

I Ain't Perfect Just Forgiven

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Bible Text: Psalm 32:1-2

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Turn in your Bibles to Psalm 32 and we'll be reading only two verses tonight. Two verses only. This is the thought that the Lord laid on my heart and I pray, I pray, I pray that you find encouragement from it. I pray, I pray, I pray that you get some help from it tonight.

Have you found your place in Psalm chapter 32? Somebody say, "Amen." Stand with us in reverence to the Word of God. In Psalm 32, the Bible says this,

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in
whose spirit there is no guile."

We're going to stop right there. We'd like to preach a message, tonight, on "I'm not perfect, just forgiven." Amen.

Let's bow our heads and pray.

Our most kind and gracious heavenly Father, Lord, we thank you, Lord, once again for another opportunity, Lord, to come to your house. And, Lord, to worship your Name and to worship you, Lord, in Spirit and in Truth. And I pray, Lord, that you would just go before me, Lord, to use me, Lord, tonight, Lord, in this message, Lord, that you gave. There is no way, shape or form, Lord, that I could even come up with this on my own, but, Lord, you have given it, so Lord, I know it has a reason. I know it has a purpose tonight, Lord, and whatever that reason and that purpose is, Lord, I pray, Lord, that you would just accomplish that tonight. Lord, for the heart that may be hurting tonight. Lord, I pray that you would just reach down and, Lord, touch the heart like only you can. And, Lord, as we begin to look at the forgiveness, Lord, that you give us time and time again, Lord, I pray that it would draw us to remember, Lord, I pray, that it would draw us to the place, Lord, of where we want to be, Lord, and that's at your feet, as close as we can get to you. Lord, I pray, Lord, that if there's anything standing in the way of me preaching this message tonight, Lord, I pray, Lord, that you forgive me of it and that you would remove it from my life, Lord. And, Lord, I pray, Lord, that I am not seen tonight. Lord, I pray, Lord, that you hide me behind the cross. Lord, fill these lips of clay, Lord, with the Words that you would have me to say tonight. And, Lord, keep me, Lord, from saying anything that does not need to be said tonight, Lord.

Lord, I pray, Lord, for this church, Lord, if you just use us, Lord, in a mighty way, Lord. Not just on Sunday, not just on Tuesday but, Lord, for every avenue, every street, every place that we go into as individuals, Lord. That you would use us, Lord, to share the gospel message, Lord. And, Lord, we pray, Lord, for the week that's coming up, Lord, Jubilee, Lord. We pray, Lord, that you just meet with us in a mighty way. But, Lord, that's on Sunday, Lord, we're asking you Lord, tonight, Lord, to meet with us in a mighty way, Lord. Lord, there's a lot of people with a lot of requests tonight. Lord, and you know each one. And, Lord, we pray, Lord, that you would just meet those needs according to your will. Lord, we'll thank you. Lord, we'll praise you. Lord, you know we love you with everything we have. It is in Jesus' sweet Name, I pray. Amen.

Thank you. You may be seated.

The Psalmist David, here, writes one more time, he says, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Now, when I began to study this week, this Scripture just kind of popped out at me and I wrestled with it. I knew the Lord was trying to show me something. Brother Randall, I just didn't know what it was he was trying to show me. And in my case, and I don't know about you, but in my case, I always kinds of just clump the transgression and iniquity and sin together, but each one has a certain description and we're going to share that with you tonight. And then we're going to preach the message of "I'm not perfect, just forgiven." Amen?

And you see here that the Psalmist David wrote that "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven." Now, you see here, the word "transgression" according to Strong's, it means "revolt or rebel." The word "transgression" means to revolt or rebel, you're going against. Basically, what he's saying here is that God had boundaries and as human beings, we crossed those boundaries. We had transgression in our life, but look what he says here, and I like this. We're going to get into this a little bit deeper here in just a few minutes, but he says, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven." I like that word "forgiven." Do you like that word tonight? I love it. Well, I don't love it when me and my wife argue, but I like it when she says, "I forgive you." I think she likes it when I say I forgive her. She don't hear that very often. Amen? It's usually my fault. Amen? But, I love it most of all when I sin against God and I'm down in the pit and it seems like my world is falling apart and I come to him and he tells me that I am forgiven. Yes, you crossed a boundary. Yes, you crossed the limit but you are forgiven. I like that, tonight. Amen?

But look what else the Scriptures say: it says, "whose sin is covered." If you go and look up the word "sin" in Strong's, you'll find that that word "sin" means "offense; an act of offense." Look what he says here, he says that the sin is covered. The word "forgiven" there before I go any further, means "to be carried away," by the way. And you see here that this word "sin" means "offense" and that basically means to miss the mark. To miss the mark. That word "sin" means "to miss the mark." The Bible says, "For all have..." what? Sinned. And what? All have sinned and come short. We've missed the mark but,

praise God, Brother Leonard, that when we miss the mark the Bible says here from David, that our sin is covered. Covered.

When I hear that word “covered” that puts my frame of mind in a future sense as well. See, when you sin against God and he forgives you and those sins are covered, guess what? That is not a one time thing. When he shed the blood on Calvary’s cross, it was for all eternity. Amen? It was good enough for that time, it’ll be good enough for the next time, it’ll be good enough for the next three times down the road. He said, “Blessed is he whose sin is covered.”

That word “covered” means “to hide.” Take it away. I like that. That my sin is covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. You can’t see through it. I love the way the church looks. Amen? I love the way it looks: it looks bigger, it looks crisp. But, let me tell you something, there were some things that were painted and primed and you’d go back an hour or two later and you could see right through that primer and that paint. And what did it need, Brother Leonard? It needed another coat to try to cover up what was underneath that. You go to the hardware store, you go to Menards, Lowes, Home Depot and all that other stuff and you’ll pay a little bit extra for that one coat paint. No primer needed. Liars. But with the blood of Jesus Christ, Amen, I didn’t have to pay a thing. He paid it all and it covers it all, praise God, every last drop of his blood covers up every dark sin in my life and every dark sin your life, praise God. When we miss the mark, know this, his blood covers it all. Amen.

Maybe this is why the Lord laid this on my heart, to share my cataract story. Because, the fact of the matter is, I have insurance but it doesn’t cover it. That does me no good. But with the Lord Jesus Christ, we have assurance and all sins are covered. Amen. All sins are covered under the blood and that’s what the Psalmist David wrote here.

But I like what else he put here. Verse 2 says, “Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity.” Now, I want to stop right there for a moment. That word “iniquity” means “moral disorder.” Moral disorder, that’s what the word “iniquity” means. And to “impute” something means that you would hold it against them. But look what he says, “Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity.” Do you know what that means? That even in David’s moral disorder, he said the Lord didn’t put it on his record. Think about that.

Let me tell you something, and I don’t know if you’ve studied this out or not, it’s new to me so let me just enjoy myself. When I got to doing a little background study, this was coming off of David’s secret sin coming out in public when he sinned with Bathsheba. You say, “That’s David, that’s not me.” Let me tell you something, in that one act, David coveted, committed adultery and murdered. That’s three of the Ten Commandments. That shows you the severity of it. That shows you how real this was. We’ve got David saying, “You know what, I’ve got something to be happy about.” And you and I can have something to be happy about because he said, “My transgression is covered or is forgiven. My sin is covered and my iniquity has not been put on my record.”

It's all about forgiveness. There's a big, I don't even know what word I want to use there, misconception would be a good one, amongst the world when they look at a church body, when they look at a Christian they tend to think that we're perfect. "Well, they're trying to live right and they go to church more than I do, and all these type things. They're just acting like they're perfect." They don't even know. We are far from perfect. If you're sitting here tonight and you think that you're perfect and everything is hunky-dory in your life, let me tell you something, there is not one person here tonight that is perfect. There is not one person here tonight that is so high and mighty that we don't need forgiveness. Amen. Some of you, some of us, might sin today. Don't have to raise your hand, don't have to say, "Amen," but I'm sure if I counted to three and we all said, "Amen," whoever sinned today, there would probably be an uproar. Amen? We'd all say "Amen" to that. But look what he says: David, coming off his sin, he's talking about forgiveness. I praise God tonight, church, that we serve a Lord of second chances. I'm on like my 200 million, quadrillion chance, Amen? I don't even know if that's a number, but we're going to say it is. In the Greek, Amen? Praise God.

Tonight I want to preach on, "I'm not perfect, just forgiven." There are some in the world that think that Christians think they're perfect. There are some in the church that think they're perfect. Go and study the Pharisees. They thought they had everything covered. They thought they had the religious thing covered, the law thing covered. They thought they had the church thing down. They thought that they would fast and all this stuff and they'd be better than everybody else. Well, let me tell you something: they were in need of a Savior as well. Amen. And listen, you may have been going to church for 20-30-40 years, but let me tell you something, each and every day we need to thank God for his forgiveness. Amen? We need to thank God for the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross. We need to thank God that he is a God of second chances. Amen? We need to thank God each and every day for that blood. Amen?

I want to share four things with you tonight and we won't be long at all. Four things tonight about forgiveness: 1. Forgiveness is an act of God. I can forgive somebody else because God established it. There is a song that we always hear, it almost gets to the point of haunting us at the house, but the song called "Seven Times Seventy," and it's talking about forgiveness. The only reason why you can forgive anybody is because God established it. Forgiveness is an act of God. Let me say this to you, I believe this with all my heart that God Almighty is the one and only one that blots out our sin.

You say, "Preacher, have you got Bible on that?" Yes, I do. Turn in your Bibles to the Book of Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." If you jump over to chapter 44:22, the Bible says this, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." I like those words. Those words excite me. Everybody here knows that I've said it before, I have not been to Bible College and all that stuff and I know he's talking to the children of Israel here, but let me tell you something, I'm a child of the King. Amen? And this applies to me as well. Amen? He said, "I blot out, blot out as a thick cloud. I see you right now through a thick cloud. But I can still make out who you are, I can still make out the colors that you're wearing and

those types of things.” But when God blots out our sin you can’t see through it, you can’t see around it, you can’t see over it, you can’t see under it. He blots it out so it’s never to be brought up again. Never to be brought up again. Forgiveness is an act of God. He says, “I blot out.” Listen, I’m glad he blocks it out. I’d mess it up. I wouldn’t be able to blot out your sin, you wouldn’t be able to blot out my sin but, praise God, he can blot it out.

Not only is it an act of God but forgiveness is through the blood of Jesus Christ. Without the shedding of blood, the Bible says what? There is no remission. There is no forgiveness is what that means. Because Jesus Christ paid the price at Calvary, we have forgiveness. Basically, all things are good between me and the Father. That is not because of who I am, it’s not because of what I’ve done. I can’t pass out that many tracts to be forgiven. Let me say this to you tonight: the reason why we are forgiven when we sin against God is because when God looks on your life, if you’re saved by the grace of God, he does not see your wickedness, he does not see your sinful nature but he looks down and sees the blood of his Son, praise God, and he says “You are forgiven.” Amen. Jesus makes the difference. Amen.

I wish the Baptist church could get some of the work ethic of a Jehovah’s Witness. Well, let me tell you something, and the reason why I say that is because they are faithful to what they believe and if we got a little bit of that and got up on Saturday and said, “Hey, forsake my day off and forsake my tired legs, let’s go tell somebody about Jesus.” My goodness, we would get the truth out there. But the reason why, we can have forgiveness is because of the blood of Jesus Christ. He paid the sin debt.

Jesus suffered for my sins and your sin. I believe amongst all the attempted distraction when Brother Oral Anderson was here, he gave a clear-cut picture of what happens there. Jesus Christ went to the cross for Brother Leonard, for Miss Sherry, for Brother Randall, for Miss Jackie. When he went to the cross, even though you weren’t even born yet, you were still on his mind. He suffered, bled and died to pay the price for my sins and your sins and the sins of the world. He suffered. Amen. He could’ve called legions of angels down but he stayed up there for Miss Pam. He could’ve called legions of angels down but he said, “I’m going to stay up here because Steve is going to be born later on and I’m going to die for his sin.” He stayed up there not just for the ones that are in church tonight, but he stayed up there for the ones that sit at home tonight. He stayed up there on the cross for people like Adolph Hitler. He stayed up there on the cross for people like Saddam Hussein. He stayed up there for all the world that they might be saved. We can look at Romans 10:13 that says, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” That includes you and that includes me. It’s because of Jesus Christ that we can be forgiven.

Not even just for the forgiveness unto salvation but even after you’re saved. Maybe I stand in this boat alone, I don’t know, but has anybody sinned after being saved? We all have. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sacrifice that he made, Brother Leonard, was good enough the first time and only time. That’s why these people that say that you can lose your salvation, gain it back and lose it, they don’t know what they’re talking about. If that was true, that means that Jesus Christ every, let’s just throw out a date,

every December 25th would have to be born in that manger over and over. Have you ever seen that movie “Groundhog Day”? Guy wakes up and he can’t get out of the same day. That’s what it would be like. If I could lose my salvation...the only reason why I have salvation, the only reason why you’re saved is because of Jesus Christ. But, if I can lose my salvation that is telling me that my Lord’s sacrifice was not good enough, that he had to come to the cross and suffer again. Well, let me tell you something, they mocked him and they spat upon him and they plucked his beard and they beat him unmercifully and they put a robe around him and put a crown of thorns upon his head. Next time we see the Lord Jesus, it’s not going to be to come on a cross but he’s going to come back to establish a kingdom. He paid the price. There was a sin debt on your life. I don’t care how much you make in a year, it would not be enough to pay it off. Not be enough to pay it off.

I like the song, I think the title is “If That Isn’t Love” where in the opening line it says, “He left the splendor of heaven.” Listen, he was in heaven. He was in heaven and he left heaven to be born amongst hay and animals. That is not how a king should be born. But that’s how my King was born. He didn’t come wearing purple. He didn’t come with gold around his neck and on his head. The Bible said they wrapped him in swaddling clothes and he came as a humble servant and grew up. I often wonder this, and my wife has as well, I wonder if he acted like my boys act. Think about this now for a minute. I don’t want to get too deep in this thought but he was still a baby. He still grew up. He grew up the one year, two year, three year, four year, he grew up. He was 100% God but he was 100% man. Did he ever get the urge just to run down an old dirt road? Did he ever get the urge to pick up a stone and cast it just to make it skip even though he probably could’ve made it float?

He was raised and grew up to a boy of 12 years old. The Bible says he began to preach in the Temple as a boy of 12 years old. I tell people, I don’t want to give them a big head, but everywhere I go I tell people about Stevie, who is 16, because I’m proud of the fact that he started to preach at such a young age. I know I had trouble surrendering at 20, let alone 16. People tend to think, our human minds tend to think, “Well, what can a 16 year old preacher teach me?” Well, 12 year old Jesus was preaching in the Temple. “What are you saying, Preacher?” I’m saying all this: that forgiveness comes through the blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus suffered. He was raised from 12 preaching up to a man of 33 ½ years.

It was then when they came and arrested him, Judas came in, gave him a kiss on the cheek. They came and laid their hands on my Savior. Get this tonight: he didn’t resist. He didn’t take off running. He didn’t make them all drop dead like he probably could have but he knew that he had to go to the cross. They took him in and they brought him before Pilate and he would not say a word. Pilate said, I’m paraphrasing, “Don’t you know what power I have?” Jesus looked at him and said, “I have the power to lay my life down and raise it back up.”

They took him and they beat him with a cat o’ nine tails. They beat him so bad that his back was lacerated and torn open and all these things. Then they made him carry his cross. And he fell under the weight of the cross so much so that a soldier picked

somebody out of the crowd and said, "Hey, you help him get up there!" Jesus made it up there of Golgotha's hill. They took that first spike and they nailed it into his hand. That wasn't even his hand, it was a little bit lower than that. They took his other hand, stretched it out and drove it through. They took his feet, crossed them over, overlapping each other and put it through his feet. Then they raised it up. They set it into place. He already had a crown of thorns on his head. Just to give you an example, have you ever gone out and tried to cut a rose from a rosebush and get hit by the thorn? My goodness, we scream like bloody murder, I know I do.

But they took this crown of thorns and it wasn't these little thorns, these things were big, thick. They didn't just place it on his head, they took it and they jammed it down. And as he hung there, they began to mock him. This might be my own way of thinking and I'm going to say that this is my opinion, but I think the Lord could've taken the nails, obviously he did, I think the Lord could've taken the crown of thorns, obviously he did, but I think the thing that hurt him the most, in my opinion, take it or leave it, was when those people came by, the very people he was dying for, the very people that he was on that cross for and they came by and they looked at him and they spit at him. I can't even imagine that. Just hauling back and phhht. Can't wipe it off, can't defend yourself, can't duck and it would just hit. Then you had the others coming around and saying, "You know if you be the Son of God, save yourself. Bring yourself down." And he ended up saying, I believe it's seven different quotes from the cross. I've heard that preached before.

The one that I want to touch on tonight is when he said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." The thief hanging on the left side, he said, "Hey, if you are who you say you are, save yourself and save us too." Then the thief on the right said, "I believe you are." I'm paraphrasing this, he said, "I believe you are who you say you are." And he said, "Remember me when you enter into thy kingdom." And he said, "Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise." Listen, they didn't take that fellow off the cross and baptize him. He was going to heaven.

Jesus suffered but not only did he suffer, but God was satisfied. God was satisfied with the sacrifice. No longer would there be a need, Brother Dennis, for us to bring the blood of bulls and goats and all those things and present them as a sacrifice. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe! Not only did Jesus suffer, but God was satisfied. God looked away from heaven and it was midnight in the middle of the day because Jesus had to take on the sin. He was a spotless lamb who knew no sin but yet he took on the sin of you and me and all the rest of the world and God looked away and it was midnight in the middle of the day.

Jesus could've called legions of angels. "Get me outta here. I don't want to do this no more." The old song says, "It wasn't nails that kept him on the cross, love did." Who did he love? "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Forgiveness is not only a God act, but forgiveness is through the blood of Jesus Christ. Look over with me in Hebrews 9:22, the Bible tells us this, "And almost all things are by

the law purged with blood,” this is what we said earlier, “and without shedding of blood is no remission.” The only way that you and I have forgiveness is because Jesus shed his blood. I don’t care if you’re a good person, I don’t care if you think you can work your way to heaven, I don’t care if you think that you have paid enough tithes to get in, if your life is not under the blood of Jesus Christ, that’s the only way to be saved. You have to come through the blood. You have to come through the sacrifice that satisfied God.

Number 3: not only is forgiveness an act of God, forgiveness is by Jesus’ blood but #3, forgiveness requires repentance. I want you to think about this for a minute because when the Lord laid this on my heart I had one of those “what comes first, the chicken or the egg” thing. I asked my wife, “Let me ask you a question, what do you think comes first, repentance or forgiveness?” I can’t even remember what she answered but forgiveness requires repentance. I’m not going to pick on any other religion, Lord help me, but listen, repentance is not going out on Saturday night then showing up at 12 noon and walk into a modified phone booth, open up a little drive through window to have somebody tell you to go say 12 Hail Mary’s and all of this other stuff. Listen to me, that’s not repentance. True repentance.

The word “repentance” means a change of mind, a change of direction. It’s when you’re heading down the wrong way, when you’re heading down the wrong path in life and the Holy Spirit stops you and you see what you’re doing is wrong and you change your direction and you go back to Christ. You go back to God and you say, “Oh God, forgive me! Forgive me!”

Forgiveness requires repentance. I know some people and in my younger days I even did this and you can look inside your own heart and answer this question, but you say, “Oh Lord, I messed up. I did this and I messed up big time. Lord, please forgive me. If you forgive me of this, I promise never to do that again.” The next day, you’re right back in the same mess. The next day, the next week, you’re right back doing the same thing you promised God you would not do. And it’s not because you’re addicted, God understands those things, but he looks on the intent of the heart. He knows what your heart’s desire is. He knows the ones that truly want to turn away from the things that have them bound down. He knows the one who’s heart is really into asking the Lord for forgiveness and trying their best to turn away from those things that grab ahold of them. On the flip side of that, God knows the heart of that person who just wants to get by by the skin of their teeth. God knows the heart of the person who says that they’ve repented and they come to the altar and they cry big tears. But let me tell you something, don’t confuse repentance with emotion. There are a lot of people that have cried many tears and got right back up from the altar in the same condition that they left it. When you have true repentance, you turn away from what’s drawn you away from God and you turn back to him.

Forgiveness requires repentance. When I mess up and I do mess up, I have to ask God, I have to repent, change my direction. You say, “Preacher, what in the world do you do to mess up?” I’ll give you one. My wife chuckles, she’s like “See me after church. He does this, this, this...” One of the biggest things that I’ve battled with is doubt. Doubt. That’s when the old devil gets up in here and says, “You know what, it ain’t gonna work out that

way.” “Maybe he’s right. Man, we’ve got this going on, this going on and maybe it ain’t gonna work out. What’s going on.” And I wrestle with doubt. But then all of a sudden, I open up the Word of God and I see those Scriptures that say that God shall supply all you need according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus. I run into those and then I say, “You know what, that’s not for me.” And I turn the page and all of a sudden I come across this, “I’m more than a conqueror through Christ Jesus.” “Well, no, that can’t be for me.” I flip over and I get to the part that “what’s impossible with man is possible with God.” “Lord, ok, just leave me alone! I want to have a self-pity party.” And I open up the Scriptures and it says, “If God be for us who can be against us?” “Lord, I’m getting out the New Testament. I’m going to the Old Testament.” And I come across there where Joseph tells his brothers, “You meant it for evil but God meant it for good.”

And these Scriptures start penetrating my heart and these Scriptures start penetrating my mind and then I say, “Oh God, I’m sorry for doubting you! Oh God, I’m sorry for not trusting you! Oh God, I’m sorry for taking your Word and throwing it down and saying it’s not good! I’m sorry, Lord.” And then you know what? I ask God to forgive me after I’ve turned in that direction.

Let me put it to you this way, I’ve already claimed myself the King of Lame Examples, but let’s do it this way, this is the best way I can explain repentance: say we’ve got a mighty big van and we’re all in this van and we are driving this van straight for the edge of the cliff. We’re on this van and it’s heading straight for the cliff. I don’t care how many times you say, “Oh forgive me, Lord. Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me, Lord,” where are we still headed? Over a cliff. What needs to happen? Somebody needs to take that steering wheel and even though we’re heading straight for the cliff, they need to turn that wheel to turn that van around and start heading back to solid ground.

The same thing with you and I when sin creeps up in our life. You say, “Well, Preacher, I don’t have sin in my life.” Let me tell you something, the Book of Romans tells us that anything that is not of faith is what? Sin. You ought to get that. Let me say it again: anything that’s not of faith is sin. Maybe you’ve doubted this week. Maybe you’ve gotten angry this week. Maybe you’ve cheated this week. Maybe you’ve stolen this week. Maybe you’ve lied this week. Maybe you’ve... we can go down the list. I hope no one killed anyone this week. Amen? My kids came close this week, God forgive me. Amen? I don’t know what your week has been, but listen, anything that’s not of faith is sin.

If you’re heading towards that cliff of sin what you need to do is to turn around and head back to where you left God. Turn back. You say, “Preacher, the way you’re making it sound tonight, you’re making it sound like you have to ask God for forgiveness every day.” You got it. When you get up in the morning, “Lord, thank you for the day and forgive me where I’m going to come up short in failure.” In the middle of the day when you’re at lunch, “Oh Lord, forgive me for getting angry at that co-worker.” When you go home at night, “Oh Lord, forgive me for the things that I did today.”

You say, "Preacher, you make it sound like Christians are awful." Listen, let me tell you something, we're not awful people but let me tell you, there are times when we get cut off on the highway and we just want to cut somebody else off. Do you think that's of God? No, that's the old flesh rising up. Somebody cussing at you and calling you names. I speak for myself, but there are just times when you just want to draw back and knock that person out. But, listen, that's not of God. Amen? That's of the flesh. That's of the world and we're supposed to be separate from those things. So, yes, we do have to go to God daily and say, "God, please forgive me."

You know what, like David said, "my transgressions are forgiven. My sin is covered. My Lord and my God, imputeth not my iniquity." What are you saying? I'm saying this: that forgiveness is an act of God; forgiveness is through the blood of Jesus Christ; forgiveness requires what? Repentance, y'all forgot already.

We are entering in this Sunday morning to Jubilee. I know I wasn't here but I am sure at some point, Pastor Clemon has probably shared with you in the Bible what Jubilee is, the time of celebration, it's the sounding of the horn. It's a time of rejoicing, it's a time to be joyful. How are we supposed to be joyful in the middle of the Jubilee when we've got unconfessed sin choking out the life inside of us? "Well, I'm just going to come to Jubilee because if I don't Pastor will think bad of me. But, I'm going to sit there and I'm just going to mind my own business. I ain't gonna sing. Miss Jolene, she has us singing for Easter and I'm just ain't gonna sing. You know what, I'm gonna go there and when we shake hands, I'm gonna make everybody come to me. I'll shake their hand but, you know what, I'm gonna make them come to me. I ain't gonna walk around nobody. The ones that like me will come shake my hand. And when that preacher gets up there, that Brother Brandon Morris, he's a fireball and I enjoyed him last time but this is a new time. You know, I've heard that before. Brother Travis, he's been here so many times, what new can he bring?"

Do you see what I'm doing here, church? When you bring that attitude of sin, when you bring the character of sin, you are going to hinder not only your service but you're going to hinder the service of those next to you. You're going to hinder the service of those behind you. And you're going to hinder the service of the one behind the pulpit. Listen, preachers see things. I see everything that goes on and I know, Brother Clemon sees everything that goes on. When somebody is sitting there like this.... "Please turn in your Bibles to the Book of Matthew..." "I ain't turning. You turn, I'll look over here." We can see that and that hinders. So why not lay the sin down? Why not start off fresh and say, "God, you are going to give us a Jubilee to remember. You're going to give us a time of joy. We're going to sound the ram's horn and we're going to have a celebration. But, Lord, before we can get to that point, I need you to take care of some sin in my life. I need to lay some things down before the throne. I need to lay some things down at your feet so I can worship you in Spirit and in Truth. So I can come rejoicing. So I can come and say, 'Hallelujah, praise God.'" That starts with you and that starts with me.

That leads me to my fourth and final point tonight: forgiveness is an act of God; forgiveness is through the blood of Jesus; forgiveness requires repentance; fourthly and

finally tonight, forgiveness means your sin is gone. Sounds good, don't it? I don't know how many preachers have preached on David. I know I'm one. I've preached on David sinning with Bathsheba; I've preached on Nathan coming to him and saying, "Thou art the man." I've preached those messages and I'm sure other preachers have as well. When David penned this Psalm his sin came out in public. Believe me, your sin that you do in private will come out in public. What you think you're doing in the privacy of your own life, it'll be brought to the light. That's another message for another time.

But, if you were to go and see David at this point as he's writing down this Psalm, you'd say, "David! Where's your sin at?" Do you know what he would tell you? Gone. Gone. I serve a Lord that forgives my transgression. I serve a God that sent his Son to shed his blood. I'm speaking on my terms now. That Jesus Christ shed his blood and my sin is covered. I serve a Lord, Brother Dennis, that doesn't hold anything on my record. When he forgives, he forgives all the way. He doesn't dangle a carrot in front of you and say, "Hey, do you remember when you messed up that time? Do you remember when you did this...you're no good. Do you remember that?" Does your God do that? If your God does that, you aren't serving the same God I am. I serve a God that when he forgives us means our sin is gone.

Let me ask you this: if we say "Amen" to that tonight, why are many Christians today haunted by the sins of the past? Don't mistake what I'm saying, I believe that God wants us to be reminded of where he's brought us from. I'm talking about the people who are haunted, shackled, chained up and bound by the things that they did before. If God has forgiven you and he's let it go, then you need to let it go. We're walking around chained up, bound down by the things you used to be. Let me tell you something, when God forgives you of that sin and you ask God to forgive you of that sin, he forgives you completely. Not halfway. Not some of the time. He forgives you completely.

That's why he tells us over there in 1 John 1:9, "if thou confess with thy mouth." A lot of people do this, "Well, God knows my heart." That's not Bible. He says "if thou confess with thy mouth." He said "he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sin and cleanse us of all unrighteousness." I love when my kids go out and play, I really do. They come in all sweaty, dirty. They play hard. Holes in their jeans and all that stuff, they play hard. I played hard. You probably played hard as well. You know those days. And then your Mom or your Dad tells you those dreaded words, "Go take a bath." We'd rather go to bed dirty but our parents say, "Go take a bath." And you get in the shower, you get in the bath and you begin to wash up and all that water is just filthy and dirty and you get out and you're clean.

Our human nature wants to stay in the dirt but our heavenly Father is telling us to take a bath and we need to get into that spiritual bath tub and let that Holy Spirit water, so to speak, wash us from head to toe. When you're in there and you're getting clean and you see that water and it's filthy, but you know what, our God doesn't leave the bath water in the tub. He's got a forgiveness drain. And all that dirty filthy water that was just washed off you goes down that drain. If you're real dirty, sometimes it leaves a ring, does it not? But do you know what? All that water goes down the drain. Our heavenly Father comes

in with some heavenly scrubbing bubbles and he takes off that ring. Why? Because there's no remnants of our sin. He forgives us completely.

There's three people, I guess you could say, entities, if you will, that bring up our past sin. That is: Satan, he loves to remind people of how you've failed. He loves to tell you how weak you are. He loves to tell you that you're no good and remember that time you were running around drinking and alcoholic and doing drugs and running around on your wife or your husband. Remember those times you lied to your boss, you cheated on your taxes. He loves to remind us of that stuff.

Satan is one. Society is another. "Hey, I remember you when you used to run around with us and I remember those. Do you still do those things? Aw, you were a rascal. I remember you." Society brings up our past sin.

Do you know what the third one is? Self. We beat ourselves up. "Aw, I'm no good. I'm failing again. Oh God, I'm drowning. I'm sinking again in this muck and this mire. Lord, I just feel like I'm constantly falling. Lord, I'm going right back to the same things I used to." But, do you know what, just like Peter was when he was beginning to drown in that water, he cried out, "Lord, save me." And the Lord was right there to grab him and pick him back up. You may be drowning tonight in past sins. You may be drowning tonight in sins that you didn't even confess. You may be drowning tonight in sin you didn't even know about.

I'm encouraging you tonight to come and take that spiritual bath. Confess with your mouth and let the Lord forgive you of your sin. Let the Lord cleanse you of all unrighteousness. We serve a Lord that forgives our transgressions. Who covers our sins and does not put on our record our iniquity. You have a God who loves you, that saved you and wants to forgive you. I tell you, now would be a good time to start your Jubilee. "Preacher, we still have Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday to go." I'm not saying this is going to be a Tuesday night practice and everything's going to be hunky dory. You're going to battle throughout the week but you know what, it's okay to take a bath nightly. It's okay to take a shower daily. It's okay. You can get under the spout where the glory runs out, as Dave Sampson used to say. You can get under there. You can get as close to God as you want to get.

The Bible tells us to draw nigh to God and what? He'll draw nigh to us. If you've got anything in your life tonight, let tonight be the night that you come to an old fashioned altar and you mean business with God. I'm going to ask Miss Jackie if she wouldn't come on to the piano and just play whatever. If you can find it, you could play "I Surrender All." I'm going to ask everybody to stand with me.

Has God called you tonight and said, "Hey, now's the time to take care of that sin," that you maybe didn't even know about. Now's the time to come and mean business with God. Is tonight the night that you get this thing settled with the Lord? Will tonight be the night that you surrender all as the altar is being filled? I'm going to ask every head to bow and every eye to close and nobody looking around. You say, "Preacher, I have that

sin in my life. I have that sin that I didn't even know about. And, Preacher, I am drowning in it." Will there be one to raise their hand and say, "Pray for me?" God bless that hand. God bless that hand. Hands all over, put them down. You say, "Preacher, I have this sin in my life and I'm drowning in it. I don't want to drown no more." Listen, if you raised your hand, why don't you come? Why don't you come and mean business with God. You say, "I don't know what to say." You just simply come to him with your heart and say, "Lord, forgive me. Lord, I've given everything over to you tonight. I surrender all. Every sin, every burden, every heartache. Everything that has been hindering me, I'm coming right now!" Don't hesitate. Don't wait. Come.