

What Every Christian Ought to Know - Adrian Rogers

What Happens When a Christian Sins - Chapter 4

Psalm 51:1-2 says, “*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.*” As I said in the previous chapter, the most miserable person is a Christian that has sinned. As a Christian we all have our consciences working in us but we also have the Holy Spirit living in us.

I don’t know about you but I feel the hurt inside the Psalmist’s heart when he says, “*Have mercy on me, O God!*” I know that you don’t have this problem but for me, when I make a mistake, I am truly remorseful. When I read these words, I feel the remorse. Remorse is different than repentant. Remorse says, “I am sorry.” Repentance says, “I will never do it again.” And means it!

Consequences of Sin in the Life of a Christian

As we learned in the previous chapter, if you can’t lose your salvation, then what does the sin of a Christian mean? Sin has bad consequences whether you are saved or not. Consider King David in Psalm 51. He had committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba and God had confronted him with his sin through the Prophet Nathan. We all know the story.

Rogers says, “If a person is bound to *sin* then he is bound to *suffer*. He will not lose his salvation, but suffering follows sin as night follows day.” David wrote Psalm 51 after he had gotten his heart right with God. He was looking back at the consequences of his sin in his life.

Sin Dirties the Soul

In verse 7 of Psalm 51, David says, “*wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.*” David feels the filth caused by sin in his life. As true children of God, we should feel unclean when we sin. Rogers says, “If you don’t feel dirty and grimy, spiritually you need to ask yourself: Have I ever been saved? Do I really know the Lord?”

Sin Dominates the Mind

In verse 3 of Psalm 51, David says, *“For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.”* Consider that David’s sin was at the front of his mind. It dominated his thoughts enough that he felt compelled to write this psalm.

Sin Disgraces the Lord

In verse 4, David says, *“Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.”* David recognizes that his relationship with God is not right. His guilt prevented him from feeling right with God. He didn’t feel the normal calm and peace when he talked to God. It dawned on David, *“My God, You were watching me. Your eyes saw what I did. O God, My God, that I love, Lord, I have sinned against You. Not only have I broken Your law, but I have broken your heart.”* (Rogers)

Sin Depresses the Heart

Verse 8 says, *“Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.”* David is depressed. He is full of remorse. He has failed God. When David sinned with Bathsheba, he gave little thought to God. He was lustful and probably thought, *“I hope no one finds out.”*

Rogers says what I have heard before, *“The most miserable person on earth is not a lost person; the most miserable person on earth is a saved person out of fellowship with God. Only one thing can take the joy from your heart . . . and it is sin.”* Joy comes from God, it is constant regardless of circumstances. Happiness is fleeting and dependant on circumstances. Happiness will only last as long as whatever is making us that way. John 15:11 tells us that Jesus said, *“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”* Joy should last our Christian lifetime and it should be complete in your salvation through Jesus.

Sin Diseases the Body

In verse 8, David says “*Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.*” David recognizes that a relationship with God that is out of sorts can affect how you feel. It is a medical fact that stress can make you ill. Sin ruins your relationship with God, it causes stress in your life which can make you feel horrible.

1 Peter 5:7 says, “*Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*” A good relationship with God through Jesus removes your anxiety. This verse is an extension of 1 John 1:9, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Casting our anxiety on Jesus is the same as confessing our sin. Paul tells us to take everything to God in prayer. Philippians 4:5-7

“Sin sickens the body. A merry heart, the joy of the Lord, is a wonderful medicine. The Bible says, “*The joy of the Lord is your strength.*” (Neh. 8:10) When you’re happy in Jesus, you sleep better. When there’s joy, you digest your food, your juices flow, your glands secrete as they ought to because there’s joy in the Lord.” (Rogers)

Sin Defiles the Spirit

In verse 10, David says, “*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*” David’s spirit was out of sorts with the spirit of God. His spiritual relationship with God was not right. Consider what David had done. He committed adultery with Bathsheba and then he essentially murdered her husband, Uriah. He thought that he would get away with it. After all, he was the king! God told the Prophet Nathan to confront him about it. Read the story in 2 Samuel 12:1-25.

Sin Destroys the Testimony

In verse 14, David writes, “*Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.*” When you are struggling with sin in your life, your life is focused on the sin and not on God. It makes sharing the good news of Jesus difficult. It makes praising God and singing to Him seem wrong. Satan is winning.

Look at verse 15, “*Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise.*” Even the man after God’s own heart is not praising Him. His lips are sealed. His relationship with God is not right. *Verses 12 and 13 say, “Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.”* How can you convince others that there is joy in serving Jesus if you have no joy in your life?

“Can a Christian sin? Yes. Can a Christian sin and not suffer? No. Remember, the most miserable man on Earth is not an unsaved man but a saved man out of fellowship with God.” (Rogers)

Cleansing of Sin from the Life of a Christian

Confidence

Back in verse 1 of Psalm 51, David said, “*Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins.*”(NLT) David recognized God’s unfailing love for us. He asked God to blot out or erase our sins. He realized that God is the only one that can erase sin.

In Psalm 103:11-12 David said it a different way, “*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*”

David was said to be a man after God’s own heart. It was not because he never sinned but because of his personal relationship with God. God understands that we all make mistakes, I make plenty but I try my best to tell God what I have done, good or bad. Fortunately, God is not done with us yet.

“Do you know what David knew? David knew that God for a multitude of sins, there were a multitude of mercies. David knew that God had not stopped loving him. He says, “*According to Your lovingkindness.*” God does not love us because we’re valuable; we are valuable because He loves us. God does not love us because we are good. “*God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*” (Rom. 5:8) We need to

have this confidence that no matter what we have done, God loves us.”
(Rogers)

Confession

1 John 1:9 says, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*” When we sin, God requires us to confess what we have done.

The Greek word for ‘confess’ in the New Testament is ‘homologeō’ which means “to say the same thing.” When we confess our sin to God, we must say exactly what happened.

God does not want you to pass the blame. He does not want any “if, ands or buts”. He wants a full admission of your guilt with no sugar coating. Remember God saw and knows every detail.

When I was a teenager, I would come home late and I could be assured of one thing. My mom would be lying in bed worried about me. When I got home she would say, “What time is it John?” For the longest time, I would tell her. One time, I gave her the time and she had looked at the clock incorrectly. She accused me of lying to her. Then I realized that she had a clock right beside the bed. She was asking me the time as a check of my honesty and to let me know that she cared.

God wants us to confess our sin to get us to admit that we were wrong and hopefully get us to repent and turn away from our sin. The Holy Spirit is inside us and should be convicting us of our sin. This was much like what my mom wanted. She wanted me to stop coming in late but I wasn’t getting it.

Consider Genesis 3:9, after Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden. “*But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”*” God knew perfectly well where Adam was. He wanted the same thing from Adam that He expects from us, true confession.

Did God get a true confession? No. Read verses 10 through 12. He passed the blame on to Eve. That is not the confession God wants. He wants us to own our mistakes and confess truthfully. King Solomon got it. He may not have lived it but he understood. In Proverbs 28:13, *“Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”* In an old Flip Wilson routine, he would say, “The Devil made me do it.” That excuse doesn’t fly with God. Remember He said *“Resist the devil and he will flee.”* (James 4:7)

In his book, Adrian Rogers speaks of the difference between satanic accusation and Holy Spirit conviction. Revelation 12:10 tells us that Satan is the accuser of the brethren. He is the original mud slinger. He will dig up past sins that you have confessed. This is one form of satanic accusation. He will cause you to have doubts about whether or not God truly erased your sins. 1 John 1:7 says, *“the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”* God said it and He means it. If you confessed it, your sins are gone.

Satan will also try to make you feel guilty for no reason at all. This is the second form of satanic accusation. When we studied Satan, we learned that he wants to make us feel useless for God. He wants us to say, “I am a sinner. No one will listen to my witness for God.”

Conviction of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit at work inside of you, helping you not to sin. He will also point out unconfessed sin in our lives and try to get us to give them to God. The Holy Spirit is a part of God and the Bible tells us that God cannot be in the presence of sin. The Holy Spirit wants your sin confessed and gone.

Isaiah 1:18 records that God said, *“Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.”* This is what God wants, this is what the Holy Spirit wants and why Jesus died on the cross.

Consecration

Read Psalm 51:12-15. David prays for restoration. He wants his feet put on the path that leads to God. Consecration means to be brought up to a right standing with God. With our sin erased from our lives, then we can be made right with God. Our relationship is restored. We can rededicate our lives to God's service.

“Don't get the idea that because you can be cleansed it makes no difference whether you sin. Just as surely as you put your hand on a hot stove and get burned, if you sin, you're bound to suffer, but thank God for His wonderful, marvelous, matchless grace that forgives and restores the sinning Christian.”
(Rogers)