

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
LI. Gaining Victory Over Sin
(Psalm 51:1-19)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

If ever there was a need for people to gain victory over sin, it would be today:

(1) Many elected officials are full of sins: “. . . (U.S. Rep. George Santos, R-N.Y.) has lied . . . enough to make him politically a dead man walking if he faces the voters again in 2024,” but “(i)t is very hard . . . to get kicked out of Congress for being a liar. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., claimed falsely to have ‘served in Vietnam,’ and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., falsely claimed Cherokee heritage when applying for jobs as a law professor. The last president . . . won the job in part because his opponent and her ex-president husband were perhaps America’s most notorious liars; the current president has arguably the longest track record in American political history of telling false stories about himself, his credentials and his life experience. If we kicked all the liars out of Congress, neither house could muster a quorum.” (Dan McLaughlin, “New York Republicans Abandon George Santos,” National Review Online/The Corner, January 11 as cited in “Quotable,” Republican-American, January 13, 2023, p. 6A)

(2) Many government entities and businesses are full of sins: “Hillary Clinton kept highly classified information on her private server . . . and . . . foreign actors obtained access to some of her emails. Now it appears that Biden also removed sensitive intelligence and kept it in an unsecured closet in his private office as well as in other still-to-be-determined conditions . . . It is already suspicious that the documents in Biden’s private office were discovered on Nov. 2 – less than a week before the midterm elections – yet the public was not informed of the discovery until this month. The FBI search of Trump’s home, less than three months earlier, had led Democrats to argue that Trump and his supporters were too irresponsible to be trusted with the levers of power. Why weren’t the American people told that Biden had similarly mishandled classified information before they went to the polls? Add to that the recent revelations of attempts by the FBI, the intelligence community and social media platforms to censor and discredit the Hunter Biden laptop story as Russian disinformation, and millions of Americans will conclude that a Trump prosecution would be just the latest weaponization of federal law enforcement against conservatives.” (Marc Thiessen, “If Trump’s actions were irresponsible, so were Bidens,” *Ibid.*, January 14, 2023, p. 8A)

(3) Sins abound with regard to the American public school system: “. . . (A) US Education Department report suggests that around one in 10 public-school students will experience sexual misconduct by an educator before graduation.” (New York Post, January 16, 2023, p. 24) “But teacher unions are a huge force for Democrats. And so the left’s silence on teacher crimes speaks volumes.” (*Ibid.*)

(4) Pope Francis has allegedly committed many sins: “Cardinal George Pell” wrote, “. . . (T)his pontificate is a disaster in many or most respects; a catastrophe.” (Nicole Winfield, “Pope Francis to deliver a final send-off for Cardinal George Pell,” *Ibid.*, January 13, 2023, p. 3B) He “complained of ‘. . . the attack on traditional morals and the insertion into the dialogue of neo-Marxist jargon about exclusion, alienation, identity, marginalization, the voiceless, LGBTQ as well as the displacement of Christian notions of forgiveness, sin, sacrifice, healing, redemption.” (*Ibid.*)

(5) Many Protestant ministry leaders sin, too: The Ministry Watch article, “Ministry Watch Top 25 Stories of 2022” (ministrywatch.com; December 26, 2022) listed 3 stories on divorces, 3 stories on denominational splits over ordaining gays and 8 stories on sexual offences, all by ministry leaders – over half of their top 25 stories of the year!

Need: *So, we ask, “What would God have us do about the great amount of sin that we face today?!”*

- I. **Psalm 51:1-19 records David’s confession to God for his adultery with Bathsheba that he tried to cover up by arranging for her husband Uriah to be murdered (Introduction to Psalm 51; 2 Samuel 11:1-27).**
- II. **Accordingly, the psalm is an emotional expression of intense guilt by David that hops from one dramatic subject to another as David spills out his troubled heart unto the Lord.**
- III. **Valuable lessons on handling temptation and sin are thus provided in this psalm (as follows):**
 - A. Lesson One – If we are crushed in spirit over the guilt of our sin, God will not view us with contempt, v. 17.
 - B. Lesson Two – God forgives a believer of his sin when he confesses it to the Lord, Psalm 51:2-4; 1 John 1:9.
 - C. Lesson Three – The personal negative effects of sin are too costly to make it worthwhile to sin (as follows):
 1. First, sin leads to a low valuation of oneself that can emotionally destroy him, Psalm 51:5; 2 Cor. 2:6-7:
 - a. The Hebrew verb for “conceive” in Psalm 51:5b is *yaham*, used elsewhere of animal conception where *harah* is the verb for human conception (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 404, 247-248).

- b. Thus, David’s guilt over his adultery and murder left him lowering his value of himself to where he used the crude verb *yaham* that referred to the conception of animals to describe his own human conception.
- c. Accordingly, Paul warned a church body to restore a repentant sinner to their fellowship lest Satan destroy him by his excess sense of guilt that could destroy him emotionally, 2 Corinthians 2:6-7.
- 2. Second, and similarly, the guilt produced by sin yields grief (Psalm 51:8a, 12a) and “emotional anguish,” the figurative idea behind the expression on broken bones in Psalm 51:8b; Bib. Know. Com., O. T., p. 832.
- 3. Third, David’s request in Psalm 51:11b that God not take His Holy Spirit from him hinted at his potential disqualification from service due to sin: The Holy Spirit came upon Old Testament believers to equip them to serve God, but He could leave them if they sinned (as with Saul, 1 Samuel 16:14), disqualifying them from service. The Spirit permanently seals believers today so that He does not leave them (John 14:15-16; Ephesians 4:30), but sin can still lead God to disqualify a believer from service today, 1 Corinthians 9:27.
- 4. Fourth, sin can also harm the sensitivity of one’s conscience (Psalm 51:10b with 1 Timothy 4:1-2).
- D. Lesson Four – From the historical and Biblical contexts, we note practical steps that we can take to avoid sin:
 - 1. If we rely on the Holy Spirit today, we will not function by our sin nature, so we won’t sin, Gal. 5:16-23.
 - 2. From David’s experiences as recorded in Scripture, we have practical guidelines on avoiding acts of sin:
 - a. If we stay occupied with God’s calling, we limit our exposure to temptations to sin. In David’s sin with Bathsheba, he failed to lead his army in battle in the spring in figuratively building up the walls (defense) of Jerusalem, staying idle at home and thus vulnerable to temptation, 2 Samuel 11:1 with Psalm 51:18-19.
 - b. If we stay occupied with our regular daily duties, we limit exposing ourselves to temptation. Instead of sleeping at night as was usual, David got up from his bed and went up to his roof where he saw Bathsheba bathing in her courtyard below, putting himself in a position where he could be tempted, 2 Samuel 11:2.
 - c. If tempted to sin, we must not mentally dwell on the temptation lest we yield to it. Once David was tempted to sin, he mentally dwelt on it, inquiring about Bathsheba, what led to his sin, 2 Samuel 11:3.

Lesson: As noted in our sermon notes above, valuable lessons from David’s sin with Bathsheba are available from his Psalm 51 confession of that sin and the Biblical and historical contexts surrounding those events.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we apply the lessons given in this message to handle sin.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

We apply the lessons of this sermon that are relevant to the issues mentioned in our introduction (as follows):

(1) As for **each** sinful scenario in our introduction, (a) Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 predicted a “Mini-Great Tribulation” for our era of Church History where leaders full of intrigue would oppress their subordinates. God lets such trials occur to drive oppressed people to cease relying on worldly leaders and institutions and instead look elsewhere for solutions, finding them in churches that nurture them by Bible exposition. (b) Thus, we teach Scripture.

(2) To illustrate **how** this Bible exposition works, we present a **general model on applying Scripture** that is applicable to any case where a party or parties have suffered abuse by a leader or leaders who are full of intrigue in an institution of some kind (as follows): (a) If someone has suffered abusive misconduct by a leader in some institution, (b) we teach that after taking the required and/or fitting legal action (cf. 1 Peter 2:13-16), (c) the abused should withdraw from the abusive leader’s influence far enough to avoid being abused again, 2 Timothy 3:1-9. There may be a limit to how one can apply this truth if the abusive leader is a governing official whose harmful actions one cannot avoid, but one should then seek to minimize his exposure to the abuse of that overseer. (d) Then, the abused needs to be saved by faith in Christ in part to obtain the spiritual means to gain victory in his or her inner person over the harmful effects of the abuse, John 3:16; Romans 8:9b. (e) The abused must then apply Romans 12:19-21 in not taking vengeance on the abusive leader but let God deal with that matter. (f) The abused must also not harbor anger against the abuser lest the Devil use it to cause the abused party to sin. Rather, the abused must commit to God the injustice that he or she suffered, letting God deal with the matter of administering justice, Ephesians 4:26-27. (g) To handle false guilt or feelings of worthlessness that often result from the experience of being abused by a leader who is full of intrigue, the abused person should apply the 33 Positional Truths that present his or her **true** spiritual **identity** and **value** in **God’s view** by his or her spiritual position in Christ. We present these truths in a series of Adult Sunday School lessons on our Church website under the title, “Revisiting The Believer’s Positional Riches In Christ.”

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s give of eternal life. May we then apply the lessons given in this message to handle sin we face in ourselves or in others.