends, without the garments of righteousness, a person will never be accepted by Jesus.

NEVER EVER!!

Jesus reveals this one of His parables. In Matthew 22, He talked about the parable of the King who arranged a marriage for His son. But many of the guests were not interested. So the King told his servants to go to the highways and invite everyone...

10. "So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests...."

So far so good. Unfortunately the parable reveals something very scary...

11. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

12. "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.

13. "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

14. "For many are called, but few are chosen."

This is a scary parable, because it shows the severity of salvation.

WOW!!!

My friends, your salvation cannot be taken lightly. Salvation is not a ticket to be treated anyway that we want. A lot of people in church have been led to believe that after salvation, a person can pretty much do what they want without ramifications... because after all, they said, "the sinners prayer."

The person in the parable above was invited, however, they did not cover themselves with righteousness. What does this mean?

(Note – what I'm about to say right here is not meant to bypass the power of salvation.)

The work of salvation was entirely done by Jesus on the cross. When He said, "it is finished." It meant that the sacrificial offering by Jesus, the Lamb of God was complete. Jesus died for us. He bore the cross and the cost. He did it so that we would not have to. After salvation, it is our faith in Him that ensures our inheritance. It is also His righteousness that covers us, because our righteousness is filthy.



So now that I have said all that, it is important that God's people understand that our relationship with Jesus must also be reciprocal.

In other words, Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving, but sadly a lot of Christians never give back by showing faithfulness toward Him.

Or even worse, a lot of church folks have been led to believe that after a person says the "sinners prayer," they can then do whatever they want for the rest of the lives. Meaning, there is no requirement that they behave in a godly manner.

Great Confusion

In summary, after a person gets saved it is very important that they exhibit a desire for the righteousness of Jesus. The desire must be displayed in their heart as hunger for Jesus and His righteousness. Because by having the desire, God then covers us with His righteousness.

Also, according to the Bible, those who seek to be righteous, are also those who are considered, "*pure in heart.*" Jesus told us in the Beatitudes that the pure in heart will see God.

What happens to the person who is not pure in heart? Will they also see God? Well, what did Jesus say? He said, "**the pure in heart WILL see God.**"

Therefore, it stands to reason that for the person who is, not pure in heart, THEY WILL NOT SEE GOD!

This is a serious matter folks! Being fleshly of heart, is a dangerous proposition. These are Jesus', words not mine. And it is here that a lot of church folks are missing it, because they are falsely believing that they can behave anyway they want, and live however they want, and it will be well with them, because they are under the impression that the, "sinner's prayer" saved them and gave them liberty to sin deliberately.

Danger!!

This type of behavior is very dangerous, because the person in question is showing no regard toward righteousness, or holiness. And thus, their mindset denies the necessity to be clothed in the robe of righteousness, also known as the wedding garment.

As we read in the parable above, this person will not make it to Heaven. Instead Jesus will *bind them hand and foot and throw them into the fires of hell.*

My friends, please make note of what I just said. To deny living righteously is a ticket to the desolation of that place, known as double hocky pucks!!

This is so very important to get a hold of and understand!

The “Christian,” who does not pay heed to this information will not be motivated to water their salvation with the righteous path. Righteousness comes by obeying, loving, and following Jesus.

Again, I am not saying that our righteousness is accomplished by our works, but instead, righteousness is attained by a desire for Jesus.

We must desire Him, my friend.

- We must hunger and thirst for Him.
- We must want to know Him as our best friend in the world.
- We must want to become familiar with His Words found in Scripture.
- We must get to the place where it saddens us when we fail Him.

This is what kinship with Jesus is all about, and the person who has a genuine relationship with Him will not have to worry about not having their wedding garments when Jesus shows up.

Unfortunately, a lot of church folks do not live with a hunger for Jesus. Nor they have an interest in the Bible, or obeying the instructions in the Bible.

Today, we are watching a great falling away, where many evangelicals who claim to be Christians, have no clue about doing their part when it comes to nourishing their salvation.

“I don’t understand Nathan, are you adding to the requirements of salvation?”

After this sermon came out as an audio message, I received several emails from a few folks who were confused, because they wrote me with a concern that, my admonition to seek the garments of righteousness, sounded like I was saying we must work our salvation with own strength.

But I did not say that. Nor do I believe that. We do not work for our salvation. Jesus did the work for us. However, it is up to us *to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.*



This means we must battle against sin and unrighteousness in our lives. But how does one do this? Simple. God's children must stop yielding to temptation.

.. And also stop making excuses.

In addition, it also means if a person is struggling with a stronghold, they must make it a matter of prayer and wrestle against it.

Most church folks today do not wrestle against sin with prayer.

... And worse, many church folks today don’t even pray.
... Nor do they read their Bibles.

... Nor do they take the time to worship God.

Brethren, it is very important that all of God's people understand what I'm saying right here, because failure could mean hearing Jesus say, "friend, where are your wedding garments? And how is it that you came without them?"

I don't want that to happen to anyone. Unfortunately, according to the parable above, it is going to happen to some people... or worse... alot of them!

...How many?

Jesus said... "Many are called, (invited) but FEW are chosen, (receive the call.) This sadly tells us that there will be sad ratio of those who are not ready when it comes to having their garments!!"

Please my friend, make note of what I'm saying here. *We cannot have salvation without our garment of righteousness.*

So how do we get a hold of that garment? Do we just proclaim it? Do we just speak it by a word of faith?

No! It can only be attained when we are steadfast with the Scriptures.

Still Confused?

Let me put it in layman's terms, righteousness is only accomplished by living for God, and living as a disciple of Jesus. Righteousness is not attained by saying that you are a Christian, but ignoring what the Bible says.

If a person ignores the Word of God, and behaves contrary to the Word of God, they will not be exhibiting a desire for the righteousness of Jesus, and thus, they will not possess the garments of righteousness.

Instead, they will be naked when Jesus looks at them, and according to the verses above, Jesus will spew them out of His mouth. He will then have His angels bind them up, and cast them away into outer darkness where there will be much weeping, and the worm never dies. This is serious stuff my friends.

So what should we do? This message is a good reminder for all of us to make sure that we are accomplishing and seeking to attain all the measures for salvation.

This is why Paul tells us in Philippians 2:12, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling."

God Wants to Be Our Shield

We need Him to be our Shield, our Protector, and our Comforter from the bombardment of Hell's arrows that are arriving in this dark hour.

We need His protection from the satanic ambushes that are sure to come. We need His comfort so that we will be able to deal with the evil onslaught that is prevailing against so many people.

Saints of God, we need Him to be our Divine Cover. We need Him to be our eyes, and our ears.

We need to be able to hear His voice, feel His smile, and bask in His comforting touch.

Why? Because it is chaotic out there. It's scary. It's dark, and it's lonely. And He wants to lead us as our Shepherd

So let us do that brethren. Let us seek to attain God's mercy, and get a hold of His loving kindness. It is available for all of us.... It is available for you.

"So how should I pray Nathan?"

Pray from your heart. Share your heart with God. If you are struggling with sin, approach God humbly like David. Lay it all out before Him. God knows about all the stuff. There are no secrets from Him. He just wants all of us to come before Him, and lay all of our burdens at the foot of the cross. If some of you need to repent, this is the time to do it. Please do not delay.

David says this in Psalms 32:6, **"For this cause everyone who is Godly shall pray to You in a time when You may be found."**

So let's do that folks. There is great reward for those who approach the throne of God in prayer.

One of the benefits is receiving guidance from God. God says this in verse eight,...

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye, do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you."

God's guidance is priceless, because He's our Shepherd, and He will show us which direction that we need to be going right now. We need that. Especially in this dark hour, and as the days progress, it's only going to get darker.

Thankfully, Psalms 32 ends with several promises. By the time David gets to the end of the Psalm, his defeat is turned into words of praise towards God.

He testifies that God is the hiding place. And he confesses that God is the one who surrounded us with songs of deliverance and joy, and he ends Psalms 32 on a high note.

"Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart."

I would like to share a prayer.....

"Heavenly Father, I thank you for this message. And I pray that it will not return void. Please allow these words to minister to the hearts of those who are struggling. Let the words minister to the souls that are listening. Let the words not condemn, but instead let the words bring hope and redemption to the many who are out there. Rescue those who are mired in sin. Break the shackles of bondage that are holding them down. Remove the residue of sin from them as they repent, and clothed them with your righteousness. And I thank you for this, in Jesus wonderful name, amen."

Final Thoughts

This message is about finding blessed assurance. And I presented the biblical formula to getting there. Before I leave, I want to mention this. If some of you never felt anything when you got saved, I have a question, “Did you include everything that we just talked about? Were you contrite? Humble? Did you admit that your sins have caused a great big mess in your life, and you need to be rescued? Did you ask God to lift the sin away? And take it away? Did you tell Him you don’t want to live like that anymore?

If you did it sincerely, and were sorry for your sins, then there is a good chance Jesus will show up and do it.

When I got saved, I felt it when the sin lifted. It was like I had been in a dark room, but suddenly, the lights turned on. I also felt the cleansing occur throughout my body. It was incredible. And it was a miracle, because I experienced the spiritual surgery from Jesus. And my friend, you can also experience the same thing.

Do not wait my friend. The time is now.

God bless,

In His Service,
Nathan Leal
Watchman’s Cry

We Hope you were blessed by this Sermon Bible Study

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