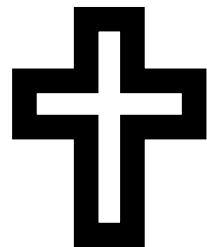


Twelve Lessons
on
The Book of Psalms
Volume Two

by
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CONTENTS

1. CONFESSİON FOR CLEANSİNG – Psalm 51	4
2. WHEN DOES A CHRISTIAN NEED A CLEAN HEART? – Psalm 51:6	7
3. FAITH IN THE FACE OF FEAR – Psalm 54	10
4. HOW TO OVERCOME BEING OVERWHELMED – Psalm 61:1-4	13
5. MY SOUL SHALL BE SATISFIED – Psalm 63	16
6. BLESSINGS OF GOD'S BENEFITS – Psalm 68:19	20
7. THE SUFFERER'S SONG – PSALM 69	22
8. IF GOD EVER HAS HE STILL CAN – Psalm 80	25
9. MAKING WELLS IN THE VALLEY – Psalm 84:6	28
10. REVIVE US AGAIN – Psalm 85:6	31
11. WHEN IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER – Psalm 88	34
12. THE PSALM OF PRAISE – PSALM 100	38

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CONFSSION FOR CLEANSING – LESSON 1

Psalm 51

Introduction: The background for this Psalm is II Samuel 11-12. We read where David lusted after his neighbor's wife, committed adultery, made the husband drunk, had him killed, and then covered the whole affair for at least a year. In the opinion of many, this is one of the greatest Psalms ever written. It is a Psalm of repentance and restoration, a part of everyone's lives. We all fall into sin and come short of God's glory and therefore need to repent and be restored. It was written over 3,000 years ago and yet it is so applicable for us today. This is a Psalm that we can all relate to, because at one time or another we have all been in the same position. We may have never committed adultery, but we have all known the feelings of guilt that are expressed here.

David was not a youth when he fell into these sins; he was a mature man, ruling over a great kingdom. As I ponder that thought the verse comes to mind of I Corinthians 10:12, "Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." There is none exempt from temptation. There is none exempt from failure. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man...." I Corinthians 10:13.

Psalm 51 was David's prayer of confession. Had he not confessed he would have never been cleansed. I John 1:5-2:2 give us God's provision for cleansing. This Psalm comes from a broken heart. There is an awful sense of the exceeding blackness of sin. David is not at all arrogant about his sin. He comes to God with a humble spirit. He cries out to God for mercy, pardon, cleansing, and restoration.

1. This Psalm is Simple

- a. David doesn't "beat around the bush."
- b. He gets right to the point and states the facts clearly.

2. This Psalm is Singular

- a. It's a personal plea.
- b. There are no excuses made and no one else is involved.
- c. It concerns one man's sin.
- d. This is a very personal prayer; note how often David uses "me" and "my sin." His eyes are not on someone else; his eyes are on himself and on his Lord.

3. This Psalm is Sincere

- a. David is dead earnest.
- b. He is not trying to impress anyone. He means business.
- c. These words do not originate in the head, but come from the heart.

4. This Psalm is a Shining Example

- a. It sets forth what we should do in a similar situation.
- b. We need to be honest with God. He already knows us anyway.

Lesson Goals:

1. To study the terrible effects of the sin of adultery.
2. To investigate what it means to confess sin.
3. To examine the extreme price for cleansing sin.

Definitions of Important Terms and/or Phrases:

1. Infinity – A theological term which implies that God is not bound by time and space (Col 1:15; Heb 1:3). God does experience everything that happens within the universe He has created. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground apart from His will. He numbers the very hairs of our head (Matt 10:30). But at the same time, He is not limited to the process of finite space and time for His experience. God is the great and eternal I AM (Ex 3:14) who, like the burning bush before Moses, burns with dynamic activity, yet is not consumed (Ps 139; 147; Isa 45:1). Only an infinite God who is greater than His creation can determine the number of the stars and keep them in their courses. (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
2. Confession – An admission of sins and the profession of belief in the doctrines of a particular faith. In the Bible most of the uses of the word confession fall into one of these two categories. Examples of confession of sin may be found in Joshua's words to Achan (Josh 7:19), in the confession during the Passover during Hezekiah's reign (2 Chron 30:22), and in Ezra's call to the people to admit wrongdoing in marrying pagan wives (Ezra 10:11). (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
3. Cleansing – The prophets spoke of an inner cleansing from sin (Jer 33:8; Ezek 36:33; 37:23). Jesus pronounced the disciples clean (John 13:10) "because of the word" (John 15:3). Cleansing from sin is possible through the blood of Jesus for all who confess their sins (1 John 1:7-9). (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).

I. THE COST OF COMMITTING SIN

A. Falling into lust and adultery seemed to be momentary acts, but what a tremendous price David paid.

1. As we see in Psalm 32:3-4, David paid for his sins physically and became ill.
2. But the Spiritual cost was also great.
 - a. He lost the purity of his heart. Vs. 1-2
 - b. He states his need to be cleansed and washed in Vs. 7
3. Note the words used for sin here:
 - a. Transgressions: This means acts of rebellion, defying God by crossing over the line God has drawn.
 - b. Iniquity: This means inward crookedness, perversity.
 - c. Sin: This means missing the mark, failing to meet God's standard.

B. David's heart was affected

1. Verse 17 suggests that David's heart not only became defiled, but it also became hard.
2. When we harbor sin, it hardens the heart.

C. David's eyes were also affected – Vs. 3

1. All he could see was his sins. All he could see were the results and consequences of sin. This speaks of guilt.
2. People with a dirty conscience are usually on the defensive, wondering what other people may know.
3. Proverbs 28:1, "*The wicked flee when no man pursueth.*"

D. David's Ears were affected – Vs. 8

1. He lost the sound of Joy and Gladness
2. Nothings sounds good to a person out of fellowship with God.

E. David's lips were affected – Vs. 13-15

1. He could no longer testify, witness, or even sing God's praises.
 - a. Luke 12:2 – *"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."*
 - b. I Cor. 4:5 – *"The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."*
 - c. Ecc. 12:14 – *"For God shall bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be bad."*
 - d. Job 20:27 – *"The heaven shall reveal his iniquity"*
 - e. Num. 32:23 – *"Be sure your sin will find you out"*

2. Truth – God will not let anybody sin and get away with it, even His children,
 - a. It doesn't matter if you are a preacher, you're still going to get caught.
 - b. It doesn't matter if you've been a deacon for thirty years, be sure your sin will find you out
 - c. You can be a S.S. teacher, singer, usher, choir leader but no one is above the judgment of God on sin.

3. Theological Statement – "Infinite perfection puts about God infinite possibilities"
 - a. Means there are some things God cannot do
 - b. God cannot keep men out of Hell if they are sinners
 - c. God cannot sin – Cannot do wrong
 - d. God cannot let someone sin and get away with it
 - (1) Abraham didn't – It has caused problems ever since Ishmael and Isaac were children
 - (2) Moses didn't get away – He didn't get to go into Canaan
 - (3) Nebuchadnezzar – Had to crawl on all fours like a wild man
 - (4) Belshazzar – Desecrated the utensils of the Temple and God killed him for it
 - (5) Samson – Laid his head in the lap of a harlot and it cost him his strength and eventually his life
 - (6) Jacob – Wrestled with God all night and came away limping
 - (7) Naomi – Backsliding cost her the three men in life that she loved – Husband and two sons
 - (8) Lot – Family, Fortune, Future

4. Sin Affects The Body

- a. God has organized this universe – Against sin
 - (1) When you break natural laws – it's harmful to your body
 - (2) If you live clean, eat clean, think clean – body will stay in good shape

- (3) Diet – We eat too much sugars, starches, high cholesterol food – high-blood, overweight, heart trouble – nothing but we've broken God's law.
 - (4) Drink – Get cirrhosis of liver
 - (5) Smoke – Cancer, emphysema, heart disease
 - (6) Chew or Dip – Throat cancer, stomach cancer or ulcers
 - (7) Dope – wear out body with speed or nervous breakdown with downers
 - (8) Sex – Sexually Transmitted Diseases
 - (9) Queers – Aids
 - (10) Sun Bathers – Cancer of Skin
 - (11) Hatred, bitterness, envy, jealousy – cause you to have indigestion or ulcers
5. Sin Affects the Mind
- a. Sin affects your thoughts – Sin walks across your brain and leaves footprints like you would leave footprints in the sand.
 - b. Your thoughts – Sin plows a furrow in your brain like you plow furrows in the field.
 - c. Herod – Killed John the Baptist – When Jesus came preaching he thought it was John risen from the dead – His sin was in his thoughts
 - d. If you sin your memory will be like 10,000 mirrors constantly showing you what you did, 10,000 snakes constantly biting you showing you what you did, 10,000 voices in the darkness constantly reminding you of what you did
6. Sin Affects your Children
- a. Exodus 20:5 – *"Visit the iniquity of the Fathers upon the children unto the third and forth generation"* – Also repent – Exodus 34:7, Numbers 14:18
 - (1) Lev. 26:39 – *"In the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them."*
 - (2) Num. 14:33 – *"And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms"*
 - (3) Job 21:19 – Talking about wicked man – *"God layeth up iniquity for his children"*
 - (4) Isaiah 14:21 – *"Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers"*
 - (5) Jeremiah 32:18 – *"They....recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them."*
 - b. Scientist – Trying to stop this thing of the iniquities of the Fathers being visited to the 3rd & 4th generation – But they can't!
 - c. Someone said – Best way to train a child is 100 years before it is born.
 - d. With this Age of Immorality – God help the babies of the next generation!

II. THE COST OF CONFESSING SIN

A. True confession of sin involves repentance, a sincere change of mind.

- 1. During that year when David covered his sins, he thought he had gotten away with it.
- 2. But when Nathan confronted him with his sins, David's heart smote him and he repented.

B. There is a difference between admitting sins and confessing sins.

- 1. I John 1:9 – *"Confess"* – Literally means “to say the same thing”
- 2. Confession is saying the same thing about our sins that God says and truly meaning it.
- 3. David went so far as to admit his sinful nature, born in sin – Vs. 5
- 4. Beware of cheap confession and crocodile tears.
 - a. Merely praying with the lips is not confession.
 - b. “Lord, I have sinned, please forgive me!” is not confession.
 - c. True Confession cost something – A broken spirit and a contrite heart – Vs. 17
 - d. This does not mean that we do penance and earn forgiveness, but it does mean that we are so broken by our sins that we hide nothing from God.

III. THE COST OF CLEANSING SIN

A. Good works cannot cleanse sin, not even religious works and sacrifices – Vs. 16-17

B. Only the Blood of Jesus Christ can wash away sins. Hebrews 10:1-18; I John 1:7-2:2

- 1. Forgiveness is not a cheap thing. It cost Jesus everything.
- 2. Jesus laid down the royal robes of glory to be born of a virgin. He lived thirty three years perfect. He died on the Old Rugged Cross and all of it was because of forgiveness in our behalf.

C. We receive forgiveness for what He has done, not because of our prayers and tears.

D. This high cost of cleansing ought to make us hate sin and want to turn from it!