



281.890.1900  
TheMETonline.org

*Jones Road Campus*  
13000 Jones Road | Houston, TX 77070

*Fry Road Campus* | Hopper Middle School  
7811 Fry Road | Houston, TX 77433

Welcome to our new series, *Kickin' It Old School*. If you're here at *Jones Road*, welcome. Those of you [who] are at our second site out there in Cypress, thank you for tuning in. And I have not yet listened to the tape from Bryan [Rose, *Lead Pastor of Second Campus*] last week, but I'm sure he said some things about me that weren't true. And so I will be paying him back during the course of this sermon. Now, those of you [who] are joining us online, thank you for doing so. We're in a brand-new series—probably take us through most of the summer—and we're talking about some of the *Old Testament* characters and what they had to say back in the day.

Now, back in the day means a lot of things to different people, but I want to ask:

- How many of you lived before cell phones? Let's see...all right? How many of you had one of the first cell phones? It looked like a Fisher-Price toy—remember that?—and a big o' battery pack, like you were on dialysis or something. Yeah?
- How many of you were around before computers? Whoa, you are kickin' it old school now.
- How many before air conditioning? Oh, man! Listen, I remember AC—no AC—not in the school; didn't have it in our first houses. Thank God we have it in the church. Amen? Y'all keep giving or we'll turn it off. We'll go strictly old-school for awhile—be sweatin' with the oldies in here before long.

Well, back in the day there were *Old Testament* characters who had encounters with God, and I'm going to talk with you about one today. And his name is David. Now when I say the name David, what do you think about in your mind? Most people think about David and—

- David and Goliath  
—or—
- David and Bathsheba

How many of y'all said Bathsheba? Let's see...*Fry Road*, put your hands up. Come on, it's all right, I know what you're thinking about. Put it up. How many of y'all said Bathsheba? Don't lie, you're in the house of God, now. Come on, come on. Woman, make your man put his hand up; you know what he said. The majority of you said: Bathsheba. That is the thought most people go to; the second one is Goliath.

Now, isn't it a shame that you could make a [single] mistake in life and forever be tagged by that mistake?—that you could sin and that's all people think about—that sin that you made. Now, the question is: **Does God think about us and treat us the same way that most people do?** If someone were to say your name, in the company of people that you keep, what would they say about you? And for David it was: Oh, yeah, it was David and Bathsheba. And sometimes we will not allow somebody to get through a sin or a difficulty in their life. Forever we tag them as “the adulterer” or “the cheater” or “the liar.” Or whatever it is that they committed, in our minds, they're forever that way; but not so with God.

In fact, David had something to say back in the day about doing right with your wrong.

## **DAVID: HOW TO DO RIGHT WITH YOUR WRONG**

David did a tremendous wrong. He committed adultery and that was the first of a multitude of sins that were birthed from that. But yet he did right with his wrong. How do we know that? Well, after David died, and after his son Solomon died, Solomon had a son who was on the

throne of Israel but he was no good. In fact, God was going to rip the kingdom away from him. But before He did, He said this about him in *I Kings, chapter 14, verse 8*:

...you have not been like my servant David, {—now remember what we thought about David: Bathsheba, adultery, sin—He says—David:} who kept my commands and followed me with all his heart, doing only what was right in my eyes.

*I Kings 14:8 (NIV)*

How could God say that? How could God look at an adulterer—

- Who turned into a deceiver
- Who turned into a murderer
- Who was trying to deceive the entire kingdom

—how can God (after He knew exactly what David did) how can God say about David: He only did “what was right in my eyes”?—because David did what was right with his wrong.

And how would you like to get to heaven one day, and all that was known about you is this wrong that you’d done in your life? Or how would you like to get to heaven one day and God say (You know what?): You did everything the way that I wanted you to do it. You only did right in My eyes.

Well, the only way you can do that is to do right with your wrong when you commit wrong. David does that. In *Psalms 51*, David shows us how to do right with our wrong. And so, if you have a Bible feel free to follow along. If not, all the verses are going to come up there on the screen. Here’s what David says in the opening verses. Our wrongs all need to be righted, and the first way that we get them righted is through forgiveness.

## **OUR WRONG NEEDS TO BE RIGHTED: THROUGH FORGIVENESS**

*Psalms 51*—the opening verse says:

...Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion...

*Psalms 51:1b (NIV)*

Now, if you are here today and you have sin in your life—which is all of us—normally sin doesn’t want us to think about God as being loving and compassionate and merciful. But the fact that we can come to God, the fact that when we sin we want to go to God, is the proof that God is merciful. God treats us like His children. And when your children do wrong you know that they’ve done wrong, and you know that they even may be lying to you. But aren’t you merciful and want them to come back to you? And don’t you want to embrace them again?

Many times in our mind when we think about the wrong that we’ve done, and we think about God, we see a big hand saying: Stop and go no further; God wants nothing to do with you.

- You have disappointed God.
- You’ve disappointed your family.

- You've disappointed the church.
- You've disappointed the people that look toward you.
- You are worth nothing now.

I imagine what David was feeling for all of that time—not only after the affair, but—

- The pregnancy
- The child dying
- Him having Uriah murdered by putting him [at] the front lines of a battle
- Deceiving people

All of this guilt is on top of him. But yet even after a year doing that, he could turn to God and say: God, be merciful to me.

For a year he sat thinking that he was getting away with something until one day this prophet by the name of Nathan shows up and tells him a story about a man who had one lamb and a great rich man who had a bunch of them. And the rich man wanted that poor man's lamb, and he took it from him. And David said: Hey, who is that guy? I'll make sure justice is done. And then Nathan said to David: You are that guy, David. You took Uriah's wife, then you took Uriah's life, then the baby died. And you've been lying all this time. And David falls on his knees and says: O God, be merciful to me.

The reason you want to come to God when you've done wrong is because God wants you to come to Him. He is merciful. When God was trying to show Moses who He was, and Moses said: I just want to see you [*Exodus 33:18* (paraphrased)]; He takes Moses and He puts him inside of a cave. He puts his hand over the cave and says: Moses, I'm way too powerful and holy; you can't see all of Me. But I'm going to go by you and the after-effects you're going to see. [*Exodus 33:20-23* (summarized)] And as He was going by angels were shouting out: Merciful, merciful God. And God says: I am merciful—

...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

*Exodus 33:19b (NIV)*

And as that mountain was thundering, (and) smoke and fire was coming from that mountain, and the people were afraid below, Moses heard what we all need to hear from God: I am merciful and I am compassionate.

Therefore David said: Have mercy upon me, with your unfailing love have compassion on me, God. [*Psalms 51:1* (paraphrased)]

If you're here this morning and you have failed miserably—and that's probably everybody—you don't have to be tagged by that for the rest of your life. There is a merciful, compassionate God. How do we know God loves us? See if you can complete this: "For God so"—what?—"the world." "For God so loved the world..." [*John 3:16 (NIV)*] God loves sinners! And I'm proud that I *are* [sic] one—when it comes to that—God loves *me*. The righteous people don't need God. People that feel like they have no sin don't need God. We who are sinners—

- Who have blown it
- Who have been tagged with a reputation

—we need God. And God says: I love you. I will have mercy on you. See if you can complete this: “Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive” [pause for congregational response] “mercy.” [*Matthew 5:7 (NASB)*]

And so, if you’ve received mercy from God and you’re a believer here, how do you treat other people when they fail you? How do you view other people? There is so much inside of us that never wants to let a person go when they’ve done something wrong. In fact, I want you to listen to a little parable that Jesus tells in *Luke, chapter 18*. He’s talking about people who self-justify (themselves in) their righteousness and people who are sinners that actually get justified by God:

<sup>10</sup> “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. {One’s a holy man; the other isn’t—he’s the scum of the earth in the Jewish mind.} <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: {He’s telling God: God, You’re so lucky that I serve You; look how good I am!} ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this...{scum, low-life tax gatherer here. He didn’t say those words, but said: Not even like this tax-gatherer. It’s like he looked down and said: Oh, thank God I’m not like that! Aren’t you happy, God, with what I do? He said: Look—} <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ {God, I serve You, I give You my money, I even fast to show people I’m really serious about knowing You. I’m better than these people.} <sup>13</sup> “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

*Luke 18:10-13 (NIV)*

The Pharisee didn’t ask for mercy. He didn’t feel like he needed any mercy. The tax-gatherer doesn’t even feel like he can approach God. He said, “God, have mercy on me...” What did David say? I can’t even approach you, God. I’ve lied, I’ve sinned, I’ve murdered, but God have—what?—mercy on me! Now listen to what Jesus says:

“I tell you that this man {the tax gatherer}, rather than the other {the Pharisee who thought he was better than everybody and didn’t need mercy and forgiveness—this man, the tax gatherer}, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

*Luke 18:14 (NIV)*

So I’m saying to you this morning that if you have committed sin, humble yourself before God and tell him: Lord, I need mercy, I need love, I need compassion. I have blown it and I don’t want the rest of my life to be an indication of what I’ve blown. I need You to do something for me.

And what does he [David] ask [God] to do? He said: I’ve got three problems with sin. He called sin three different things. He says:

...blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and  
cleanse me from my sin.

*Psalm 51:1-2 (NIV)*

Let me tell you sometimes why we don't come to God with sin. Because we don't know how serious sin actually is:

- We see it as a fault. God says: No, it's fatal.
- We see it as a mistake. And God says: No, it's a serious malady inside of your heart that you're never going to get over.
- We see it as a chance. It's just a chance that David saw her bathing out there. It was just a chance that Uriah was an old man. And (after all) David's only a man, and he's the king, and he did what [he did]. It's not a chance it is a choice.

We think: Oh (you know) it was just an accident. No, no, no, it's not an accident; it is a premeditated thing that we do. And we don't see it the way God sees it, therefore, we don't feel like we need forgiveness. But feelings can be very, very deadly wrong.

And [David's] feelings for a year were wrong:

- I got away with it.
- I covered it up.
- It's okay.

—except it wasn't right with him and God.

And finally, through the mercy of God he says: God, help me, I have transgressed.

Do you know what **transgression** is? Have you ever [seen] a fence line and you go over the fence? Do you know what that fence is saying? Don't come in here. You transgressed when you jumped the fence.

We lived in Bakersfield, California for awhile—vacation capital of southern California. (Those of you [who] are in the oil industry know that's funny—all right?—it's like Midland, [Texas] only worse.) And we had the Kern River, which is gorgeous—great trout fishery by the way. And every year I'd watch a little sign at the beginning as you go up the Kern River, up to the mountains. There'd be a sign: This year x-amount of people have died in the Kern River. And I mean, every year they'd just go up and up and usually over 100-some-odd people would die, even though it's clearly marked:

DO NOT SWIM HERE.  
DANGEROUS RAPIDS.  
UNDERTOW.

[There were] rocks that will catch you and drown you. Do you know what would happen? They would look at the sign, they would see the place staked out, and they would walk over and they would transgress the boundary and they would die.

And when we sin and God says: There are certain things you ought not be doing. And we step over, we die! We injure and hurt ourselves.

The second thing he says is—not only do have I transgression that needs to be blotted out—I need you to, "Wash away all my iniquity." Do you know what **iniquity** is? It's twistedness. It's perversion inside of our hearts. In fact he even says this in *verse 5*. Listen to this:

Surely I was sinful {the same word: iniquity; I was iniquitous} at birth...  
*Psalm 51:5 (NIV)*

When we are born into this world, in our DNA is—built-in from Adam—this twistedness, this perversion. The image of God is marred and twisted inside of us and we want to sin. We can't help but sin.

I saw some beautiful babies in the service today. Right now they're cute and cuddly and they're all just pudgy and they're beautiful. But give them until about 2 years of age and all hell breaks loose on them—breaks loose out of them. They learn [to say] mama, dada and the next word: No!

- Give me that—no!
- Don't go there—no!
- Be nice—no, no, no, no!
- Share—mine, mine, mine, mine [repeatedly]—no!
- Don't play with those—no!
- Don't eat that—no! [pantomimes eating and saying no with each bite]

Why? Here is what they are saying: I don't want to obey; and there's something in me that says it's better if I don't obey.

That is what the word iniquity means. That on the inside, we think:

- It's better if we don't obey.
- We have a twisted nature that really wants to sin and thinks:
  - That sin is a good thing to do (and)
  - It will feel good
  - It will be good for us.

Just like when your kid is playing in the dirt and looking at you and—

- You say: Don't eat that.
- And he says: Well, this is good for me and you don't know. [Pantomimes the kid gulping it down.]

How many of your kids ever ate dirt or bugs or worse? Even though you told them not to—why?—because they are sinners. And if you don't believe it you don't have kids.

<sup>1</sup> ...blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

*Psalm 51:1-2 (NIV)*

Just the word "sin" —*chatta'ah* [pronounced: khat-taw-aw'] is the way it is in Hebrew. It means to miss the mark. It means to fall short of something, because we're twisted. If you're shooting an arrow and the arrow is warped and bent, no matter how many times you put it on the bull's eye it is going to go off because it is warped and twisted.

This last past hunting season I was hunting. And, I know, some of you don't like hunting and don't like deer getting killed. But I'm going to tell a story about a deer that I killed, all right? Save the email because I'm not going to read them. I'm going to go home and eat the sausage when I am done right now.

So, I'm hunting and out walks the biggest deer I've ever seen. (I mean) he is so big [holding up his hands with fingers splayed, demonstrating a large rack of antlers] we called him Stickers—he's got stuff everywhere [too many points to count]. And (I mean) I'm cool and collected. [Demonstrates excited wide eyes while breathing heavily] It's like I'm on my first day [hunting]: Oh, God, pull over, stop. And he stopped. And I said: Oh good. And I put my gun up and put my sight right on where I wanted to shoot him and I shot and that deer turned around and looked up at me. I said: That cannot be right. And so, I put it on again and click. What the heck?

I had bought bullets that were—because you know I am old-school now and I don't like my shoulder hurting very much—and so I bought these bullets that said: These kick less. But I also didn't read the fine print: Do not use in semi-automatic weapons—because they don't have enough kick to kick themselves out. And so I was starting to say things only deacons say. And I yanked that thing out [—the bullet cartridge—] and I put another one in. And I got him this time, [pantomimes aiming the gun] right up—boom!—and I saw dirt kick up and he took off. I thought: Oh man, I know I am a better shot than that. I had a guy with me and he said: Man, I don't think you moved. And I was filming it—it was the things to film: all of your great losses. And I looked at [the film] and said: I didn't think I moved the gun.

And so I went out and I bought new ammunition—my shoulder [hurts] to prove it—and I sighted it in. My gun was off that far [demonstrating a diagonal distance between his hands of about three or four feet]. No matter how many times I put it on the bull's eye, it was never going to hit it because the scope was twisted.

And I'm telling you, we are like that. No matter how much good we want to do, we're so twisted [that] we always go and do the bad [thing]. The scope is off. So, how do those things get fixed? How do you deal with the transgression and the iniquity and the sin—going across the line and being twisted and always missing the mark?

Here is what he says, "...blot out my transgressions." [Repeated for emphasis] To **blot out** means: take something out of my record book; take something away from me. I don't want You to remember this anymore, God.

You know, it is interesting, in *Matthew's Gospel, chapter 12, verse 36*, Jesus says this,

But I tell you that men will have to give an account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.

*Matthew 12:36 (NIV)*

If God is writing down words—

- You know He saw David's deeds.
- You know He heard the lines he put on Bathsheba.
- You know He was watching the whole bed scene.

It is all there: God, I know You know about this. God, will You please take this out of the record book like I never really ever did it? He said: blot that out. He says: Wash away —"Wash away all my iniquity"—wash away my iniquity. Now the word for **wash** here isn't like (you know): just put a little soap on it and wash it. It is for (like): get on the garment and jump up and down and stomp on it, nasty dirty. The kind of dirty like when you were single, guys; and pulled

something out and sprayed deodorant on it—that dirty—then you would wear it. That dirty. Don't say you didn't do that because you lied about the Bathsheba thing too.

My brother and I, who is here—in fact, Frank, there is my brother there—stand up Frank. You can see the family resemblance immediately—other than I have hair—there he is. Frank (you know what?) don't get mad at me. Stand up here [pointing to a place on the floor right in front] and come right here—center—and look at that camera so *Fry Road* can see you. You need to hurry up and do it or I will hear about it. Come here, right here in the center. Okay, well, come on up here [next to Pastor Sal on the stage]—this is my brother, *Fry Road*. He looks just like me. Ready [for the] profile, Frank? [They both turn their heads to show the similar profile.]

So we were fishing. That's where I was last week when Bryan preached and we made [our budgeted amount for the] offering—which I'm not very hurt about at all—but I'm glad that ya'll gave when Bryan was preaching. I'm thinking about giving him the whole summer now and see how well he does with that.

We were fishing. So we came home. We've got a ton of dirty clothes. I mean nasty, fish-guts-smelling clothes. (Right?) And we dumped them into the washing machine and started it. And Frank and I were looking at it. And it was just going—[pantomimes the washer's gentle sloshing agitation]—like it was regular dirty clothes. And Frank said: I think it needs a little more than that. So we hit the heavy duty [button—pantomimes aggressive agitation] and extra long and two rinses [pantomimes even more agitation]. Why? Because it was dirty, stained, nasty, sweaty, smelly, dirty-boy-smell clothes with fish. Not good.

That means he's saying: I am so deeply stained, I am so thoroughly permeated with this sin, You're going to have to wash me like you are scrubbing on some rocks and jumping up and down and get this thing out of me. Wash away this stuff.

And then He uses the word **cleanse**. He says, "cleanse me from my sin." [*Psalm 51:2 (NIV)*] I'm missing the mark. This is an interesting word. Cleanse appears when they are ceremoniously cleansing people. And the first time you see it is when there are lepers, and the only way to cure leprosy is [through] a miracle. The high priest would take water and sprinkle it on them, pronouncing them clean—cleansing them—when God's already done the cleansing. In fact, what [David] is saying is: God, I need a miracle here. I need You to do something I can't do for myself nor can anybody else.

- Through forgiveness (secondly)
- Through confession

## **OUR WRONG NEEDS TO BE RIGHTED: THROUGH CONFESSION**

*Verses 3 through 6:*

For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me.  
*Psalm 51:3 (NIV)*

(You know what?) Read these first three or four verses. He never mentions Bathsheba. He never mentions anybody else. He says, me, my sin, my iniquity, my—I sinned against You [God].

Do you know why we do not get the forgiveness and cleansing that we need sometimes? [It's] because [we say:]

- Lord, if you hadn't given me that woman, I'd have never done it. That's not confession that's blame.
- Lord, if my boss hadn't—I wouldn't have. That's not confession; that's blame.
- Lord, if my friends weren't—I wouldn't have. That's blame, not [confession].

Confession is: Lord, I have sinned—my responsibility—and it wasn't a mistake, Lord. I did it. I wanted to do it.

And [David] is saying—he's not blaming Bathsheba because she was taking a bath. You know, he could have easily said: Oh, look! Bathsheba is taking a bath [demonstrates turning his back], I'd better go inside. He said: Oh my gosh! Bathsheba's taking a bath [pantomimes peering closer at the sight]. Have that woman come up here? And that began the long [story]. It was his responsibility. When we sin it's our responsibility. And no matter who we sin against or whom we sinned with—guess what?—it's against God. Look [at] what He says: Sins and my transgression "is always before me." [*Psalm 51:3 (NIV)*] And *verse 4*:

Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight...

*Psalm 51:4 (NIV)*

- Did he sin against Bathsheba?—better believe he did
- ...Uriah?—better believe
- ...the entire nation of Israel?—better believe

But bottom line: I sinned against God. And if I had never sinned against God, I would have never sinned against the rest of these people.

So go make up—whichever you've got to make up with—but until you get it right with God, it's not right. You still bear it. You still carry it and it will crush you. God sends no one to hell on their own; remember I told you that a few weeks [ago]. God sends no one to hell, we send ourselves. We send ourselves because we will not admit it. We fall into sin when we choose not what God wants for us. God's never setting us up for that.

Do you know what repentance is? **Repentance** is you taking responsibility for what you've done and bringing it to God so He can make it right. That is repentance. But until you do, He can't.

And then finally, through cleansing

## **OUR WRONG NEEDS TO BE RIGHTED: THROUGH CLEANSING**

*Verses 7 through 9:*

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

*Psalm 51:7 (NIV)*

I love that word cleanse. That word **cleanse** literally, in the Hebrew, means: de-sin; de-sin me.

You know, when we were growing up, we kind of grew up a little bit—well, a lot—poor. And every now and then there'd be a lice break-out in the school. Ya'll ever had a lice break out in your school? That's okay; I know you don't have it now, because you don't have any hair. But when we'd get it (you know what?) we'd have to be deloused. It's just not like: wash your hair. You've got to wash it in such a way that the lice are killed and they leave.

Look, don't just wash over my sins, God, de-sin me. I need to be de-sinned.

And [David] says, "Cleanse me with hyssop." It's a weed that you can find anywhere in the Holy Land; it grows everywhere. But the first time you see hyssop used (that little weed used) is on the tenth plague when the children of Israel left Egypt—when they had to kill a lamb, remember? And they had to take hyssop, dip it in the blood of the lamb, and then with that hyssop mark the lintel [top] and the sides of their doors. And somebody had to spill blood that the hyssop was dipped in, in order for the Death Angel to pass over that family. If there was no blood, there was no pass-over; and your first born died.

Over 2000 years ago, on a hill called Calvary, a man named Jesus was hanging on a cross made out of wood—hyssop (if you will)—and blood was coming out of his body. It is as if God took that cross [pantomimes holding the cross in his hand and snapping it to splatter the blood] and sprinkled those who had believed, to cleanse them and de-sin them from their transgression and their iniquity and their sin. "Cleanse me with hyssop." Only the blood can cleanse us from our sin.

Listen to what God said in *Isaiah, chapter 1, verse 18*:

"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

*Isaiah 1:18 (NIV)*

I will wash you clean. I will de-sin you. But even more than that, if you look down in *verse 9*, [David] also says:

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

*Psalm 51:9 (NIV)*

Remember I told you when He says, "blot out...my iniquity," to blot out means to remove something from his records as if it never existed.

You know, when you're accused of a crime and you're arrested here, they do an investigation. And [if] they find out that you (you know) you're not guilty—you did not commit that crime—they do what they call an expungement. They expunge every record—in every written record or

record of you being arrested or what the charges were are totally taken off. So when someone looks at your record, it would be as if it never happened.

Now here is the difference:

- With us, it happened.
- With David, it happened.
  - You committed adultery, David.
  - You set up the murder of your good friend Uriah, David.
  - You lied to people, David.
  - You lusted
  - You committed [adultery]

You did all of that, David and now you're asking God to remove that, to blot it out? Do you think that's fair? Do you think that's right, David? Well, it doesn't matter if we think it's fair or right, listen to what God says in *Isaiah, chapter 43, verse 25*:

"I {God's speaking}, even I {God says}, am he who blots out your transgressions, {Listen to me now!} for my own sake, {Listen!} and remembers your sins no more.

*Isaiah 43:25 (NIV)*

So when I get to heaven because of Jesus Christ (and you get to heaven because of Jesus Christ)...

- If the devil is saying: Hey, God, do You remember when—that Sal did this and Sal said that and Sal went here and Sal participated in that?
- [Then] God's going to go: I don't know what you're talking about because I'm looking at the record of his life and all I see is an expunged record. There is no fault in him. He has done only what is right in My sight—because Sal has done right with his wrong (and you can do right with your wrong.)

Now, why is that so tough to believe?—because you can't believe that about yourself. It's not God's problem; that is why God puts it in the Bible. It's our problem. We believe that we can't think that way about ourselves. The number one reason is that we don't think about others that way.

- If you find yourself being more merciful and forgiving toward others, here's what you're going to get in return: you're going to be more merciful and forgiving toward yourself.
- But if you're an angry/bitter/caustic individual who is always seeking revenge, always running down, rumor-mongering, gossiping, and tearing down the character of others; you don't get that benefit from God.

If you will not forgive your brother who sins against you, then why should God give you the joy of forgiveness when you're not granting it to other people—if you're a believer? That's why you're not experiencing it. You need to release some of these people that you're holding captive in your heart because it's just holding you captive. It's not holding them; they're doing fine, but you aren't.

Through cleansing: blot out my iniquity and remember my sins no more.

Here's one of my favorite verses: *Revelation 1:5*. The other service didn't get it—you get this.

and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sin by His blood—

*Revelation 1:5 (NASB)*

Jesus Christ will release us from—

- The guilt
- The stain
- The iniquity
- The transgression
- The missing of the mark

—as His blood cleanses us, as it blots out the record-book of sin against us; because that's how much God loves us.

(Now we need to hurry up. What time did we start here, 9:30? We've got a few minutes, all right? I'm going on vacation next week so you're going to get a double load here.)

Our hearts need to be renewed.

## **OUR HEARTS NEED TO BE RENEWED: THROUGH INNER PURITY**

Look at what [David] says:

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

*Psalms 51:10 (NIV)*

Let me tell you why that's so important. That word [translated] *create* is the Hebrew word *bara* [pronounced: baw-raw'] Say that with me: *bara*. Oh gosh; do that with me now—one, two, three—*bara*. Very good! Now in the beginning, God *bara* the heavens and the earth. In other words, God took nothing and He made something out of it. God took nothing and He made the heavens and the earth. He *bara*—He created—the heavens and the earth.

When God takes our sinful hearts, and we are repentant toward Him and He forgives us, He *bara* a new person inside of us—a brand-new person. Listen, if there is not a radical change of heart, there will be a repetition of the past. You can't help it—why?—because you're crooked and perverse like the rest of the world. You will go back to your sin like "a dog returns to its vomit" [*Proverbs 26:11 (NIV)*] unless God *bara* in your heart, a brand-new heart.

"Create in me"—*bara*—"a pure heart, O God..." Take this sick thing that made me do that and make it new inside of me. So maybe today, rather than making promises you can't keep to God about not doing stuff again, you can say: God just give me a new heart. This thing's killing me, God, and it's hurting other people.

- Through inner purity
- Through inner power

## **OUR HEARTS NEED TO BE RENEWED: THROUGH INNER POWER**

*Verse 11—*

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

*Psalm 51:11 (NIV)*

Here's what he's saying: God, I cannot live this life that You've created for me unless the Spirit of God is inside of me.

Many of us struggle with the Christian life because we don't submit to the Holy Spirit of God. When you submit to the Holy Spirit of God and He fills you, you can be faithful to God. How are people faithful to God? They are faithful to God because they are filled with the Holy Spirit of God. Look, we don't need a program—some program that we can produce—to make us faithful. All we need is the power of the Holy Spirit of God. And some of us aren't faithful because we've been rebellious and will not allow God to fill us with the Holy Spirit.

When the Person of the Holy Spirit of God fills us up in our lives and shows up in this building (I'm telling you) all heaven begins to break out. But you have got to say: God, forgive me of my sin; fill me with the Holy Spirit.

- Get in the Word of God
- Pray to God
- Allow the Spirit of God to empower you

And when you're being tempted, you then have the power to turn from sin. You then have the power to love as you ought to love. Then—through inner peace

## **OUR HEARTS NEED TO BE RENEWED: THROUGH INNER PEACE**

*Verse 12—*

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

*Psalm 51:12 (NIV)*

(You know) I'm always suspect of people [who] don't sing in worship. Do you know why?—because they're not happy; they're not joyful.

(I mean) here's David:

- God has just expunged his record.
- He has just given him a brand-new heart.
- He has chosen to blot out all the bad that he did.
- He's poured now the Holy Spirit of God inside of his life,

How can he not get up and dance? How can he not get up and do a jig for Jesus? How can he not get out that harp and start playing and writing a new song? How can he not, in front of the

congregation, raise his hands and thank Almighty God for all the good that He's done for him? How can he not do that?

And yet many times that's why I sit up front and look forward. Because when I look out I get depressed sometimes. Because here's what I see [demonstrates arms crossed over his chest and a disgruntled frown on his face with a grumpy voice:] I don't like that song. Man, that's too loud. I don't want to raise my hands; they might think I'm charismatic.

Let me tell you, no one's going to think you're charismatic, all right? Trust me; you ain't [sic] nowhere [sic] close to being charismatic. We just want you to be a Christian—then we'll work on the other. (I mean) think of what God's done. I don't care—in your worst day of your life—you are not going to hell. You ought to get up like a jack-in-the-box: Wahoo, wahoo, wahoo! I'm not going to hell. But—

- Not only are you not going to hell
- God has put His Spirit in you
- He has anointed you to serve Him and to preach the Gospel
- He has opened up the windows of Heaven to pour out a blessing on your life

And you're going to do this all day? [Again displays the disgruntled demeanor] Go suck on a persimmon somewhere else, pal; we're going to worship God here and at *Fry Road* too.

Do you know why we don't give and why we don't serve and why we don't praise? Because—

- We are self-centered (and)
- ...selfish (and)
- We are filled with ourselves

That's why; that's the bottom line. I know that's kind of rough but—you know what?—that's life. It is what it is.

You find somebody who's a brand-new heart and the Spirit of God is filling them, they aren't about themselves anymore; they're about Jesus. Because "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live;" but it's not me who lives, it is Christ who's in me; and the life I live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and died for me. [*Galatians 2:20* (paraphrased)]

- I have never seen Jesus be stingy.
- I've never seen Jesus not meet a need.
- I've never seen Jesus not give.

If you're like Jesus, then start living like Jesus:

- Be filled with the Spirit of God
- Get the joy of your salvation back (and)
- Be willing to do whatever it is God wants you to do—whatever it is.

Okay, let me tell you one more thing while I'm on this. You know why we don't make budget week after week?

- Because you don't give
- Because you're stingy (and)
- ...you're greedy (and)
- ...you don't trust God

I know that's rough and rash—but I'm going on vacation—so deal with it with these other guys that are [going to be] coming in [to preach in Pastor Sal's place]. Listen, that's the truth, isn't it? You don't trust God. (You know.)

You go: I don't know how I'm going to make it. And if I give You this little/tiny/measly 10 percent...

God says: I don't know how you're going to make it if you don't give it to Me.

Where is the joy in what God has given us, guys? We ought to be out here doing rapture practice all day long—so excited about what God is doing and what God wants to give you. Let go of your nickel. God's got millions He wants to pour out on you.

- Get the joy of your salvation
- Be willing to do what God wants you to do

Now we're through with this.

Does God need to create something new in you? Are you tired of that old way? Are you tired of the fear and the anxiety and [wondering:] what if I'm found out? How would you like it if God just expunges your record and there's nothing to find out anymore?

Maybe you're a believer and you need to create something new by the way you talk about people and how you treat people. And if you want mercy, dear brother and sister, give mercy. If you can't say anything good about people—let me give you Momma's advice—don't say anything at all. If you don't say anything at all, look inside of your heart and say: God what's wrong with me that I can't say anything good about your people? Does God need to put a new heart inside of you?

In a moment we're going to pray and—if that's the case—I'm going to pray with you. Maybe you're a believer and—

- You just need to be cleansed from some sin you've been hanging onto (and)
- You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God:
  - So that you can have joy (that I was talking about)
  - So you don't face the future in fear, but in faith knowing that: Hey I am willing to do whatever You're asking me to do, God. Because, I know that You are going to take care of me. And I know this is right. And I know that nothing but good can come from my obeying You.
- Do you need the joy of your salvation returned?

You just need to come to God and ask Him to forgive you and fill you.

So let's bow our heads and close our eyes. As our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed I want to pray for us. If you say—hey:

- I need a new heart.
- I need a new start.
- I want to be a follower of Jesus Christ.
- I want my sins forgiven.

I'm going to say this prayer out loud and I'm going to ask you to just say it silently after me. It goes like this:

Dear God, I am a sinner. Wash me from my transgressions. Blot out my iniquity. Cleanse me from my sin. Come into my life, Jesus, and create a new heart within me.

No one is moving around. If you just prayed that prayer for the first time—or maybe you prayed it and meant it this time—will you just put your hand up? Let me see just as a testimony. God bless you—hands all over this room—God bless you. You can put them down.

In a moment, Pastor Zach [King, *Lead Pastor of Ministries, Students and College*] is going to come back out and he's going to give you some *Next Steps*. If you were serious about what you just prayed before God and these witnesses, (if you're serious about that) take the next step that Zach is going to be sharing with you.

Now for those of my brothers and sisters [who] are here, who do not have the joy of the Holy Spirit, who are not willing to do what God is asking you to do—don't you want that? I know you do. I want that. So would you silently pray this prayer of rededication as I pray it aloud?

Father in Heaven, give us the joy of your salvation again. Sustain us with a willing spirit. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Don't let us grieve your Spirit or sin against these days of opportunity that You've given us. Give us, God, revival in our midst. May I be the most joyous person on the face of this earth. May we be the most joyous church anybody could walk into. May we be the most merciful people. And no matter how we're poked or prodded or punched, nothing but the mercy and the love and the compassion of God comes out of us. God, because of that, I pray that You'd turn our church upside down. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Lead Pastor: Dr. Sal Sberna

**The MET**  
Metropolitan Baptist Church  
13000 Jones Rd  
Houston, TX 77070

*Sermon Transcript Ministry*  
resource@TheMETonline.org

**Strategic planning is the key to warfare;  
to win, you need a lot of good counsel.**

*Proverbs 24:6*  
(THE MESSAGE)

**Legend:**

(words in parentheses) = spoken by the preacher *but unnecessary* to the core sentence idea  
[words in square brackets] = additional explanation for clarity *not spoken* by the preacher  
{words in curly brackets within indented quote} = spoken explanation *not part of the quote*