

I have Sinned

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Date: 05 January 2025

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[0 : 00] If you have Bibles, I want to turn to 1 John 1.9, 1 John 1.9. On Wednesday mornings at 11 a.m., we do midweek prayer and Bible study in the fellowship hall. And as the year ended, I was preaching through 1 John during that time.

And I got to this passage and just kind of started pondering on some stuff and thought, as we begin the year together, why don't we reflect on this a little bit on Sunday morning?

And so in reality, it's something I never wanted to say. I've spoken in all kinds of capacities and addressed all kinds of different burdens, but this is one I really don't like dealing with.

I typically speak boldly about the things of God, but I get a little mousy with this one, if you will. It's hard to admit. I have sinned.

It's not what I like to talk about, not fun to share. I've sinned. I knew better. I shouldn't have done it, but I've sinned. It took Pharaoh a long time to admit it.

[1 : 05] He had been horribly oppressive to the Hebrew people. It got worse when they wanted to worship. He started providing the straw for the bricks that they were to make and stopped providing the straw for the bricks that they were to make and told them to get their own straw, but to keep the same production level that they had when they were provided straw.

When they couldn't do it, he beat them. So then God turned the Nile River, not only their source of water, but also a God to them, turned it to blood.

The fish died. The water stunk. Could not be drunk. Pharaoh did not take it to heart. Exodus 7 verse 23 says. A week later, the frogs came and they were everywhere.

Scripture even tells us that they were even up in the bed. And then they died. And they laid in piles. They didn't stink.

They stank. Horrible. But once he got a rest from them, he hardened his heart again. Then the gnats came.

[2 : 21] And then the swarms of flies came. And then the livestock died. Then they had a breakout of boils. And boils covered people and animals. Then came the hail.

Worst hail they had ever experienced. Not only that, but it was mixed with fire and thunder. It broke down every budding plant.

Scripture says, quote, with the barley in the ear and the flax in the bud. That means at the wrong time, folks. Every tree killed animals.

It shook Pharaoh. He had a hard time saying it, but he finally did. In Exodus 9, 27, he said, this time I have sinned.

Once it stopped, not a lot changed for him. Then the locusts came. Although the wheat was just beginning when the hail came and was not affected, the locusts got the wheat.

[3 : 22] It was when the hail and the locusts came that Pharaoh said, I have sinned. Please ask the Lord to forgive me. But he still didn't change. Balaam had a hard time admitting that he was not following the will of God.

And it was not until God enabled his donkey to speak to him that he realized that the seemingly stubborn donkey had saved his life.

Balaam admitted, I have sinned. It wasn't easy for Achan to admit. Jericho had so much when they overtook it.

And he wanted so little of that to keep for himself. And it was too sweet to pass up. Even though the Lord told him not to take any of it, he did a little bit just for himself.

And hid it in his tent so nobody would know. His sin caused the whole army to lose the battle that they should have won. And the question came, wait a minute.

[4 : 24] What happened here? Who sinned? It was hard for Achan to say it. There was a process that made him have to. Joshua 7 verse 20, he admitted, I have sinned.

Saul was rebuked by Samuel for his disobedience. He was too busy listening to other people, not listening to the Lord. And he brought sheep that he had gained from the Amalekites instead of killing them as the Lord had told them.

And the reason why the Lord would tell him that is because he didn't want himself to be profited from those things that had been evil. Samuel confronted Saul for doing this, disobeying God.

With a quote that I absolutely love. Samuel said, what is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?

Saul said, I have sinned. When David spared the life of Saul as Saul was trying to kill him, Saul was pursuing David to kill him.

[5 : 43] And in his pursuit, Saul stopped in a cave to relieve himself. I didn't make that up. That's in scripture. David was hiding in that cave.

And his men told him, this is your opportunity. Saul is in a compromised position. Get him. And David would not lift his hand to God's anointed.

He spared Saul's life. And again, on another occasion, he walked up on a sleeping Saul and only took his sword and a jar to show proof that he could have taken his life.

He spared him again. And in response, Saul said, I have sinned. When David became king, he had to say it. He was confronted about sleeping with an officer's wife while the officer was in battle.

And David was lounging at the house in the spring when kings were to go to war. When she got pregnant, he brought the man home to somehow cover his tracks.

[6 : 54] However, Uriah would not go into his own house with his own wife because he knew his men were still in battle. And when he went back to the battle scene, David said, put him in the front of the line and then remove yourself from him, making him vulnerable to the enemy.

And Uriah died in the battlefield. And David thought he had covered it up. And Nathan confronted him by telling him a story about a man who had a lot of sheep and took one man's only sheep.

And David heard that story and said, what a sorry individual. That's my interpretation. What a sorry individual. And he said, who took a man's only sheep when he had plenty for himself?

And Nathan said, as only the King James can pull out, thou art the man. David said, I've sinned. David got proud of his accomplishments through a census. He knew he had a bunch, so let's just start counting stuff. Let's see how much success we've had. But that was not of God.

[8 : 16] And he had to admit, I've sinned. When Shimei threw dust and rocks and curses at David, he got dragged into the king's chambers and he had to admit, I have sinned.

When the prophet Micah looked at his people and realized the wickedness that he saw in them was a reflection upon his own life as well, he had to admit, I have sinned.

When the prodigal son had spent the inheritance that he received early on wine and women in the world and filled his belly with the husk that the swine did eat, when he came to himself, he said, I will arise and go to my father's house.

And upon approaching his father's house, he said, I have sinned. When Judas sold Jesus and his own soul for 30 pieces of silver, the guilt of the matter weighed on him heavy and he said, I have sinned.

And he went out and hanged himself. I am thankful. For each one of these individuals that I've mentioned, I am thankful for myself.

[9 : 39] I'm thankful for you. That 1 John 1.9 says that if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Now, you may say this morning, but, but pastor, you don't know what I've done. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But pastor, you know, I really hadn't done that much wrong in my life. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But thank God. Isaiah chapter 1 verse 18 says, When the people insisted on having a king, Saul was the one that was chosen by God as the first king of Israel.

He was ahead above all the others. I believe that's physically ahead above all others, but I also believe that it was also symbolically that, man, he stood out.

[11 : 05] Man like that have to say, I have sinned. So do we. If David, a man that is described, made a lot of mistakes.

Scripture gives us a lot of details about David's life. But they also described as a man after God's own heart. If he had to say, I have sinned, so do we.

If Michael was a prophet who God allowed to see into the future hundreds of years and see the birth of Christ, if he has to say, I have sinned, so do we.

The reality is we don't really have time to monitor everybody else's sins. We have enough to deal with with our own. And we need to be saying, I have sinned.

I mean, life can get so busy doing so many good and right things that if we're not careful, we'll let it slip. But when we do, we need to be saying, I have sinned.

[12 : 12] Daddies and mamas. Don't be afraid to admit, I have sinned. Until we've confronted the sin in our own lives, we'll never be an adequate judge of what is wrong.

In somebody else's life or what's wrong in this country or what's wrong in our own household, our own community, or even what's right.

I have sinned. I don't believe we'll ever be able to lead folks to Christ effectively unless we acknowledge, I have sinned. I don't believe we can lead our families the way they need to be led unless we've acknowledged, I have sinned.

Or to lead our churches, I have sinned. I mean, our pride from being so good at hiding our sin from others has sometimes got us thinking that we are hiding it from God.

It ain't true, folks. 1 Samuel chapter 16 verse 7 says, The Lord sees not as man sees.

[13 : 23] Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. And if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just.

That means that he will do it. That means he can do it. I've said it many times before, but if he would do it but couldn't do it, we'd be in a mess.

And if he wouldn't do it but couldn't do it, we'd be in a mess. But he can and he will, and because of that, Scripture tells us that he will release us from our sins.

He'll let us go. Listen, when God forgives us, he releases the ball and chain of our sin.

There's fishermen in the room, and when you catch a fish and you catch it on a hook and you pull it to the boat, who got that fish that got caught by going after the wrong bait, once that hook is removed and he is placed back in the water, he is released to go.

[14 : 39] There might be a scar or two, but he's released to go. Christ cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

When I get a stain on my clothes, I try to shout it out. I spray it and I scrub it and I spray it again and I scrub it.

But I take the whole shirt and I put it all in the wash because it all needs to be clean.

I'm like Peter. He didn't want the Lord to wash his feet. He didn't feel like that was right. And Scripture tells us in John 13, 8 and 9 that Peter said to him, You shall never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him, If I don't wash you, you have no share with me. And then Peter, as only Peter can do, and a few of us other ones can do it too, go above and beyond.

[15 : 49] Peter said, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. I mean, clean me all. Lord, wash me, all of me. For I have sinned.

Don't you think the Lord this morning, that he does not hold our sin over our head, and that he'll forgive us, and he'll cleanse us, if we acknowledge our sin to him?

That our sin is lost in the sea of God's forgetfulness? That it's removed as far as the east is from the west, is what Scripture says?

And you know the significance of that? I believe that if you were to travel north today, and you were able to do it, and go all the way to the North Pole, there's a time you're going to begin to travel south.

Scripture says that he's removed the sin as far as the east is from the west, and if you leave today and go east, and continue to go east, there'll never be a time when you ever automatically go west. He removed sin.

[17 : 10] It's gone. And so let's deal with it. Let's begin a year the way we ought to begin a year, and deal with what we need to deal with.

If there's never been a time in your life when you've asked the Lord Jesus to forgive you, and to come into your life, and to save you, I want you to know the best decision you'll ever make is to return to your life to the Lord.

And the truth of the matter is, Scripture shows us through a lot of examples, and just in what it says, that we can come as we are, and he'll clean us up from where we are. All we have to do is admit the fact that we've sinned against God.

We've been separated from him because of our sin, and we ask for him to forgive us, and to cleanse us, and we walk away from that sin by the power of the Holy Spirit that he indwells within us.

No longer do we have to be a slave to sin, but instead we can walk in freedom away from it. And if that's never happened to you, in a few moments, Holly's going to come sing, and when she does, I'm going to stand down here, and we're going to stand together, and I want you to come down and tell me, I want to give my life to Christ.

[18:22] If you mean that with your heart, he'll change you forever. If you've done that privately, but you've never done that publicly, Jesus, by his example and by his commission, tells us that we need to be baptized as believers.

It's the first step of obedience. A public acknowledgement of what Christ has done privately in our lives. If you've never been baptized as a believer, I encourage you to come. We're not going to do it this morning, but I encourage you to come, and let's begin that conversation.

Let's ask folks to pray for us in that process. Maybe God's leading you to First Baptist Church.

God's doing a wonderful work in First Baptist Church, and I know that God's speaking to the hearts of several people.

Maybe God is leading you to do that. I just encourage you to just be obedient and follow his lead. But I'll be honest with you this morning. I have no clue what God has told you. That's not my responsibility.

I know what he's told me to say, and so I encourage you to simply be obedient and follow what the Lord would have you to do. You can do that where you sit.

[19:24] You can do that at this altar. You can do it with a pastor praying for you. I just want you to deal with God. When we leave this place, let's walk through the rest of 2025 absolutely committed to do everything that God would have us to do in all of our lives.

Listen to me, folks. With a clean slate. Don't you just want a clean slate? If we confess our sins.

He's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins. Thank God. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let's pray together.

Lord Jesus, I love you, and I thank you for your word. I thank you for the hope and the promise that it gives to me, a sinner, and it gives to all of us as sinners, dear God.

And I pray that we'll acknowledge that we've sinned. It's not fun to do. It's not fun to talk about. But it's the truth.

[20:33] So God, help us to acknowledge our sin before you. To surrender our lives to you and to simply be obedient as you lead and work in our lives. We love you dearly, and we ask God that the Holy Spirit of God will have the freedom to move and work in our midst as only you can, Lord.

In Jesus' precious name. Amen.