

When I Have Sinned  
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When you carry UNCONFESSED SIN around with you everywhere you go (drop bag)...it's a heavy load! (Visual...bag with a heavy load inside)

- You and I know that from experience.
- King David knew that too. And he wrote about it in Psalm 51.
- Psalm 51 is David's plea to God for forgiveness after his sin with Bathsheba.
- It's a model to all of us of how WE should deal with personal sins.
  
- Let me illustrate what I mean as we get started.
- This bag has a heavy load inside (verify with folks on the front row)
- I need a volunteer who has a good strong arm to hold come up here and hold this bag for a minute or two. (Explain how to stand and hold the bag of bricks)

Now while you stand there let me give some background to this story. Most all of us remember what happened in Second Samuel 11 & 12. But here's a refresher:

- In the spring of the year when kings went to war...David decided to stay home.
- As he walked on the palace roof he saw a beautiful woman bathing.
- Who IS that INCREDIBLE CREATURE? SIN NUMBER ONE: LUST.
- Turns out she was BATHSHEBA the wife of one of his mighty men URIAH the HITTITE. SIN NUMBER TWO: COVETING HIS NEIGHBOR'S WIFE
- David sent for her. You see kings can begin believing their own press.
- Even a man after God's own heart.
- They began a torrid affair. SIN NUMBER THREE: ADULTERY.
- Then she sent word she was pregnant.
- Now David needed a cover up. SIN NUMBER FOUR: LYING AND DECEPTION.
- David sent for Uriah and had him come home from the battle so he could sleep with his own wife and believe the child was his.
- But Uriah had more INTEGRITY than his King and he refused TWICE to allow himself the pleasure of being with his wife while his men were dying in battle.
- So David hatched a more EXTREME CONSPIRACY. He had Uriah sent into battle and abandoned so he would be killed. SIN NUMBER FIVE: MURDER.

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- And then David married the wife of the man he had killed.
  - David had to have believed the cover up had worked.
  - Then along came NATHAN the Prophet with a MESSAGE FROM GOD.
  - Nathan weaved a story to confront David with his sin.
  - He told of a rich man with hundreds of head of livestock.
  - And a poor man with one little lamb that he kept like a pet.

- And the rich man had company and needed something to cook.
- So instead of using his own livestock he forcibly took the poor man's one little lamb that he loved like a child...and cooked it.
- David was ENRAGED.
- Who is this rich man that would do such a thing! He deserves DEATH. At the very least...RETRIBUTION of FOUR TIMES what he took.
- Who IS THIS TERRIBLE, CRUEL RICH MAN???
- Nathan...pauses...and looks his King, David in the eyes and utters the words none of us wants to hear:
- YOU ARE THE MAN!
- God wants to know: Why have you despised the word of the Lord so much to commit: ADULTERY and then MURDER to cover your tracks.
- God told him...I'll take YOUR wives and give them to your neighbors.
- And I'll do it in a way that you will be humiliated in front of all of Israel.
- And one more thing...THE SWORD WILL NEVER DEPART FROM YOUR HOUSE.
- I'll forgive you David...but you'll have to LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES.
- Then Nathan...as he walked out the door said: By the way, this terrible thing you've done has caused people to BLASPHEME...you've made good Christians a laughing stock.
- And one more thing: The child Bathsheba is carrying...WILL DIE.

David had a heavy load of sin!

We can lighten our burden of sin if we'll only confess them.

(To the person with the bag) Any idea what's in here?

Here's a list...if you'll tell me one by one what's in here let's lighten your load.

What's item #1? (etc.)

1. Rage
2. Lying
3. Gossip
4. Evil thoughts
5. Bitterness
6. Greed
7. Envy
8. Pride

(Take out a brick for every sin). Thanks to the volunteer

- Do you believe UNCONFESSED SIN is a heavy load to carry around with you?
- Do you believe God can RELIEVE YOU and ME of that burden?
- David did. Let's look at Psalm 51:

Beginning with verses 1 and 2

## Psalm 51

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

1 Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

- Look at verse 1: Right off the bat, what did David ask God for?
  - Mercy!
- Also in verse 1, what did David know about the nature of God?
  - Unfailing love
  - Great compassion
- David **KNEW THE NATURE OF GOD**
- David also **KNEW THE NATURE OF SIN**
- Look at the last sentence of verse 1 and all of verse 2. What three words did David use to describe what he had done wrong?
  - Transgressions – Disobedience against God
  - Iniquity – Suggests a perversion or distortion of something that is straight
  - Sin – Means missing the mark
- Same scripture what three words did he use to ask God to remove his sin?
  - Blot out
  - Wash away
  - Cleanse me
- Let's talk about each of these
  - What does **BLOT OUT** mean? It's like rubbing out...like using an eraser.
    - Using an eraser may get rid of something but there is usually a mark.
  - What does wash away imply? It's like washing your clothes.
    - You might wash your clothes good enough to hide a stain...but what is one level beyond just washing the outside?
  - Cleanse me – This talks about not just washing the outside part people see but **CLEANSING** like **DISINFECTING** the **INSIDE**.
- Jesus talked about the difference between a “**SUPERFICIAL**” cleaning and a **THOROUGH CLEANSING**.

Turn to Matthew 23:25-28...Jesus speaking to the Pharisees,

25"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26Blind

Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

27" Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. 28 In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

Spurgeon observed,

*"The hypocrite is content if his garments be washed; but the true suppliant cries, 'wash me.'"*<sup>1</sup> (Emphasis mine).

- David didn't want to be cleaned up just on the outside...he wanted the FULL TREATMENT!

Now let's turn to Psalm 51 verses 3-5:

3 For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are proved right when you speak  
and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

- David is in FULL CONFESSION MODE!
- My SIN IS ALWAYS BEFORE ME.
  - Ever say something stupid or thoughtless and then you play it over and over like a tape in your head? Or you try to sleep that night and in your dreams the stupid thoughtless thing just plays over and over again.
- Look at verse 4
  - There's no doubt David sinned against Uriah
  - No doubt he hurt and sinned against Bathsheba
  - Who does he say in verse 4 sin is REALLY AGAINST?
    - God!
- If you and I were to give a simple definition of SIN what would it be?
- How about this one: "God, I don't care what you said...I KNOW WHAT I WANT."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (in Cost of Discipleship) said

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<sup>1</sup>KJV Bible commentary. 1997, c1994 (1045). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

*" When you are tempted to sin, you do not say, 'I hate God and God hates me.' Rather, you simply forget about God. And you do what you want."*

Wayne Grudem in his book Systematic Theology states:

*We may define sin as follows: Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature. Sin is here defined in relation to God and his moral law. Sin includes not only individual acts such as stealing or lying or committing murder, but also attitudes that are contrary to the attitudes God requires of us.*

- It's not just the obvious sins but it's our THOUGHT LIFE TOO
  - Susan's comment about "The Lord knows what I'm thinking."
- When we SIN it's against God and David recognized that!
- Look at verse 5. David also recognized that SIN IS OUR NATURE FROM BIRTH!
- In these first 5 verses David has made a REAL CONFESSION

James McDonald writes:

*Do you see that the biblical process of repentance involves more than just saying, "I'm sorry"? Do you approach repentance as one who is seeking never to duplicate the issue, or one just seeking a temporary pass until the next time? What is the right attitude and process that we should undertake?*

- What did David NOT DO in these verses?
  - He didn't rationalize or blame someone else
  - He accepted full responsibility for his SIN
- After David said FORGIVE ME in the first five verses he moved on to say CLEANSE ME!

Look at verses 6-9 of Psalm 51

6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts [a] ;  
you teach [b] me wisdom in the inmost place.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;  
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins  
and blot out all my iniquity.

- In verse 7, what is significant about hyssop?
  - Hyssop is a bushy plant the Israelites used to brush the blood of the Passover lambs on the doorposts in Exodus 12:22.

- Hyssop was also mentioned in the book of Numbers as having been used to sprinkle a mixture of blood and water to CLEANSE a person or a house that was UNCLEAN
- Did you ever spill food on a silk tie (guys) or a silk blouse (ladies)?
- What is it about passing age 40 and suddenly you can't get the food from your fork to your mouth without spilling it on your clothes!?!
- And when you make a spot on your tie or your blouse what do you see every time you look in the mirror? THE SPOT.
- And what do you feel like everyone you meet is looking at? THE SPOT.
- When you make a stain on a silk garment it's pretty likely that you need EXPERT HELP in getting that spot off.
- David knew he needed a SPECIAL KIND OF CLEANSING
  - He said I want you to make me WHITER THAN SNOW!
  - David knew that he didn't just need cleanup on the outside...he needed CLEANSING that only comes from the shedding of blood!
- Verse 8, "Let me hear joy and gladness."
  - Why would David shift from the darkness of his confession to talking about JOY and GLADNESS?
  - David CLUNG TO THE HOPE that God would not just wash him but would RESTORE HIM.
  - David is quickly moving from CLEANSING to RENEWAL

Look at verses 10 – 12:

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

- David is asking God for RENEWAL
- Remake me on the INSIDE...give me a PURE HEART and a STEADFAST SPIRIT.
- Restore to me the JOY of both your presence and your SALVATION
- Note: He didn't say RESTORE TO ME YOUR SALVATION...He didn't lose his salvation...he's asking for the JOY of that salvation.
- When God forgives us of SIN and CLEANSSES US INSIDE and OUT what does that set us up for?
- Look at verse 13:

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will turn back to you.

- When we truly CONFESS and God FULLY FORGIVES
- We've got a POWERFUL TESTIMONY to share!
- By the way...though all the bad things Nathan said would happen in David's family did...AND MORE. THERE WAS A HAPPY ENDING.
- David and Bathsheba had ANOTHER SON...his name was Solomon.
- The wisest man who ever lived; he built the temple in Jerusalem; and 28 generations later he had a great, great, great, etc. grandson named JESUS.
- When God forgives and restores he can REBUILD something beautiful from something terrible.

So what's the takeaway?

1 John 1:9 says:

9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- That's GREAT NEWS!
- You might be saying: "Okay, so David committed a couple of the BIG TEN SINS...ADULTERY; MURDER; with a little lying and deception thrown in. His bag of sin bricks was HEAVY. I'm not even sure my little back has any bricks in it at all?"

1 John 1:9 is BRACKETED by two verses we dare not miss:

Verse 8:

8If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

And in case we missed it...verse 10:

10If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

- You and I may not think our bag has any bricks in it. We may not think our tie or blouse has stains on them. But what about the SUBTLE SINS?

Mary Fairchild wrote an article on this asking: "How do we decide if something is sin when the Bible is not clear?"

Usually when we're in doubt over sin, our first tendency is to ask if something is bad or wrong. I'd like to suggest thinking in the opposite direction. Instead, when you're trying to determine if something is sin, ask yourself these questions based on Scripture:

**1. Is this a good thing for me and others? Is this beneficial? Will it draw me closer to God? Will it strengthen my faith and my witness?** (1 Corinthians 10:23-24)

2. The next great question to ask is, **will this glorify God? Will God bless this thing and use it for his purposes? Will this be pleasing and honoring to God?** (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 1 Corinthians 10:31)

3. You can also ask, **how will this thing affect my family and friends?** Although we may have freedom in Christ in an area, we are never to let our freedom cause a weaker brother to stumble. (Romans 14:21; Romans 15:1) In addition, since the Bible teaches us to submit to those in authority over us (parents, a spouse, a teacher), we can ask, do my parents have a problem with this thing? Am I willing to submit this to those in leadership over me?

4. **Finally, in all things, we are to let our conscience before God convict us of what is right and wrong on matters that are not clear in the Bible.** We can ask, do I have freedom in Christ and a clear conscience before the Lord to do whatever is in question? Are my own desire's submitted to the Lord's will? (Colossians 3:17; Romans 14:23)

- In other words...ASK GOD!

Chuck Swindoll said:

*When the child of God tries to hide his sin, the guilt virtually eats him or her alive But when you finally come to terms with your sin, and you make your confession, when you declare yourself guilty, God "surrounds you with His lovingkindness"--His magnificent mercy*

The Woman's Study Bible had a great quote:

*Whatever sins we cover, God will uncover; what we uncover, God will cover* (Prov. 28:13: He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.).

Thomas Nelson, I. (1997, c1995). Woman's study Bible . (Ps 51:5). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- So, what do you think?
- Did you come to church this morning with some bricks you've been carrying around in your bag? Any stains on your tie or blouse?
- God is ready to address them one by one so you and I can be CLEANSED and RENEWED to SERVE and GLORIFY HIM!