

Set Free From Shame

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon 'Set Free From Shame' explores the transformative power of God's truth and mercy in overcoming shame and living in freedom.

Duration: 54:43

Scripture: Psalm 25:1-5, Psalm 25:9-10, John 8:1-11, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Topics: "Freedom"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher encourages the audience to participate in a Bible study. He emphasizes the importance of knowing the truth, as Jesus promised that it would set them free from sin and its effects. The preacher urges the congregation to let go of feelings of guilt and shame, reminding them that through Jesus Christ, they are made clean and can approach God without condemnation. He then references a story from the Bible where Peter is instructed by God to eat unclean animals, symbolizing the breaking down of societal barriers and the inclusion of all people in God's kingdom. The sermon concludes with a call to trust in God and seek His guidance in all aspects of life.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church Pulpit Series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, PO Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771, or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. Let me see your Bibles, if you brought your Bibles with you tonight. This is Bible study night as well as service night at Times Square Church.

I want to encourage you to do something tonight. If you could take your Bible and get the index of your Bible, because we're going to do a Bible study tonight, and you're going to have to move fast with me to be able to get through it. We're going to be reading a lot of scripture together.

Now, I believe with all of my heart that you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. That's what Jesus promised. Free from sin, free from the power of sin, free from the guilt of sin, free from the shame of sin, free from the effects of sin, free from the controlling power of sin, to live a brand new life, a resurrected life with the power of God within us, a life that brings glory to His name.

Tonight I'm going to ask that you would ask the Holy Spirit to have a heart that in spite of your experience, or in spite of whatever might be going on in your mind, or has been controlling your mind, that you would declare, God, this is a higher law, this is a higher truth. I'm going to embrace this tonight. I'm not going to embrace anything that has been part of my life that is contrary to what you have declared about me.

You have to have that in your heart tonight, or you will not embrace the truth that sets you free. I'm going to be speaking tonight about being delivered from the power of shame. Being delivered from the power of shame.

Father, I thank You, God, for Your Word. I love Your Word, Lord, and God, Your Word truly sets people free when we embrace Your Word with our hearts. Holy Spirit, You are pleased.

You've been sent of Christ to come and make that Word a living reality in all of our lives. God, tonight I'm asking for deliverance in this house. Lord, You said the anointing was upon You because You had come to heal those who have been bruised in heart.

There are many people here tonight that have been bruised. Because of those bruises, they are still in part held in captivity by the powers of darkness. I stand tonight against these powers of darkness.

I stand against them by the Word of Almighty God, the One who created the universe and died for mankind, that whosoever will can come and be saved and be absolutely set free. Father, I thank You tonight that Your Word has preeminence. Every power of hell must bow.

Every knee must bow. Every wicked thought must bow. Lord, we thank You tonight that by Your Word, You will bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Jesus Christ.

Father, thank You, God. Thank You tonight that people are going to be set free. Absolutely set free.

Totally set free. Not only, not just for a day, but for the rest of their lives and into eternity to praise You, God, for what You have done and for who You are. Lord, we thank You for this in Jesus' name.

Psalm 25, if you'll go there with me. Psalm 25. Set free from shame.

Set free from shame. This is a psalm of David. You know, when you consider who David was, you begin to realize that all humanity goes through the same struggle.

There's nothing come against you, the Bible says. Nothing you struggle with that is not common to all of mankind. Did you know that tonight? There's a common struggle in all of humanity.

But the Bible says that God will make a way for you to escape it. Psalm 25. Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

O my God, I trust in Thee. Let me not be ashamed. Let not mine enemies triumph over me.

Yea, let none that wait on Thee be ashamed. Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause. Show me Thy ways, O Lord.

Teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth and teach me, for Thou art the God of my salvation. And on Thee do I wait all the day.

Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies for Thy loving kindnesses, for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions. According to Thy mercy, remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

Good and upright is the Lord. Therefore will He teach sinners in the way. The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way.

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies. For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.

What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth. But this is the plan of God for you tonight.

David clearly says it. For those who open their hearts to what God would teach, your soul will dwell at ease. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.

Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn they unto me and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged.

O bring Thou me out of my distresses. Look upon my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins. Consider mine enemies, for there are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred.

O keep my soul and deliver me, and let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in Thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on Thee. Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Now back in verse 2, David is saying, O God, I trust in You. Let not mine enemies rub my former sins in my face. Let them not steal the victory from me and triumph over me by leaving me downcast and in defeat.

There are many, many people in the body of Jesus Christ who are still bound by the cords, by the shame of their past sin. And the enemy comes against them and throws these things back in their face continuously. And it was the cry of David, which I believe is the cry I prayed specifically for this night.

I prayed specifically that many of you who are here tonight would be here. I said, God, bring those that are bound by shame and bring them to the house of God on Friday night. Move upon their hearts to come, because God, You're going to set them free.

Not just for a good feeling Friday night, but You're going to set them free for the rest of their lives. Verse 7, David cries out and says, Don't remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions. According to Thy mercy, remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake.

In verse 11, he says, Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. In other words, David is saying the things that I did in my youth were great. And oh God, I pray that You would pardon me for them.

In verses 16 to 20, David is saying to the Lord, Look upon my pain. He says, Turn unto me and have mercy. I'm desolate and afflicted.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Bring me out. Oh, bring down me out of my distresses.

Look on my affliction and my pain and forgive all my sins. Consider my enemies, for there are many, and they hate me with a cruel hatred. Oh, keep my soul and deliver me.

Let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in Thee. And this is the cry of many of God's people week in and week out. They come to the house of the Lord, have the knowledge that they are saved, have the knowledge, at least some of the knowledge, that their salvation is a complete and a full salvation, yet still are prey to the shame of the things that they have done throughout their lives before, and even sometimes after they initially came to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Now, we need to understand tonight that there is a purpose for shame. Shame has its initial purpose. Zephaniah, don't turn therewith, but let me just read it to you.

Chapter 3, verse 5, the prophet says that the unjust know no shame. And there is a season, I believe, in everybody's life when you are without Christ, that many who are here tonight, if you'll be honest, there's a season where you committed things and you knew no shame. You could go and commit abominable sins and walk out of those places, and because there was an unjustness in your life, you had no connection or relationship to God, there was no shame in you.

But it was through the preaching of the word that you began to feel shame and sorrow. It's only by the knowledge of God's law that shame comes into your heart in the first place. It's just like with the children of Israel when Aaron built the calf, and when the word of the Lord returned to them through Moses, the people then realized that they were serving their own gods, and they had become naked and subject to shame before their enemies.

And so when the word came to you, you saw your need, and shame turned to sorrow, and sorrow turned to repentance. You see, there's a process. You come into the house of God, God's word is preached.

You begin to feel ashamed for the things that you've done, and that shame gives you a sorrow in your heart. The apostle Paul speaks about that in 2 Corinthians, and that sorrow brings you to a place of repentance, and repentance is basically saying, God, I don't want to live in sin anymore. I don't want sin.

I've grieved you, Lord. I'm cut off from you because of my sin, and I don't want to live in sin anymore. I want to be a new person in Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah, if you'll go there with me, please. Just go ahead in a couple of books. Jeremiah chapter 31, and in verse 19, the prophet Jeremiah says it this way, Surely after that I was turned, I repented.

And after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh. That's a typical expression for their generation. It means like, God, when I was confronted with your word, I turned.

I had in my heart to turn from my sin. And after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh. That would be like a man beating upon his heart today, a woman beating upon her heart, and saying, Oh, God, how could I have done these things? How could I have fallen into such a depth of depravity and wickedness before you? And then he goes on to say, I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

Now, there are many people who go through these experiences when they're coming to Jesus Christ. There has to be a knowledge of wrongdoing, or you really haven't had a genuine conversion. If you are among those who have perhaps come in here tonight, and you think you've always been a wonderful

person, then you've missed the whole point.

Everything that you've done is an abomination when faith is not at the core of it, when it's not in a living relationship with the Son of God. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 7, verses 9 and 10, he says, Now I rejoice not that you were made sorry, but that you sorrowed to repentance, for you were sorry after a godly manner. Now, I've seen that hundreds of times at this altar.

People hearing the word of God, coming to the altar of God and the house of God, and there is a genuine sorrow. There are a lot of tears. And Paul says, The purpose of the gospel was not just to make you sorry for your sins, but to bring you to a place where you would have a desire in your heart to turn from those sins.

That's what a godly sorrow was all about. He says, There's a sorrow of the world that just works death. That's the man or woman who is just simply sorry because of what they did.

They're sorry they got caught. They're sorry it's brought consequences into their life and into their home, but not sorry enough to want to turn from it and to begin to walk with God. And Paul says, You were brought, in verse 10, to a salvation not to be repented of.

That's an incredible thing when you think about it. You sorrowed after a godly sort, and you were brought into a salvation that's not to be repented of. Now, Paul is saying it's a salvation that does not make you sorry.

It is full, it is entire, and it is complete. When you came to Jesus Christ, those who had a godly sorrow that turned you, that created in your heart a desire for repentance, you came to a salvation that is absolutely entire and complete, a salvation that was won for you by Christ on Calvary. You were clothed with a righteousness that is not your own.

It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ that was given to you. The Bible says clearly that the memory of your sins was blotted out in heaven, and the God, who says He can do all things, says, I will cause myself to remember your sin no more. That's an incredible thing.

I serve a God tonight who cannot remember my sin that I have committed before I came to Christ. Can you imagine that? There is no record of my sin in heaven. You need to know that tonight.

You need to understand that. If you get to heaven and stand before the throne of God, you're going to have to tell Him about it, and everybody around about the throne of God is going to say, well, we'll have to take your word for what you did because there is no record of it, and we have absolutely no recollection of anything you did. When we look upon you, you have been received because of the blood of Jesus Christ.

God looks upon you, and you have become the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ. That's an incredible truth, folks. You have to understand that tonight.

You are the righteousness of God. You can be the most struggling saint in the entire church world tonight. You can be crawling literally.

When others seem to be running, you're crawling. You're walking through, and the devil is there to condemn you at every step of the way. But you need to know tonight that you have one that stands before the throne of God the Father, and He presents your name.

Even in the midst of your darkest hour, He is boasting about you before the throne of the Father. He is talking about His love for you. He is talking about your love for Him.

He is talking to God about what the Holy Spirit is going to accomplish in your life. He is talking continuously, standing before the Father, and the Father looks at Him and says, My son, I accept this person as absolute and entire, completely righteous because of what you did for them on Calvary, and because they have trusted in you for their salvation. Now, the enemy loves to use the crippling power of shame to keep God's people from entering into the fullness of our salvation.

Go to Psalm 44, please. Go back in your Bible, just a few books. Psalm 44.

Let's hear the rustling of the leaves tonight. Psalm 44, and verse 15 and 16. The enemy loves this power, because he knows the day that you get out from under the power of shame, that you are going to become appraised to the name of God in the earth.

Your countenance changes. Your step changes. Your outlook changes.

The sense of who God is changes. Everything begins to change when you step out, when you are taken out from under that reproach of the things that you may have done before you came to Christ. And keep in mind, even after you came to Christ, there are things that you may have done.

But if in your heart you are still trusting in God, you love Jesus, you know He knows it, you are trusting Him for your salvation, there is no imputation of your sin to you. Christ took your sin upon Himself. You are still clean in the sight of Almighty God.

Now, Psalm 44, verse 15. The psalmist says, My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face has covered me. For the voice of him that reproaches and blasphemes by reason of the enemy and the avenger.

There is a voice. That's the devil's voice that will come against you all day long. And listen, the psalmist says, My confusion is continually before me.

I'm hearing that I'm righteous in the house of God, but I feel so unclean. I go home after church, and I'm all excited, and I wake up Monday morning, and that voice is right back there again saying, Remember what you did. Remember the things that you were involved in.

Remember the sins of your youth and all that you've done. And you'll never amount to anything. You'll never get out from under this.

And oftentimes that voice says, If the people around you ever knew what you used to be, they would reject you. They would cast you away out of their presence. And then if we swallow that lie, this is the voice, keep in mind, of the one who blasphemes the work of God.

That's what the scripture says in verse 16. That voice is a blasphemous voice, because that voice is declaring that the work of Jesus Christ is not full and complete, and did not cleanse you completely, and there is still a record of the wrongs that you have done in the past. It's a blaspheming voice.

And the psalmist cries out and says, God, deliver me from that blaspheming voice. The only way you will ever get set free is not by emotion in the house of God. It's not by any measure of jumping up and down in God's house.

It's not even by responding to a thousand altar calls. It's when you and I hear the word of God, and we say, God, this is true, and let every other voice be a lie. Let God be true, the scripture says, and let every man be a liar.

God, your word is true. We make that decision. We say, God, you're not a man.

You can't lie. I'm not going to accuse you of lying. If you've said I'm clean, God, I'm clean.

I'm absolutely clean because you said I'm clean. Hallelujah. David cries out again in Psalm 25, verses 4 and 5. He says, show me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths.

Lead me in thy truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation, and on you do I wait all the day. Show me. And if that's the cry in your heart tonight, then I'm going to open the scriptures with you, and as we read the word of God, I'm believing the Holy Spirit will show you once and for all that the condemner has nothing in you at all.

Go with me to the New Testament, the book of John, chapter 8. A familiar portion of scripture where there was a woman who was caught in adultery, in the very act of adultery. Now, keep in mind, in those days, adultery was punishable by death. It was a horrible sin.

It was as terrible, I suppose, as anything that can be committed because it was punishable by stoning to death the offending parties. Now, chapter 8 of John, it says that Jesus went up into the Mount of Olives. That's verse 1. And early in the morning, he came again into the temple, and all the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them.

The scribes and the Pharisees brought to him a woman taken in adultery, and when they had set her in the midst, they said to him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery in the very act. Now, Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned, but what do you say, or what sayest thou? This, they said, tempting him that they might have to accuse him, but Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground as though he heard them not. I'm anxious to get to heaven, and I want to look up in God's library what it was that he was actually writing on the ground at that time.

So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said to them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down and wrote on the ground, and when they had heard it being convicted by their own conscience, they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last, and Jesus was left alone and the woman standing in the midst. Now when Jesus had lifted up himself and he saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? And she said, No man, Lord.

And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. Now that's an incredible passage of scripture when you begin to understand what it is that God is saying.

He's saying that if you even have committed a sin that is worthy of death, but in your heart you begin to understand who I am and you turn to me. He said, I have a voice that is greater than any voice that will ever come against you. I have a power that is greater than any power that will ever try to destroy you.

And if I have called you clean, there is nobody around who dares to anymore call you unclean. If I don't condemn you, because God was speaking to her, if I don't condemn you, then no man on this earth, no voice, no power of hell has the right to condemn you if I have declared you clean. If I don't condemn you.

In other words, God was saying to this woman, There is no judgment in me towards you. I do not hold you accountable for the thing that you have done. He saw something in her heart.

He saw repentance. There was a desire perhaps. Some say that this was Mary Magdalene.

There are some Bible scholars who believe that this was Mary Magdalene who was the one really who went in effect to his tomb after he was crucified. I don't know that for sure. Or possibly one of the ones that followed him later on and ministered to him out of their substance.

But he looked upon this woman and it was the eye of God that was looking at her, caught in her sin and says, I don't condemn you. There is no judgment in me. There is no condemnation whatsoever because your heart is towards me.

Now go to the book of Acts chapter 10. Acts chapter 10 beginning in verse 9. This is a story about the apostle Peter going up on a housetop and beginning to pray. And as he prayed, the Holy Spirit was about to change his thinking about something.

Verse 9 says, On the morrow as they went to their journey, chapter 10, verse 9 of Acts and drew nigh unto the city. Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour and he became very hungry and would have eaten. But while they made ready, he fell into a trance.

Or in other words, he began to pray. God began to speak to him and he saw heaven open and a certain vessel descending unto him as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners and let down to the earth wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air and these were considered unclean despicable things in the sight of Peter. And there came a voice to him Rise, Peter, kill and eat.

And Peter said, No, not so, Lord for I've never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake to him again the second time and said, What God has cleansed call not thou common. This was done thrice and the vessel was received up into heaven.

Now here's the situation. God was about to tell Peter something. There was a line of demarcation in society in that generation and those who were not Jews were considered unclean.

They were considered cast out or outcast at the presence of God. Salvation was for the Jews and for the Jews alone. And the Holy Spirit was now beginning to speak to Peter about something.

A man who considered certain types of people unclean certain things they did unclean perhaps certain practices that they had were considered unclean as unclean as the four-footed beasts and unclean things that were in that sheet let down from heaven. And God began to speak something to Peter and he said, Peter, I'm about to do something. I'm about to cleanse the people that you don't understand.

You don't understand the nature, the depth of my mercy. You don't understand the fullness of my power. You don't yet understand the great depth of my redemption.

But Peter, I'm telling you what I have cleansed. I'm about to clean an entire populace that you consider unclean. And when I clean them, I give you no power to call them common or unclean anymore.

You cannot raise your tongue. You cannot raise your hand against the work that I'm about to do. Now I have a question for you tonight.

Has God cleansed you? Are you still allowing the devil or perhaps you're still letting down the sheet of the past and calling yourself unclean? And many people do that. Come into the house of God to have a mental ascent, I suppose, to the truth of God. But go home and in times of solitude or quiet or prayer or meditation, one more time that sheet comes down from heaven and all the unclean things that you've ever done are in that sheet.

And I know I'm speaking to many hearts tonight. The memories of the past. Some you've suffered sexual abuse.

There are others that in your youth and some of that you got involved in homosexual experiences. There are all types of things that have gone on. Things that you wished you had never been involved in, things you wished you had never done.

But nevertheless, they did happen because you were living in sin. And when you go back, even with a mental understanding of who you are in Christ again, one more time, that sheet comes down and all these creeping things are in it. And the natural tendency of the human heart is to condemn oneself as unclean.

But God was saying something to Peter, the very thing that he's saying to us tonight. He's saying, if I have cleansed you, you have no right anymore to call yourself unclean. If I declare you clean, you don't have a right anymore.

I've not given you the right. God is speaking to us tonight. He's speaking to you tonight.

You know, your dilemma is just this. If you are still calling yourself unclean because of experiences of the past, you have, in effect, thrown Jesus Christ off the throne of your life. You have taken the throne and you've become God in your own life.

In other words, you consider yourself a court, in effect, that's supreme over the court of Almighty God. You've been declared judicially set free. You've been declared righteous before Almighty God in the highest court in the universe.

You've been declared. And yet so many people, even though God has declared them clean, they say, no, it can't be. My thoughts have got to be higher than God's thoughts.

My ways have got to be higher than God's ways. And they sit on the throne of their own heart and they condemn themselves. Now, it's such a tragic thing when you think about it.

It's such a foolish thing to do, to condemn yourself for something that Jesus says you are absolutely there's no record of it. You're absolutely set free. You're a brand new creature in Christ, a brand new creation as it is in Christ Jesus.

Now, go to 1 Corinthians chapter 6 with me, please, if you will. Very quiet. Are you always this quiet on Friday night, or is it? You're all wondering where Pastor Neil is tonight.

That's what the problem is. Is that right? Well, it's his birthday tonight, so we gave him the night off and he's out with his wife. Hallelujah.

Now, 1 Corinthians chapter 6. Listen to what Paul is saying to the Corinthian church. Verse 9. He says, Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate means homosexuals, nor abusers of themselves

with mankind that be the immoral, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

But then he goes on to verse 11. And such were some of you. So he's speaking to a church, the Corinthian church, and in that church were every one of these things that are listed in verses 9 and 10.

But listen to what Paul says. But you are washed. In other words, you're cleansed.

You're not that anymore. God has come, and with His blood He has washed you. These things are not part of your life anymore.

You may still be fighting some of the struggles. Coming to Christ doesn't mean folks that were not tempted. Christ Himself, the Scripture says, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.

To be tempted is not sin. It's to give in to the sin and to begin to enjoyfully, as it is, participate in it again. That is a dangerous place to be in.

But temptation itself is not sin. The devil would have you believe it is, but it isn't. Such were some of you, but you are washed.

You are sanctified. That means that the Holy Spirit is now in your life. You have the Spirit of God.

You have the One who created the universe who is now in you. And folks, I guess this is the easiest way to explain it, what sanctification is. When you came to Jesus Christ, the lawful requirement of God for the punishment of your sins was fully satisfied.

God laid all of His wrath upon His own Son. His own Son took everything that you deserved and I deserve for every sin we've ever committed. So tonight, we have the knowledge that we stand before the throne of God, in Christ, fully justified.

Absolutely justified. There is no court in the universe that can condemn us. There's no voice that can condemn us.

We are justified in the name of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. That's an incredible truth.

There's big words we use in the church. One of them is justification. And that's what it means.

We are completely justified. Now that means the devil can't condemn you anymore. Because if Christ does accept, that's why Paul said, if God be for us, then who can be against us? God is for me.

There's no voice in the earth or hell that can come against me because God is for me. He has declared me in the highest court in the universe free. Absolutely free.

The price has been paid. My sin is not imputed to me anymore. Now, regeneration is another word we use.

Regeneration is God's gift to us as the church of Jesus Christ. When we believed in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit came into our life and we were regenerated. That means we were made alive from the dead.

We were brought into, by the power and mercy of God, we were brought into the very life of Jesus Christ. We've been quickened and we live together with Him in heavenly places. That's what the Paul says in the

book of Ephesians.

We are His body. He is the head. We are partakers.

We are co-heirs with His life. That life that God the Father gave when He raised from the dead is yours and it's mine. We don't have to live under the dominion of sin anymore.

We don't have to live in the weakness of the flesh. We've been regenerated. We've been given new life.

It's by that power that we become new creations in Christ Jesus. And then the scripture says that we are sanctified. Now, sanctification is the Holy Spirit coming into my life and continuously bringing about in me the victory or the nature of Almighty God through Jesus Christ.

Now, my standing is completely justified, but my state may be way down here. And sanctification is an ongoing process. Sanctification is not making me holy.

Do you understand that? This is the end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two. When you understand these things, the devil can know.

Some people confuse that. They say sanctification has come to make me holy so that I'll be acceptable with God. No, I am fully acceptable, accepted with God through Jesus Christ.

Sanctification now is the Holy Spirit coming and making my standing a reality in my life down here on the earth. That's why Paul says in one of his epistles, it's not as though I have already attained. He's not talking about salvation, but he says I press on to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul said I'm called to something. I'm called to be a praise to God in the earth. When you understand these things, the devil can no longer condemn you.

He can't speak against you. He can't point his finger against you. He can't remind you of your past sins because they're gone.

They're in a sea called forgetfulness and nobody has the right to dig them up again. Not the devil, not anybody on the earth, not any demon power, nor your yourself. Nobody has the right.

God says I took that right away when I judicially declared you clean. You are clean. You are clean.

You are absolutely clean in the sight of God. Hallelujah. I had a friend one time who was a marvelous testimony for Christ and a missionary later on in life, but had a problem.

And that problem dealt with the past. And I remember he used to always say to me, he said, oh, if they only knew what I did. Oh, even if you only knew what I did before I came to Christ, you'd reject me and God would reject me.

He said it so often, finally one day I said, well, just tell me. I don't care what you did before you came to Jesus Christ. I know who you are now.

I know who God has made you. I understand your position in Christ. Oh, no, he keeps saying if you only see this, this is a man totally in the grip of the voice of the condemner.

This is a man that every time he prays, there comes down the sheet of all these unclean former activities condemning him. God, the voice of God unable to get through. But you need to understand that I remember there was a sense in this man that if they knew they would reject me, they might even spit in my face.

But listen, I want to show you why you can know that there is no condemnation now to those who are in Christ Jesus. Go back to Isaiah 53 with me, please. Isaiah 53.

The Bible tells us clearly that Christ took our shame. He took our shame, not just our sin, folks. He took our shame.

He took the shame of our sin, not just our sin. And you need to understand this tonight. He took it all.

Isaiah 53. He is despised and rejected of men. A man of sorrows and equated with grief.

And we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not. But listen to verse 4 now.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. The things that made us sorry. The things that brought us to a place of that contriteness or the things that produced shame in us like the Apostle Paul says.

He bore these griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken and spitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions.

And he was bruised for our iniquities. And the chastisement of our peace was upon him. And with his stripes we are healed.

For all the wrong things he did, he was wounded. For all of the wrong things that we have done, he was bruised. And all the wrath of God the Father for the sins that we have committed in our youth and throughout our lives were laid upon him.

He bore it in its entire totality. And by his stripes, that means by the cross, by the death he suffered on the cross, we are healed. In other words, a person who is healed is healed.

You're not partially healed. You are healed in Christ. All we like sheep have gone astray and turned everyone to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Go back to Isaiah 50 very quickly with me. Isaiah chapter 50.

I hope you love the word of God. Here's what Jesus did for you. Verse 6, I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.

I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Jesus was saying it was my face that was spit in for all the wrong things that you have done. For everything that you have committed before you have given your life to me, my face was the one that took the spitting.

I'm the one that took the blows upon my face. I'm the one that bore the shame of it. I took it all upon myself on the cross.

The victory we have in Christ is a complete victory. It is not partial. It's not a victory that just saves us from our sins but leaves us to wallow in our shame.

It is a total complete and entire victory. We are absolutely clean. There is no record of our sin at all in heaven.

Hallelujah. Now go with me to Psalm 71. Psalm 71.

If you're not shouting by the time this is over, well, I guess this doesn't apply to you. Psalm 71. Listen to what the psalmist says.

Verse 19. Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who has done great things. O God, who is like unto Thee? Thou which hast showed me great and sore trouble shall quicken me again and shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

Thou shalt increase my greatness and comfort me on every side. This is a promise of God to you and to me. God says, I will increase your understanding of who you are and me and I will comfort you on every side.

The psalmist says, I will also praise Thee with the psaltery, even Thy truth, O God, will I unto Thee will I sing with the harp, O Thou Holy One of Israel. The psalmist is saying, God, I will praise You with Your truth. I will praise You with Your truth.

I will declare back to You who I am in Jesus Christ. I'll not come into the house of God looking at myself. I'll not come in with my head hanging down.

I'll not come in with my hands dragging on the carpet the backs of my hands. God, I will lift up my voice and I will praise You with Your truth. I will praise You, God, for taking my iniquity upon Yourself.

I will praise You because You are standing before the throne of the Father and You are declaring me clean right now. Even if I have the worst week of my life, You are still boasting about me before the Father. I will praise You, my God, according to Your truth.

Hallelujah. That's why elsewhere in the psalms the psalmist says, sing praises with understanding. Not just mouthing words, but let those words grip your heart.

Come to an understanding of who You are in Jesus Christ and what God has determined to do within each one of our lives. My lips, he says, shall greatly rejoice, verse 23, when I sing unto Thee in my soul which Thou hast redeemed. My tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness, not my righteousness, Thy righteousness all the day long.

Now here's what happens when we begin to understand that our righteousness is in Christ Jesus. For they are confounded, they are brought to shame that seek my heart. As my righteousness is in Christ, there's not a voice that can condemn me.

Tell me, who can condemn you if your righteousness is in Christ? If Christ has cleansed you, what voice has the right to call you common or unclean? What voice has the right to remind you of your past sin and drag it up and throw it before your face? Tell me, what voice? There's not a voice. There's not a voice in heaven, not a voice in the earth. Every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

He has triumphed over all of these things. Hallelujah. Now go ahead to Isaiah 54 now.

Isaiah 54. Hallelujah. Follow through with me.

In Isaiah 54 I'm going to read the whole thing from verse 4 to the end. Isaiah 54. Fear not.

Verse 4 says, For thou shalt not be ashamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame. Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. Hallelujah.

God says, I'm coming to do a work in you, and you're going to forget the shame of your youth. You're going to forget the reproach that was on your life before you were betrothed to me. That's what he means by the reproach of your widowhood.

For thy maker is thine husband, verse 5, and the Lord of hosts is his name. And thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth, shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou hast refused, saith thy God.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto thee, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

God says, I have sworn, those who come to me, I will not be angry with you, and I will not bring you into a place of rebuke. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. Neither shall my covenant be removed from you, God says.

Oh, now listen now, there's so many people this applies to in the body of Jesus Christ. Oh, they're afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted. I think that applies to some in this house tonight.

This is what he says, those of you who are afflicted, you are tossed with the storms and you have, there's seemingly unconsolable because of the sins you have committed. Behold, he said, I will lay thy stones with fair colors and lay thy foundations with sapphires. He says, I'm going to rebuild you.

I'm going to rebuild you first in your thinking. I'm going to lay a new foundation in your life. Hallelujah, because my thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways.

God says, I'm going to take you from the ground up, and I'm going to make you into a brand new creation. Hallelujah. Your righteousness is going to be of me and not of yourself.

And I will make your windows of agates, and your gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. I could go into the typology, but we don't have time tonight. But God's saying, I'm going to give you, you're going to be a brand new person in appearance.

You're going to have the glory of almighty God come upon you. You're going to have my glory. You're going to have my salvation.

You're going to have my new life, but you're going to have my glory being manifested in you and through you. You're going to have a new song. You're going to have a new testimony.

I'm going to plant you upon a rock, and the gates of hell are not going to prevail against you. No plans, no tongue rising against you is going to prosper against you. And all your children shall be taught of the Lord, verse 13.

And great shall be the peace of thy children. When we acknowledge and recognize these truths, we have now the ability to pass this on to those that come under our influence, beginning in our own homes. In righteousness shalt thou be established, and thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear, and from terror it shall not come near thee.

God says, I'm going to establish you in my righteousness, not your own, and that's going to protect you from all your fears and from all that would terrify you. It will not be able to come near you. Behold, he says, verse 13, now he says, listen, they shall surely gather together.

In other words, there are going to be enemies come against you, and they're going to come all around you, but not by me. In other words, they will gather, but I have, it's not, I'm not the one who's doing this. The devil will try to convince you that it's my voice, but God says, it's not my voice.

I'm not your enemy, I'm your defender, I'm the one who justifies you. Hallelujah. Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

God says, I have determined in my heart that I'm going to triumph. I'm going to destroy these voices. All these weapons of hell that come against you, I'm going to come against them with my word, and I'm going to destroy them in your life.

Behold, he said, verse 16, I have created the smith that blows the coals in the fire, and that brings forth an instrument for his work, and I have created the waster to destroy. In other words, God's saying, everything is in my control. Even the powers of darkness are subject to me.

Jesus Christ is on the throne of absolute power and absolute glory. And in verse 17, he gives a promise. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.

And every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord. Why? Why? And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Do you understand that tonight? Every tongue that rises against you, that rises against who you are in Jesus, what he has done in your life, God says, I have given you the right to condemn it right to the face, because your righteousness is of me. It's not of yourself. It's of me.

And the devil has nothing in me. He has no power over me. He cannot point the finger at me.

Therefore, he is powerless. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Now go to Zephaniah, our last scripture tonight. Zephaniah is about four books back from Matthew.

You'll find Zephaniah. Zephaniah, chapter 3. Now, you still love his word? Remember Zechariah and Zephaniah? It's just like there's a couple of Z's before everybody fell asleep for 400 years. That's the easy way to remember it in the Old Testament.

Hallelujah! Zephaniah, chapter 3, verse 9. For I will then turn to the people a pure language. What are you hearing tonight? A pure language. In other words, a language easy to be understood.

That they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent. For from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. God says, I'm going to call a people that formerly were unclean, and I'm going to cleanse them, and they're going to bring an offering to me and be my people.

In that day, verse 11, shalt thou not be what? Ashamed. For all thy doings wherein thou hast transgressed against me. For then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt have no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

God's saying, I'm going to take away the voices, the proud voices that exalt themselves above the knowledge of God and try to come against you to point out the former things that you have done. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel, verse 13, shall not do iniquity nor speak lies.

Neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth, for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. None. Sing, O daughter of Zion.

Shout, O Israel, verse 14. Be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord has taken away thy judgments.

He has cast out thine enemy. The king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee, and thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not, and to Zion let not thy hands be slack.

The Lord, thy God, in the midst of thee is mighty. He will save. He will rejoice over thee with joy.

He will rest in his love, and he will joy over thee with singing. That's an incredible thing when you hear that. God says, I love you so much.

I will save you. I will rejoice over you. You will rest in the power of my love, and I will rejoice over you with singing.

God says, I'm going to do a marvelous work in you. You're going to become aware of the depths of my love for you. You're going to become aware of what was accomplished for you on Calvary.

I will gather them, he says, that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee. I will save her that halts.

I will gather her that was driven out, and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. God says, I'm going to gather you. I'm going to undo all that has afflicted you.

I'm going to save those that were weak and falling and failing. I'm going to gather those that were driven out of my presence, and I'm going to get a praise and a fame to my name in every place where you have been formerly put to shame. God says, I'm going to give you new life.

I'm going to give you power over your old sins, and it's going to be a praise and a fame to me, not only on earth, but for all of eternity. I'm going to do a work in your life. At that time, he says in verse 20, I will bring you again, even in the time that I gather you, for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth.

God says, I'm going to do this, and how's he going to do it? When I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord. God says, I'm going to turn back your captivity, and I'm going to set you free, and you are going to become a praise to my name throughout all of the earth. Hallelujah.

You talk about a bride that has a song to sing. You talk about a bride that has a reason to rejoice. I serve a God that cannot remember my sins.

I want you to think about that. I serve a God who cannot remember my sins. He says, I will cause myself to forget your sins and iniquities.

I will remember no more. No record in heaven tonight. No record in heaven.

Hallelujah. If there is no record in heaven, and if Christ is the one who is presenting you righteous, then where does the condemner come in? You have the right tonight to say to Satan, you take your crooked, dirty old finger, and you turn it around and point it at yourself, and just go. In Christ's name, go.

I am clean. I am free. I cannot be condemned.

I cannot be condemned. It doesn't matter who knows what I did in the past. That's in the past.

That's gone. That's under the blood of Jesus Christ. Every voice that raises against me in judgment, God has given me a heritage to condemn those voices, because my righteousness is of Jesus Christ and of Him alone.

Verse 14, Zephaniah. He says, Sing, O daughter of Zion. Shout, O Israel.

Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. For the Lord has taken away thy judgments. He has cast out thine enemy.

The King of Israel, even in the Lord, is in the midst of thee, and thou shalt not see evil any more. Hallelujah. I want to sing something to you tonight.

There's a song that I heard one time. It goes along these two verses. It goes like this.

And as we do, I want to invite everybody who's here tonight, and you've been shame-bound. You've been shame-bound. You know it.

I know it. God knows it. It's no secret to the Lord.

It's no secret to you tonight. But tonight, God's going to set you free. You've heard the truth, and now you have to receive the truth.

And in all recall, you're not coming to disalter to cry over anything. You're not coming to repent over anything tonight. You're coming to disalter to say, God, I agree with you.

I'm clean. I agree with what you've done in my life. And therefore, I'm getting off the throne of my life.

I'm not calling myself common or unclean any more. And God in heaven, you're showing me tonight through your word that I have the power to condemn every voice that rises against me in judgment. No more sheets of unclean things.

No more memories of the past. No more dragging my face through my sin. I'm free.

I'm clean. I'm justified by the Spirit of Almighty God. Hallelujah.

If that's you tonight, would you slip out? Would you just slip out wherever you are? Everybody's been bound by shame. You come into this house, you worship, but shame has bound you for your past sin. And God's going to set you free tonight.

Just set you free. I believe he already has. This is just a declaration that you're agreeing with the word of God tonight.

Set free by the power of God. Set free by the love of God. Set free by the goodness of God.

Pray with me now, those that are at the altar, perhaps in the sanctuary as well. Lord Jesus, I agree with your word tonight. The truth has set me free.

By your blood, I am cleansed. I am whole. I am clean.

The condemner has nothing in me. A new person. A brand new creation in Christ Jesus.

I condemn. That tries to remind me of my past. My sins are forgiven.

I am clean. I am clean. It has to be settled in the earth.

It has to be settled in your heart tonight, in your spirit. Clean. Absolutely clean.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Do we have a song? Do we have a song we can sing to go tonight? Whose report do you believe? Folks that are at the altar, I ought to ask you something tonight. Please don't hang your head.

I don't want anybody hanging their head at this altar tonight. You have the right to come before the throne of God. You are absolutely clean in Jesus Christ.

No hanging your head anymore. Get out of the old habit pattern. Get out of that old condemning mode.

And lift your hands and thank God that through Jesus Christ, you are a brand new creation. Let's sing it, then we can go. This is the conclusion of the message.

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