

Place: Lurgan Baptist 25:9:205

Reading: Psalm 51

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS ?

I want to begin by asking you a question. *Can a Christian sin ?* All right you know from the Scriptures and from personal experience that a Christian can sin. But can a Christian sin and get away with it ? *Can a Christian sin without suffering ?* Years ago an ex-fighter, a boxer got saved. He felt that God was calling him to preach but no-one would have him in their pulpit. So he started to preach on a street corner in Chicago and he has his little congregation that came. Some followed him. Some hated him. Some would throw eggs and tomatoes. And there was one man who wanted to argue with him. Now this man was a self styled atheist, an infidel and he would argue with the preacher. The preacher was always trying to prove the Bible, and the other man was always refuting it. On one particular day, the preacher was ready. This ex-prize fighter said to this sceptic, *“ If I can prove to you that just one verse in the Bible is true, will you apologise to me ? ”* *“ Indeed I will,”* said the sceptic. With that the ex-boxer reached out, took this man by the nose and twisted his nose so severely that the blood ran down both nostrils.

He then took his Bible, turned to ( Proverbs 30:33 ) and read triumphantly, *“ Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose*

*bringeth forth blood.”* Now I want to say, just as surely as the wringing of the nose brings forth blood, just as surely as the churning of milk brings forth butter so the sin of a Christian will bring forth suffering. Years ago an old country preacher said this about sin, *“ sin will take you further than you want to go. Sin will keep you longer than you want to stay. And sin will cost you more than you want to pay.”* There’s a lot of wisdom in that and I believe old David would say Amen to that because this psalm is the psalm that was written after David had sinned by committing adultery with Bathsheba. You say, *“ Well, he was only human.”* My .... he was desperately wicked. Yet the Bible says that David was a man after God’s own heart. ( Acts 13:22 ) David was the O.T. counterpart of a N.T. Christian and I confidently expect to meet David in heaven. And yet David as a child of God sinned horribly, hatefully, hurtfully, and hellishly.

David sinned. And here in ( Ps 51 ) David is coming to the Lord as a converted man, coming to be forgiven and cleansed, after Nathan the prophet had confronted him with his sin. Now what happens when a child of God sins ? Does God cast him away ? Does he cease to be a Christian ? No, thank God. But nonetheless there are consequences. Look at,

### (1) The Consequences of Sin in the life of a Believer

What happens when a Christian sins ? Well, think with me about the consequences in a believers life ! The first thing that sin will do to the child of God is this.

**(a) IT SOILS HIS SOUL:**

Here's a king who bathed in his marble tub. Here's a king who wore his royal robes. Here's a king who slept on his silk sheets. Yet he feels dirty. Do you see how he prays ? “ *Wash me, cleanse me .... purge me, create in me a clean heart.*” ( 51:2,7.10 ) You see, it was not his body that was defiled, It was his soul. Sin had soiled his soul and he felt dirty. One of the ways you can know whether you are a believer is by asking yourself this, “ *Do you feel dirty after you have sinned ?*” Did you know that there's no pig who's ever felt dirty ? Pigs don't feel dirty. Now a sheep might feel dirty.

A sheep will fall into the mud and want to get up and get out. That's not his nature, that's not his habitat. But a pig has never said, “ *Woe is me. I'm dirty.*” He does not feel it. No child of God can have the Holy Spirit within Him and have sin in his life and not feel dirty. My .... here is the difference between a child of God and a child of the devil. A Christian may indeed sin. But when the believer lapses into sin, he loathes it. The unsaved person leaps into sin and he loves it. That's the difference. For the first thing that sin does to the child of God is this. It soils his soul.

**(b) ITS SATURATES HIS MIND:**

Look if you will at ( 51:3 ) All the time it was prominent in David's thoughts. Night and day and day and night the thing that David had done so etched itself upon his consciousness that it reverberated through his soul, and he could not get it out of his mind. “ *My sin is*

*ever before me.*” Now again here's the difference between a Christian and a non Christian. The unsaved man can sin and forget about his sin, but no Christian can truly forget about his sin until that sin is forgiven and cleansed, because the Holy Spirit will not let Him forget it. “ *my sin is ever before me.*” My .... you may it out of your conscious mind. But don't forget your mind has at least two compartments, the conscious part and the subconscious part. And sometimes we consciously out that sin out of our mind. But we've not gotten rid of it.

We kick it out the front door, it runs around the house, comes in through the backdoor and shows up in the subconscious mind as an irritable disposition, a sore neck, an inability to digest food, inability to concentrate on the Word of God, an inability to pray, and get through to God. That disquieting feeling is there all of the time. Do you know what I'm talking about ? “ *my sin is ever before me.*” Until it is cleansed, its there. The third thing that sin does to the child of God is this.

**(c) IT STINGS HIS CONSCIENCE:**

Now let me ask you a question. Against whom did David sin ? You may say, “ *he sinned against Bathsheba.*” He did, but that's not what it says here. You may say, “ *he sinned against his own body.*” He did but that's not what it says here. “ *Well, he sinned against his wife, his children, he sinned against the kingdom.*” Indeed he did, but David got to the bottom line and saw his sin for what it ultimately is and David said, “ *against Thee, Thee only have I sinned.*” ( 51:4 )

Now here again is the difference between an unsaved man and saved man when he sins. Do you know what the unsaved man is primarily concerned about with reference to his sins ?

The suffering that he might have to do. *What his sin is going to cost him. He is more concerned about the consequences so far as personal cost.* Do you know what a Christian is concerned about ? He is concerned about the fact that he has wounded his God, that he has dishonoured his God ? David says, “ *My Lord, my God .... The One that has redeemed me. The One who loves me. The One who is my shepherd, my rock, my stay. Oh, God, I have sinned against you. I committed this sin in your sight.*”

Sometimes when a man or woman wants to commit an act of immorality, they slip off to some clandestine spot. But David says, “ *Lord, while you were looking, I did this sin in your sight. You watched me commit adultery.*”

My .... David realised not only had he broke God’s law, he had broken God’s heart, and that’s what broke David’s heart. He was conscience smitten. The Christian singer Nikki Leonte had an amazing voice since a child. In the late 1990’s she had a string of top Christian songs.

Her career was riding high. But in the Autumn of 1999, Nikki and her fiancé discovered that she was pregnant. This is what she said about the whole experience. “ *I never thought this would happen to me. I was the one up there preaching that true love waits. I never dreamed I would compromise those boundaries. But I did. I lost my self-esteem, my self-respect. I let down my*

*family, my friends, my record company. But for me the worst of all was that I disappointed the Lord.*” My .... Christian .... are you disappointing the Lord ? What about the sin that you are committing ? The word that you have spoken in anger ? The deed that you have done ? But look further, not only did it soil his soul, saturate his mind, sting his conscience, his sin, well,

#### ***(d) IT SADDENS HIS HEART:***

Look if you will at ( 51:8 ) then ( 51:12 ) Now David did not say, “ *Restore unto me Thy salvation,*” he had not lost his salvation, but he did lose the joy of it. You see, when God saved you He did not fix you up where you couldn’t sin anymore. *He just fixed you where you could not sin and enjoy it.* The most miserable man on earth is not an unsaved man, the most miserable man on earth, is a man out of fellowship with God, a man who is a Christian, but who has sin unconfessed, and unforgiven.

He’s far more miserable than an unsaved man, a man without Christ at all. For he’s lost the joy. How would you like to take a test and find out if you are backslidden or not ? There is just one question. Is there in your heart this moment, joy unspeakable and full of glory ? If not you are backslidden. You say, “ *Hold on. Wait a moment. No-one can be happy all the time.*” My .... I did not say anything about being happy. There’s a difference between happiness and joy. Happiness depends on what happens and therefore we call it happiness, if your hap is good you’re happy, if bad you’re unhappy. There’s nothing wrong with being happy.

But do you know what God's Word says ? It says, " *Rejoice in the Lord,*" do you what the next word is ? " *Always.*" ( Phil 4:4 ) Not sometimes but always. You see, happiness is like a thermometer it registers conditions, but joy is like a thermostat. It controls conditions. And when you are walking with the Lord and there is no unconfessed sin in your heart, then the joy of the Lord is there. And my .... if the joy of the Lord is not there its because there is sin in your life and mine. Do you know something ? There's only one thing that can take the joy of your heart ? Not two, or three, or four, but one. What ? Sin ! Furthermore, only kind of sin. Would you like to know what kind ? Yours ! " *make me to hear joy and gladness.*" ( 51:8 ) My .... when there is unconfessed sin in our lives, nothing we hear sounds good. We attend church and lash out. The choir was off key, the soloist was flat, the office-bearers were unfriendly, the pastor was too long. Everything we hear is wrong. Do you know why ? Its because we are wrong. You are wrong, the joy is gone, and sin saddens the heart. I want to say something else that sin does to the child of God,

#### ***(e) IT SICKENS THE BODY:***

Look if you will at ( 51:8 ) Now David is not speaking here literally, he's speaking poetically. His bones were not literally broken. Today we would use a similar idiom. We might say, " *I was crushed, I was under tremendous pressure.*" Now I would be a fool to stand here and tell you that all suffering and sickness is caused by our personal sin. ( Jn 9:1-2 ) But I am going

to say this. It would surprise those of us who are saved to know how much of our sickness is a result of personal sin. The Bible says, " *For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.*" ( Gal 6:8 ) Do you recall what happened at Corinth ? They had abused the Lords Table and God came in judgment and Paul says, " *for this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep.*" ( 1 Cor 11:30 ) My .... there's something about the joy of the Lord that keeps you healthy. Have you ever read this in the Word ? " *A merry heart doeth good.*" Like a what ? " *A medicine.*" ( Prov 17:22 ) When the joy of the Lord is there, you stand straight, breathe deep, eat well, sleep right, but when you are not right with God and you know you are not right with God, there's that pressure. But I'll tell you something else that sin does,

#### ***(f) IT SOURS HIS SPIRIT:***

David was conscious that his spirit was wrong. That's why he says in ( 51:10 ) David had a wrong spirit. He had a sour, censorious, cantankerous, critical spirit. Now you watch a person who has that kind of spirit. He's backslidden or ready to backslide. Now every church has those people who are critical and sour, and the reason is, there is unconfused sin in their hearts ! Let me gave you an example ! David had committed this horrible sin and Nathan the prophet had come to speak to him, he was David's elder or pastor and he told David a story about a man who was filthy rich and his neighbour who was poor. A stranger passed by and the rich man rather than taking one of his own flock went over there and took that poor man's one lamb, killed it

and barbecued it, and fed it to that stranger. “ *David what should be done to that man ?*” The King was livid with rage. He jumped from the throne and said “ *the man who hath done such a thing will pay four-fold.*” And David had sentenced himself in his own court. For Nathan said, “ *thou art the man.*” ( 2 Sam 12:7 ) You all know the story. But I want you to notice this. ***Here was a man with a beam in his own eye trying to pick a speck out of someone else’s eye.*** Sure its wrong to steal an animal but David had killed a man, and he was with deeper sin in his own life finding fault and judging someone else. My .... do you know those type of people ? They are continually fault finding, they have a sour spirit and its there because of sin in their hearts. I heard about a person in one particular church who opened the door of the broom closet and saw five new brushes. He lost his cool and said, “ we are not even meeting our financial budget and we have five new brooms in one cupboard.” Next thing you know he was at one of the leaders of the church. He did not how to handle it, so he kicked it upstairs to the pastor, and the man was fuming, he said, “ *why this waste of money ?*”

The pastor said, “ *I don’t know maybe we do a lot of sweeping or perhaps there was a sale on brooms, I don’t know but don’t fall out of fellowship over it.*” Later the pastor was speaking to the treasurer, and he related this story. The treasurer said, “ *Well, its easy to understand. How would you feel if you saw everything you had given to the church in the past year tied up in five brooms ?*” My .... watch that type of person. Either he’s not saved or he has unconfessed sin in his life. But let me tell you the last of these seven things that sin will

do to the child of God,

### **(g) *IT SEALS HIS LIPS:***

Look at ( 51:14 ) if you will. You see David had not been *Singing.* In ( 51:15 ) David had not been *Praising.* In ( 51:13 ) David had not been *Witnessing.* His praise had dried up. His testimony had withered. Soul-winning had stopped altogether. The joy is gone, the song is gone, and the testimony is gone. Andrew Murray said, “ *there are two kinds of Christians, soul-winners and backsliders.*” My .... be honest, which kind are you ? Are you lips sealed ? Have you no heart of concern ? No soul of compassion ? Has sin sealed your lips ? You see, I believe that a pure church is a powerful church, a persuasive church. David says, “ *Restore unto me .... then .... sinners shall be converted unto Thee.*” ( 51:12-13 ) (1) Let me take a moment and deal with,

### **(2) *The Cleansing of Sin in the Life of a Believer***

Let me give you three words that will tell you how to deal with sin, the cleansing of sin in a Christians life. Firstly,

#### **(a) *There should be CONFIDENCE:***

Did you notice ( 51:1 ) “ *Have .... loving kindness,*” Isn’t that a beautiful word ? “ *According to,*” or “ *your great compassion.*” David may have been a great sinner, but I’ll tell you one thing. He was a great repentor. Do you know why ? He knew something of the character and nature of God. David knew that for a

multitude of sins there were a multitude of mercies. *He knew that for great sin there was great grace.* God had taught David that He never stopped loving him for one moment. I don't know what you have done teenager. I don't know what you have done those of you who are high up in business, but I want to tell you that God loves you with a tender love and He's never stopped loving you ! (a)

**(b) *There must be CONFESSION:***

Do you see what David says in ( 51:3 ) ? “ *I acknowledge my transgressions .... me,*” have you done that ? Have you confessed your sin ? David says, “ *Against Thee, thee only have I sinned ....,*” ( 51:4 ) Its not my brother or my sister but its me O Lord, standing in the need of pardon, purity and power. There is one thing that God will not accept for sin and it's an alibi. The Bible says, “ *if we confess our sins ....,*” ( 1 Jn 1:9 )

Jim Baker was the man who headed up the American T.V. show, “ ***Praise the Lord.***” In his book titled, “ ***I was wrong,***” he not only admits to moral failure, but also acknowledges that he led multitudes astray by teaching theological error. He describes himself during that part of his life as ambitious and self-serving, and considered himself above consequences. When he wound in prison, alone, broken, and abandoned he experienced a change of heart. He reached a point where he was truly sorry for his sins. Do you recall that singer Nikki Leonte ? She said when she found out she was pregnant out of wedlock her first thought was “ *How can I cover this up ?*” Then she came clean with

God ! I wonder as a Christian do you need to do that ? Do you need to come clean with God ? For years you've carried about the sin of bitterness, of pride, greed, lust, lying, deception. My .... your sin will never be dealt with until there is confession. (a) (b) Then,

**(c) *There will be CLEANSING:***

For David says, “ *Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean ....,*” ( 51:7 ) Hyssop was a little shrub with which they applied the O.T. sacrificial blood. This verse is the counterpart to the N.T. verse that says, “ *the blood of Jesus Christ .... sin.*” ( 1 Jn 1:7 ) Thank God, there is such a thing as ***family forgiveness.*** Now remember there is a difference between Holy Spirit conviction and Satanic accusation. The Devil is the Accuser, but the Holy Spirit is the Convictor. The Holy Spirit will only convict you ***Legitimately.*** He will not convict of sin that's been forgive and put under the blood. The Holy Spirit will only convict you ***Specifically,*** and He will name the sin. He's like the doctor, He will put His finger on the sore spot and push. The Holy Spirit will only convict you ***Redemptively,*** to bring you to joy and peace.

But the Devil He is the accuser, he accuses you illegitimately, he accuses you vaguely and he accuses you to lead you to despair. My .... if you have confessed your sin, brought it out and put it under the blood of Christ you have every right to say, “ *Praise God I know I am forgiven, and devil you're not going to accuse me anymore over it. I'm not going to let you dig up what God has buried.*” Bertha Smith said, “ *He buried my sins in the deepest sea and posted a No*

*Fishing sign right there.*” My .... what a Saviour we have. But what fools we are if we go around with unconfessed, unforgiven sin in our hearts.

My .... Christian .... Is there in your heart, unconfessed sin ? I’m not talking about things that have already been forgiven, things that the Holy Spirit has given you peace about but unconfessed sin an act or attitude, a relationship between you and someone else, a thought, a habit, sin of omission, or sin of commission ? My .... confess it, agree with God about that thing, “ *for he that covereth his sins shall not prosper but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*” ( Prov 28:13 )

Are you this ..... and not saved ? Do you realise that your sin will take you down to hell ? Do you realise that the only remedy for sins malady is the blood of Jesus Christ ? Will you come to that fountain this .... and find cleansing which is full and free ?