

How to Receive God's Blessing

by Erlo Stegen

To receive the blessing of the Lord, we must have clean hands and a pure heart, and be willing to make right with others and break any ties of sin.

Duration: 1:13:26

Scripture: Psalm 23:1, Psalm 24:3-9

Topics: "Blessing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses a story about a man stealing from a shop to illustrate the importance of having clean hands and a pure heart. The man denies taking anything until the shop owners show him the CCTV footage of his actions. The preacher emphasizes that just as the man's guilt was exposed by technology, our sins will also be exposed before God. He then refers to Psalm 24, which asks who can ascend the hill of the Lord and stand in His holy place, stating that only those with clean hands, a pure heart, and truthful speech can do so.

Transcript

Shall we pray? Lord of lords, we bow before thee, we worship thee, creator of heaven and earth. You who died on the cross for us at Golgotha. Thank you that your hand is upon us always.

You who protect and deliver us from all dangers. We ask you to be with us always. Help us now and work through your word.

Amen. Psalm 24 Now Psalm 23 is very well known throughout the world. But today we will read from Psalm 24.

From verse 3 Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false, and does not swear deceitfully, he will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Today I would like to speak about the blessing of the Lord.

Very often we say, God bless you. But the blessing of the Lord is no light thing. With it we rise, and without it we lose everything.

And we wish everyone the blessing of the Lord. But the question I have is that all those upon whom we wish the blessing of the Lord, do they truly receive his blessing? Often we pray, Lord bless our children, bless our relatives Lord. But the question remains, why it is that so many desire blessing, or we desire for them God's blessing, but so few actually receive it? It is like those who go to the witch doctor or herbalist and they are promised that if they will just take this medicine or that potion, they will receive blessing and good luck.

Or if they will slaughter a goat or a cow, then they will be blessed. But many there are who grow old with grey hair, never having received blessing. Some die without having received God's blessing.

So the question is, how then do we receive his blessing? Our Lord often spoke in parables, wanting people to understand what he said through illustrations. Blessing does not walk with sin, and sin destroys blessing. Wilhelm Busch once said, whenever you sin, it is like a link in a chain.

That chain is bound around your neck. Many people walk with it. Now you do get those who have a chain or a necklace around their neck, maybe they even hang a cross on it.

That, however, is not the chain spoken of. Busch meant it is the strongest chain, that which drags a cow or pulls the plough. When you sin, whenever you are a hypocrite, whenever you lie or swear at somebody, it is yet another chain, a heavy link in the chain.

Whenever you have grudges, whenever you are angry or have hatred, this chain gets ever longer. And so he would ask, how long is the chain that you are dragging? And so he would ask, how long is the chain that you are dragging? There are those who sin right from the beginning, where they are doing things that are wicked right from their childhood, and so the chain grows ever longer, which they are dragging. Think of how long your chain is, and unless the Lord Jesus breaks that chain, that will bind you and drag you into the bottomless pit of death.

Now I have said that the Lord Jesus often illustrated with stories so that people would understand him well. And here in Psalm 24, it also uses an illustration. Who shall ascend or climb the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands, guiltless hands, and a pure heart, and who does not lift up his soul to lies, and does not swear deceitfully, he is the one who will receive the blessing of God and righteousness from the God of our salvation.

Actually, we don't have very high mountains here. Now with the two friends here from Austria, that is a country with real mountains. In the Netherlands, however, they have no mountains.

Many places have no mountains. There are those who are mountain climbers who seek to climb the highest mountains. Some even die attempting the climb.

It is full of ice and snow and mist. It is in their blood to climb the hills, the mountains. Some climb a mountain, and when they are on the pinnacle, they fall and die.

Though there are many very high mountains, nothing equals the highest mountain, which is the mountain of the Lord. Here it is asked, who will ascend this mountain of the Lord, this highest mountain? And who shall stand in his holy place? That is the question. No mountain can match the mountain of the Lord.

His holy mountain where he sits. So who then will climb this mountain and receive the blessing of the Lord? For the blessing of the Lord is found there on the peak of the mountain. We are not speaking about

earthly mountains, but a spiritual one.

So the question is, who will ascend this mountain of the Lord and receive blessing? Then it is answered, he who has clean hands and a heart that is pure, who does not lift up his soul to lies, he will receive the blessing of the Lord. So let us ask ourselves, we who are here, will we receive the blessing of the Lord? Are our hands guiltless? Have you ever stolen something? Gone into a shop and taken some article quickly into your pocket? Or maybe there is money in a drawer in some bedroom which when the person is not there you quickly snatch? Or some article which you have envied that you steal? So are your hands clean or is there something that you have done that has defiled your hands? They are to be hands that are guiltless, guiltless before God. Examine then your hands, in what condition are they? The great day comes when you will stand before the judge of judges and he will examine your hands.

Is there a pen or a rubber that you have stolen, you have pinched or hit somebody? Are your hands innocent before God? Only he who has clean hands, guiltless hands can ascend this mountain. There are very few in number that actually do ascend this mountain because so many have unclean hands. There is a friend who has got a shop near Dalton.

He has put up now CCTV cameras in his shop. He has put up now CCTV cameras in his shop. They once noticed a man with a big jacket coming in and as he walked by one of the shelves he snatched an article and put it into his pocket.

Saw something else, he grabbed it as well. One thing after the other he hid in his pockets. He filled his jackets with articles.

When he was going out they stopped him and said, tell us what is in your pockets? He said nothing. Then they said come here. They took him into the office where there was the camera equipment.

They switched it on. They played back what he had done. They showed him exactly when he had walked in the shop the different articles they had stuffed into his jacket.

He was astounded. He said is technology so far advanced? They said what about what is inside your jacket? In your trousers? I said take it out. He was denied taking anything.

He simply said well technology is very advanced. That was his downfall. He said is it so advanced? Guiltless hands.

Do you have hands that are clean? I remember. And we had a youth conference at the end of the conference. At the end of which we did a check on the suitcases and one suitcase we found the undergarments of the girl who said I am missing my undergarments and there it was.

Let us examine our hands now as to what condition they are in. Is there any guilt upon your hands? When the day of death comes. When your day of death comes and you draw near to God who will ask you about your hands, how you have lived with your hands from childhood up.

Woe to you if your hands are guilty. You will never be able to ascend that mountain. You will fail.

There is a sentence. There is a certain auntie who is here who when she was younger in 1973 experienced actually dying. And the Lord showed her many things, one of which was climbing a mountain which he said was very steep.

Very, very difficult to climb. You cannot climb it alone. You cannot climb the mountain without Jesus, she said.

He is the one who holds your hand and can pull you and help you. You get to some places which are just impossible to climb. Where you need to go down on your hands and knees and crawl up, calling upon the Lord to help you.

Steep cliffs on either side and if you fall down one of the cliffs, that's the end. She experienced in one place there was a hen with beautiful little chicks. It was a very narrow path and she had to go through these chickens.

And it was difficult to think of trampling on these little chicks. And she prayed, Lord, give me the courage to go right through, come what may, even if some of these are trampled upon. And so she got through.

But it hurt to trample on these little chicks. How difficult it is, how many experiences you have to go through in climbing this mountain. She met with three ladies, she said.

Who also wanted to climb with her to receive the blessing of the Lord. And they asked, where are you headed? They answered, we are climbing the hill of the Lord to receive his blessing. And the Lord who had asked this question then pointed to their clothing and said, look, it's got spots, dirty marks on it.

And the Lord said, look, it's got spots, dirty marks on it. They kept quiet for they were fully conscious of the fact that they had to climb with spotless, clean garments. And they failed to continue to climb this mountain.

Then a man came, also climbing this mountain, but around his ankle was a rope. A long rope, the end of which was invisible, going down into the valley there where you could not see where it ended. This young man thought he was progressing in climbing the hill.

But then he got stuck, like a goat where you tie a rope around it, it will go a certain distance and then have to stop. He could not continue. Then it was said, do you see this rope that is around your ankles? It goes down there, down the mountain.

Tied to someone else around his ankle, this was also tied. It was said, And it was said, you see, when you became a Christian, you never broke ties with that person that you were bound to. You never went back to be reconciled and to make right with that person.

Then it was said, And it was said, you see, when you became a Christian, you never broke ties with that person that you were bound to. You never went back to be reconciled and to make right with that person. You never went back to be reconciled and to make right with that person.

For you had sinned with him, and so you were bound together in your iniquity. You never went back to apologize and to cut that tie. Then it was said, And it was said, you see, when you became a Christian, you never broke ties with that person that you were bound to.

That climbing the mountain of the Lord is no small thing. You should have made right with that person. You should have gone back.

Otherwise, you'll say, but I never took the time to go to that person and apologize and confess that I had done this with you and break that tie. You will not succeed in your journey of faith if you are still bound in

sin to someone else. Go and make right.

Without which you will never succeed in climbing the mountain of the Lord to receive His blessing. And it also says, with the heart that is pure. The heart of a person must be clean.

Should it not be clean, you will not succeed. In the book of Mark, the gospel of Mark, chapter 7. The Lord said in verse 20, and He said, What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery.

Coveting, wickedness. Deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these things come from within a man.

People had come to the Lord and said, but your disciples are eating without having purified their hands. They are unclean. And the Lord said to them, it's not what goes into man that defiles him, it's what comes out of man.

Evil thoughts. Where do wicked thoughts come from? From an unclean heart. Evil thoughts proceed.

These evil things proceed from the heart. And all these things defile a man. The Lord is not looking just at the outside, He looks at the heart.

Those who don't dress nicely. Dress like a prostitute. Like an immoral person.

If that person is challenged, they immediately rebuff with the words, but God doesn't see the outside. He only sees the heart. And they don't realize that what they're saying is only partially true.

For it is from their heart that also proceeds evil thoughts, sexual immorality, adultery, all these things. They cause a person to not be able to stand in God's holy place. Slander.

Foolishness. All these things come from within the heart. My friend, you might look so nice on the outward side with clothing, expensive gold, jewelry and diamonds.

But is your heart clean? I don't know whether that's understandable. Or do you need another language to understand? I don't know whether that's understandable. I don't know whether that's understandable.

Or do you need another language to understand? Or does it just make you sleepy? You need to wake up. This needs to stir you. Otherwise, you'll find that you meet with your day of death, perhaps it's in a bus accident, and you're found without a clean heart.

Jesus said in Matthew 5, If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out so that you can go to heaven with one eye rather than going into hell with both. And men too, when they pray, let them lift up holy hands, hands that are pure. There are those who have the habit when they pray of literally lifting up their hands, but you need to check yourself, are those hands clean? And so the word says, if the men lift up their hands, let them be holy, let them be without anger and doubt.

You see men, see the sin of men is especially anger. And the Lord says, don't dare lift your hands up in prayer if they have anger. Men's sin, men easily lose their temper.

The sin typical of females is slander, gossip, their tongue. But if you climb the hill of the Lord, it should be a tongue and it should be innocent. Be careful.

Look at your hands. Look at your hands, your heart, and look at your lips too. If you are not clean, you will not succeed in the Christian life.

Thoroughly examine himself, lest there be some error, some sin in you, then there is a woe upon you. Overseas, near Scotland, the Hebrides, some young men got together and they said, well, let's have a time of prayer so that we have a regular prayer meeting that God would work. It was in 1949.

They prayed for weeks on end, it was already a few months. Every week they would pray, Lord, pour out your Spirit, work in a marvelous way. However, God did not work.

One day in the morning, one of the young men said, now men, before we pray, let's read the Bible. He read Psalm 24. Who shall ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who will stand in his holy place? He raised his clean hands and appeared right.

He will receive the blessing of God. He looked at his friends, his brothers in the Lord. He said, brothers, it does not help for us to pray.

If our hands are unclean and our hearts are impure. He said, brothers, let's examine our hands, our hearts, our lips, whether we've spoken what is wrong. He could not continue, they stopped right there.

As they examined themselves, one fell on the floor. So powerful was the presence of God among them. It was a different day.

Three of them had broken hearts and fell on the floor. But they said, this is unusual, this seems like God is among us. Revival.

Revival began. We so easily speak about the Holy Spirit, so superficially. But if we want the Holy Spirit to truly work, we need clean hands, a pure heart, lips that are clean.

He said, brothers, let's examine our hands, our hearts, our lips, whether we've spoken what is wrong. He said, brothers, let's examine our hands, our hearts, our lips, whether we've spoken what is wrong. There is a certain place where the pinnacle is very beautiful.

Below that pinnacle, below it is a little village. There is a stream that flows down the mountain past this village, and it is crystal clear. There is a certain place where the pinnacle is very beautiful.

There is a certain place where the pinnacle is very beautiful. The village people got together and said, we need to hire somebody who is a protector of the source of this water, because at certain times of the year there are leaves that fall into the stream. Then they hired an old man who lived up the mountain.

So they appointed him, and his duty was solely to check the stream all the time that it shouldn't get dirty. Year after year, this stream was known as being clean, crystal clear, through every season. Then the town committee, who had official meetings once or twice a year just to examine things, check their books.

Then this committee, who didn't know this man, they said, who is this man in our books to whom we pay a regular salary? What is he doing? We don't know him. Let us fire him. So he was given notice and was told, we don't need a person who is doing this job of yours.

Cleaning the water. It didn't take long. People from all over Europe used to visit this town and admire the beautiful water and the ponds where swans and ducks would swim.

They could even run a mill to grind and make flour from the power of the stream. Everything looked beautiful, the fields too, because of this beautiful water. One night, these town people, the managers of it, this committee said, no, we're wasting our money on this man.

We don't need him to do this job. Not long after that, the water became dirty. Leaves, yellow leaves had fallen into the water and branches had fallen into it.

Soon, the very water itself stank and the people didn't want to drink the water anymore. And this hydro-mill couldn't operate anymore. And so tourists who used to come to see this no longer came.

And this mill stopped completely and the water was just full of dirt. Why? The cleaner was no longer cleaning the stream of the leaves. And so things came to a standstill, even the mill.

And the reputation of this town and that stream was lost because people didn't want to come anymore to see this because it was dirty. You see the secret? The person whose job it was to clean that stream regularly had been fired and the good water came to an end. You see, if we are not busy cleaning our stream day and night, then eventually the clarity of that water, the beauty of the stream is lost and people will no longer admire it.

Our country will be defiled, our schools and our Christianity will be defiled. I close now. If our hearts are not kept regularly clean from deception, from lies, from immorality, Satan will abide there.

And you will fail to climb the mountain of the Lord. That chain of sin will drag you back. So let's be quiet.

Is your heart clean? Are your hands undefiled? Are your lips clean? Or are you being dragged? You should be busy with cleaning your heart. If you're not doing that, then don't blame me one day and say I never told you the truth. I need to stop now.

Time is gone on. But just for a moment, have a look at your hands. Look into your past.

Are they guiltless? Is your heart snow white? Nothing tied to your ankles? If there is, now is the time to get right with God. Let's get right with God. Let the sun not go down without your being reconciled to God, without your confessing your sin, your tongue, without it being sorted out.

Woe to you if you go your own way, you'll land up in hell. However, if you get on to God's way, there is the hope that you will enter into heaven. Let's stand and pray.

If your knees are not sore, Lord Jesus, we hear your word. As to who will ascend the mountain of the Lord, only he who has guiltless hands and a heart that is pure and whose lips do not speak deception, work, O Lord, that this meeting would not have been in vain, but that everyone would be helped through it and find reconciliation with you. Amen.

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