

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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“What Can Wash Away My Sins?” #1

By Brian Meade



God, in His infinite mercy and love wants us to be free from our sins—but it is up to man to respond according to His design and way of salvation. The basic problem man has in coming to God is simply listening to God’s directions without addition, subtraction, or substitution. Men often want something different than the plain and simple gospel of salvation taught in Scripture.

In 2 Kings 5, Naaman is a prime example of someone who wants God to work things out his way, instead of listening to the instructions given by God.

Notice his reaction to the simple way he was told to be cleansed of his leprosy, “*But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, “Indeed, I said to myself, ‘He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy. Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?’” So he turned and went away in a rage.*” (5:11-12).

Many today are have this same point of view in regard to their own salvation from sin. That’s why we must first look at what will NOT wash away our sins— because many are trusting in false ways.

I. Will Time Erase Our Sins?

Some have the misconception that if enough time passes from the time they committed their sin, that somehow God will release them of that sin.

Whether it is the sins of one’s youth, as many refer to it as, “Sowing your wild oats,” or any other sin one can commit, time will not blot out our sins. Oftentimes, people do things in their youth that cause them great regret and shame later on in life. Some have even committed the heinous sin of murdering someone and, in the passing of time, have thought that it would be forgiven due to the fact that it happened a long time ago. But with God, there is no statute of limitations that cause one to escape prosecution (2 Corinthians 5:10).

I believe the mistake many are making is trusting in time to erase their sins and believing that God is like man; that God will forget our sins like we may forget the past. Or in some way, time lessens the severity of the offense. Like the old saying, “Time heals all wounds.” Some can begin to believe that sin can be healed by time as well. But such is not the case with God’s penalty for our sins. That’s why Jesus had to go to the cross— to provide a way of saving us.

God is eternal (Psalm 90:1-2; Isaiah 57:15), and thus, time has no restriction or limit on how the God of all creation will judge us for our sins. Peter even tells us of some who would scoff at the punishment of God, appealing to the fact that so much time had past and God had not punished the wicked yet.

Notice Peter’s words in 2 Peter 3:3-4, “*knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”*”

Peter reminds us of the day of Christ’s coming to judge the world in verses 8-9, “*But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*”

So let us not trust in time to erase or forget our sins, but use our time in obedience to God. (Acts 2:37-38; Acts 16:31-33; Ephesians 5:15-17).

II. Can We Out-Distance Our Sins?

Some try to do with their sins what criminals do, and that is, “Leave the scene of the crime.” Bank robbers, murderers, and even those guilty of hit and run accidents... all want to get away as fast as they can from where the crime took place. Why? Because they know that those who enforce the law will be coming there soon to bring justice to those who break the law; they are attempting to escape accountability by running away!

But it is impossible to that with God! God is everywhere, in every place. David said a long time ago in Psalm 139:7-10, *“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.”*

Proverbs 15:3, *“The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good.”* God sees our works, even if we don’t see Him! (Revelation 2:2; 2:9; 2:13; 2:19; 3:1; 3:8; 3:15). That fact alone lets us know that trying to flee from our sins is a lesson in futility! Just look to the story of Jonah, and how well did that work out for him to run from God’s presence?

“But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.” (Jonah 1:3-4).

Some might reason that if I could just get away from where my sin took place and get a new start on life— then I could be free from the past guilt and shame. But even if we go off to a new city, state, or even country to live in, we still can’t out-distance our sins! God still knows our deeds, and it changes nothing in regard to the Judgment Day (Revelation 20:12-15). The only real clean slate from our past is in the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

III. Will Excuses Cover Our Sins?

Some have the mistaken notion that excuses for our sins can magically take away all our accountability for our sins. This is a very common deception among us, that excuses have power to help us in regard to our failures to please God (Romans 3:23). Many people today have become experts in finding an excuse in everything, and in everyone, but themselves for their sin.

Excuses are a way for us to feel better about the shame and guilt of what we have done. It can be a defense mechanism to shield us from our failures in keeping God’s commandments. Many even believe that the more excuses you have on your side, that they can help to justify their sinful behavior. It is a way to rationalize the behavior and lessen the responsibility for the sinner.

Many excuses are: *“I was lonely.” “I was hungry.” “I was stressed.” “I was tired.” “I felt I had to do it.” “I was born this way.” “I’m only human.” “Everybody’s doing it.” “I had no choice.” “Other people were mean to me.” “I just couldn’t resist it anymore.” “I was deceived by the devil.”* And list goes on and on....

But do the Scriptures teach that God will overlook or forgive our sin based on our excuses? Do excuses carry any weight with God’s punishment for sin?

1. Adam and Eve Sinned in Genesis 3:6-11.

Adam’s excuse: *“Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”* (3:12).

Eve’s excuse: *“And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”* (3:13)

Did either of these excuses stop the punishment for their sin? No! God still punished both of them for their breaking His command not to eat of the tree that He commanded them not to eat of (Genesis 3:16-19; 23-24).

2. King Saul Sinned in 1 Samuel 15:7-9.

Saul’s excuse: *“And Saul said to Samuel, “But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal.”* (15:20-21).

But God took away the kingdom away from King Saul regardless of his excuses to why he failed to utterly destroy all the Amalekites. Samuel still told him the words from God, *“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king.”* (15:23).

Excuses do not cover our sins at all. We might feel better in the short term, but God will still punish us in the Day of Judgment. So do not waste time and effort on things that don’t avail any good.

(Continued next week)

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, and Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Aaron Posey (Phil Campbell), Wade Butler, Wesley Trimble, Danny Cottrell, Jerry Trimble, and Jon Smith.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Danny Sheffield
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *“What Is A Pastor In The Bible?”*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
Author: Philippians
Starting Page & Question: Paul R. Blake
Lesson #1, Question #1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Lee Busby
Scripture Reading: *1 Timothy 2:9-10*
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Lord’s Supper: Paul Johnson
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *“Dressing To Please God”*
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

November 2:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
Workbook: The Miracles Of Jesus
Author: Mike Willis
Starting Page & Question: *Page #25, Question #1*
Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Brian Meade
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade



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“What Is A Pastor In The Bible?”

Lesson Text: **Ephesians 4:11-12.** “Pastor” Only Once Used in Scripture.

I. The Religious World’s View Of A Pastor.

– Southern Baptist Job Description of a Pastor:

(1) Minister. **(2)** Counselor or Spiritual Advisor. **(3)** Head Of Administration. **(4)** Head of Missionaries.

II. The Importance Of Accurately Using God’s Word- 2 Tim. 2:15.

– **Rightly Dividing:** to give accurate instruction—‘to teach correctly, to expound rightly.’

‘do your best to teach the word of truth correctly’ **2 Tm 2:15.**(Louw, J. P., & Nida, Vol. 1, p. 414)

– Misnomer: A wrong or inaccurate use of a word or name.

– We wouldn’t call a doctor a lawyer or a judge a deputy? Why? Wrong Role!

– We Cannot Call An Elder An Apostle Or A Deacon A Pastor?

– What happens When We Incorrectly Use A Biblical Term?

– We may do things in an UnBiblical Manner And Stray From Truth. Apostasy?

– Are We Speaking “*As The Oracles Of God*” by Misnomers- **1 Peter 4:11.**

III. The Biblical Terms Of Pastors And Preachers.

– Elders (**Acts 20:17**), Pastors (**Eph. 4:11**), Presbyter (**1 Tim. 4:14**), Overseer
Bishop (**Phil 1:1**).

– Preacher (**2 Timothy 1:11**), Minister (**1 Timothy 4:6**); Evangelist (**2 Timothy 4:5**).

– Why Mention This? These Are The Biblical Terms; Distinct, Proper, and Accurate.

IV. What Is The Biblical Role Of Preachers And Pastors?

– **Preachers:**

1. Preach The Word- **2 Timothy 4:1-2.**

2. Teach God’s Word- **1 Timothy 4:11.**

3. Charge Men Not To Teach Another Doctrine- **1 Timothy 1:3.**

4. Warn Of Dangers To The Church- **Acts 20:31.**

5. Rebuke And Reprove Error- **2 Timothy 3:16.**

6. Encourage and Exhort To Do Good **2 Timothy 3:16; Acts 11:23.**

7. Put Brethren In Remembrance **1 Timothy 4:6; Titus 3:1.**

– **Pastors:**

1. **Shepherd** (poimen); “The verb means “to feed, to tend a flock, keep sheep.”

- **Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-2.**

2. **Oversee** (Gr. “To look or watch): **1 Peter 5:1-3; Hebrews 13:17.**

- **1 Thessalonians 5:12.**

– From These Passages: 1. Take Oversight and Rule Well. 2. Take Heed To The Flock.

3. Shepherd/Feed the Flock. 4. Watch For The Souls of the Church.

– Elders Who Oversee And Labor in the Word- **1 Timothy 5:17.**

Was Timothy A Pastor? Was Paul A Pastor? Was Philip the Evangelist? (**1 Tim. 3; Titus 1**).

V. Why All This Confusion? And How Do We React To It?

– Arbitrary Terminology Or Carelessness? Tradition? (Martin Luther?).

– How Do We React To This Terminology? **Matthew 5:13; Ephesians 4:15.**

“Dressing To Please God”

Lesson Text: **1 Thessalonians 4:1-5.**

I. The Christian’s Need To Please God.

- **2 Timothy 2:4; Hebrews 11:6; Colossians 1:10.**
- Who Are We Pleasing In Our Dress?
 - Going Along With Our Friend’s Style Of Dress?
 - Our Family That Sees Nothing Wrong With Immodesty?
 - The Girls Or Boys We Are Trying To Date?
 - The Husband Or Wife To Please Their Spouse?
 - The World That Expects Us To Dress Immodestly?
 - Or Even Our Godly Parents Who Want Us To Do Right?
- We Are To Offer Our Whole Life To God To Please Him— **Romans 12:1-2.**

II. What Happens When We Dress Immodestly?

- We Show Our Nakedness Or Sensuality Before Others.
 - When We Wear Clothing Too Revealing, Too Tight, Too See Through, Too Sensual....
 - Ill-clad Clothing: **Genesis 3:7-10—3:21** “Tunics”; **Exodus 28:42; John 21:7; Prov. 7:10.**
- We Cause Others To Lust- **Matthew 5:28; Matthew 18:6-7; Rom. 14:13; Mark 6:21-23.**
- We Become A Bad Example Of Godliness- **Matthew 5:13-16.**
- We Fail To Please God- **Romans 8:8; Galatians 5:24-25.**

III. How We Please God In Modesty?

- By A Choice To Show Godliness In Our Lives.
 - When Selecting The Kind Of Clothes We Wear, Do We Consider God?
 - It Is Choice To Be Different From The World- **1 John 2:15-17; James 1:27.**
- **1 Timothy 2:9-10.**
 - **"modest" (kosmio)**
 - "Orderly, well arranged, decent, modest" (akin to kosmos, in its primary sense as "harmonious arrangement adornment"; cf. kosmikos, of the world, which is related to kosmos in its secondary sense as the world) - (Vine’s).
 - "The well-ordering is not of dress and demeanor only, but of the inner life, uttering in deed and expressing itself in the outward conversation" - (Trench).
 - **“propriety" (aidos)**
 - Translated "shamefacedness" in the KJV
 - "a sense of shame, modesty, is used regarding the demeanor of women in the church, - Vine's Expository Dictionary

This word applies more to the issue of brevity of clothing: Can it be said that those who display their bodies so as to excite lust in others have the quality of "shamefacedness"?
 - **“moderation" (sophrosune)**
 - Translated "sobriety" in the KJV ; "denotes soundness of mind" - Vine's
 - "it is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising..." - Trench.
 - **“not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing"**
 - Excess, rather than actual adornment, is what is being condemned here- **Isa 3:16-26; Ezek 16:10-14.**

Conclusion: 1 Peter 3:3-5.