

Come . . . Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet

by Fred Whitmore

Fred Whitmore's sermon emphasizes God's gracious invitation to sinners for forgiveness and reconciliation through Christ.

Duration: 38:08

Scripture: Isaiah 1:16

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Invitation to Salvation"

Description

Fred Whitmore emphasizes God's gracious invitation to sinners, urging them to come and reason together with Him, despite their scarlet sins. He highlights the transformative power of God's forgiveness, which can turn sins as red as crimson into purity, akin to snow. Whitmore explains that while sin separates humanity from God, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ provides a way for reconciliation and cleansing. He warns of the urgency of accepting this invitation, as tomorrow is not guaranteed, and stresses that true salvation is offered freely through faith in Christ. Ultimately, he calls for a personal response to God's call for repentance and acceptance of His grace.

Transcript

So we're reading tonight in the first chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah. We shall read from verse 16. Whilst you make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes.

Cease to do evil, burn to do well. Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed. Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

If you do willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the band. But if you refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot say, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity.

Your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverse things. And then again in chapter 44, verse 22, I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Return unto me,

for I have redeemed thee.

The Lord will bless to us the reading of his word. To the prophet Isaiah there was given the privilege, perhaps more than any other prophet, to speak of the one whom God was to send into the world. He gives us the account of his miraculous birth.

He tells us of his manner of life as Jehovah's perfect servant. He goes on to describe his sufferings and his sacrifice. And he tells of his coming kingdom and glory.

If you want a prophecy that is absolutely filled with the person of Christ, you cannot do better than study this wonderful prophecy. Those of us who love the gospel, we find in it many remarkable illustrations of the truth. There are there some priceless gems that God gives to the gospel preacher that delights the heart and makes it possible to set forth clearly the way of salvation.

Isaiah, of course, he bore a wonderful name, a little different to the name of our Saviour. It was written before the advent of our Lord Jesus, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. But Isaiah's name means Jehovah saves.

And so the salvation of God has a very prominent place in this prophecy. Tonight I'm asking you to look with me to one of the most gracious invitations that ever fell upon the ears of men. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.

But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured for the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. In the early part of chapter one, we have a description given to us of the condition of Israel at the time of Isaiah's prophecy. Here were a people who had departed from God.

Here were a people who were defiled in their minds, and in their hearts there was enmity toward the one who had blessed them. God failed to have his rightful place in the lives of this people. They were content with ritual and with ceremonial, but they knew nothing of that which God desired, nothing of intimacy with God and the reason their sins had intervened.

If we went through this book carefully, we would find there are no exceptions, for here the prophet he deals with the priests, and then he deals also with the so-called prophets, and then he deals with the people. And what does he say? He says we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities as the wind have carried us away. Isaiah even includes himself in this fearful indictment.

He says we are all as an unclean thing. After all these words, they find confirmation later in the New Testament, when the apostle Paul views humanity relative to God, and he sees all men alike in their sinful condition. He says there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

And yet, my friend, it was to those who were corrupt us, to those whose ways were evil, to those who were perverse in all their doings that God spoke, and he spoke gracious words, words of invitation, words of pleading, words of appeal. God speaks in the grace of his heart, and he says come now. It's never God's desire to banish men from his presence.

It is not the desire of God that men should be eternally separated from himself. God is a savior of God. Judgment is his strange work.

God delights in mercy. Who is a pardoning God like thee, or who hath grace so rich, so free? Some of us, we have received pardon from an offended God, pardon for sins of deepest die, and we know that that pardon, it was procured for us by the precious shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And my friend, the God who pardons sinners, the God who can block out their transgressions, the God who can make men anew and impart to them newness of life, he speaks to you tonight compassionately.

He brings to you words of grace, and he says come, come. Ah yes, we know all too well that the moment will dawn when the Savior will have to say to men, depart. He who died to bring them near, he who died to put away their sins, he endured the agony of Calvary in order that men might be reconciled to God, and yet he will have to say to men, depart.

I never knew you, but tonight he is speaking in grace, and he says come. You know that's a gospel word, it's a word of invitation. We were saying last night that salvation is offered on the simplest possible terms, and the words that are used to set it forth, they are the words that we can easily understand.

It's not difficult to discover why ordinary people heard the Lord Jesus Christ gladly, for although there were profound things that he presented, he presented them with the utmost simplicity, and men understood him. They understood the words that he was using, and the illustrations employed brought light to their minds, and light to their hearts. And my friend, God is just the same today.

He doesn't bring to you a complicated plan, but he sets before you an offer of salvation, and he tells you that this wonderful salvation that you stand so much in need of, this newness of life, it can be received by a simple act of faith. And so an invitation is used, and the Lord says come. He invites you to himself.

Now if the Lord has invited you, you can banish all fear. No need, my friend, to enter into his presence with dread and fear of torment. If the Lord has invited you near, there's a basis for this invitation.

And my friend, that basis was laid at the cross when the Lord Jesus suffered, when he shed his precious blood. And it's because Christ died for sinners that God is able to offer pardon to sinners, and it's on the ground of the finished work of Christ that God is able to say tonight, come, come. But my friend despised that work, refused to hear him that speaketh from heaven.

Go on without this proffered grace and this great salvation, and my friend you will be summoned into the presence of the righteous judge of all the earth, and will hear from his lips the terrible sentence, a sentence of eternal banishment from the presence of God. How solemn it is. We have to thank God that it's the day of grace, that God is inviting sinners to himself, and that tonight he's saying, come, come now.

This is a matter of urgency. It brooks no delay. Tomorrow is not yours, it is not mine.

Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. My friend, tomorrow's sun may never rise to bless thy long deluded sight. Now is the time.

Oh, then be wise. Thou wouldst be saved, why not tonight? God says, behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation.

And the Lord tells of those who will seek entrance into the kingdom when the door has been closed, but they will be seeking when it's too late, never to receive mercy, only to be banished from the presence of God. No wonder again the prophet Isaiah speaks, and he says, seek ye the Lord while he may be found. And that moment, it is the moment of presence.

And here tonight, friend, God says, come. He says, come now, come now. Whatever has hindered you in the past, banish it.

Get rid of it. Whatever obstacle may stand in your way, surmount it by all means. Strive to enter in at the straight gate.

This is the thing that matters. This is the matter of the utmost importance, that you come to know God in the person of his Son, that you come to receive God's salvation. God speaks, and he says, come now, and let us reason together.

Men often suggest that God is unreasonable in his attitude toward them, how foolish men are. Men are unreasonable in their thoughts regarding God, and in their attitude toward God. Friend, I think I could prove to you tonight that there is nothing more unreasonable than unbelief when that unbelief is related to God, when it is related to the Son of God, and to the Word of God.

Man's unbelief libels the character of God. It's men who are ignorant of God, and the power of God, and the heart of God, who continue in unbelief. Unbelief.

Think of it. Have you any reason for it? My friend, did you ever put God to the test, and he failed you? When did you discover there was unreliability in God and his Word? When did you discover that? My friend, is it true that you're going on in unbelief, but you've never tested the character of God for yourself? You've never proved the value and the faithfulness of his Word? No. Yet you go on in unbelief.

My friend, I would have you remember tonight what unbelief will involve you in. No. God is going to demonstrate the truth of his Word in two companies, and that eternally.

He will demonstrate it in the company of those that have believed. He will demonstrate it in the company of unbelievers. It will be demonstrated in heaven.

It will be demonstrated in hell, the truth of the Word of God. He that believeth on the Son has everlasting life. That's true now.

It will be true eternally. There will be a multitude that no man can number, surrounding the person of Christ and rejoicing in God's salvation forever. But they will be the ones who have exercised faith in him while he ever lives.

But my friend, there will be a fearful company in hell, in whom there will be demonstrated the solemn truths. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Your unbelief causes you to put your soul in jeopardy.

It brings you, my friend, into danger of eternal judgment. And yet you go on in your folly, charging God with unreasonableness, while the fact is this. God has done all that was possible on his part to bring you into blessing.

He has provided this great salvation, and he offers it to you without money and without price. And yet in your unbelief and folly you go on without it, exposing your soul to eternal death, to eternal judgment. God stoops in grace and he says, come now and let us reason together.

Let us place these facts together. Let us consider these things together. Let us reason together.

But my friend, let us notice, there is a particular subject that God has in view here, and this subject is not popular with men. Though your sins, your sins, who you say do not mention my sins, do not try to stir my conscience with regard to the guilt of the past. The things that I've been responsible for, they're behind me, and I want to forget them.

My friend, it's folly to forget the things that God would have you to remember. Some of us can forget the past tonight because God has forgotten it. He's dealt with it.

It has fallen under judgment. We've heard the voice of God saying, your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more. The things that God has forgotten we can afford to forget.

But remember, while you continue in your sins without the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, then you continue as one who will be responsible for your sins, will have to give answer for your sins. You're just as well to face it now. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord.

Though your sins, your sins, you could talk about your neighbor's sins, couldn't you? That's not difficult. We can all see failure in other people. We can easily discern where others have gone astray.

But my friend, God is not asking you to concern yourself with the sins of other people. You've got sufficient to do if you concern yourself with your own sins. He says though your sins, not your neighbor's, not that professing Christian who you say is a miserable failure, that is no concern of yours at the moment.

There's a matter far more important than that. It's your sins, your sins. Realize what they are capable of my friend, your sins.

God says they're a scarlet. He says they're like crimson in their dye. What does he mean by that? He means that they cannot be hidden.

They cannot be hidden. You've tried to hide them from view, haven't you? You know there are two men brought before us in the Old Testament, the first. He tried to find a hiding place from himself.

He wanted to hide himself from God. But the second was a man who sought to hide his sins from God. Did Adam succeed when he tried to hide himself? No.

The moment God required Adam in his presence, Adam was there. My friend, the moment God summons you into eternity, you'll be there. You'll not be able to argue with God.

When the command comes, you'll respond to it. And my friend, the wealth of the world could not hold you for one further moment in time. When God wants you in eternity, you'll be there.

David tried to hide his sins. But the wise man has said, whoso covereth his sins shall not prosper. But he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

My friend, in this matter of covering sin from the eye of God, no man has ever prospered. No doubt David schemed and he thought that he had succeeded. He even went thus far that he tried to cover his sins with the blood of Uriah.

But the prophet Nathan arrives. And of course, David is quite smug at this time. He thinks all has been successfully accomplished and nobody knows anything about his doings.

True, he'd sinned against Israel. He'd sinned against Uriah. He'd sinned against Bathsheba.

He'd sinned against his own soul. But he was going to learn that his guilt was greater than that. In the very first place, he had sinned against God, and God held it against him.

Couldn't get away from it. My friend, the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good. You've hidden nothing from God, you never will.

He knows you through and through. And as the prophet comes and he unfolds his simple parable, David thought he was looking upon the sin of another man. And his indignation, it was hot within him.

Why, he couldn't restrain himself. He said, the man that has done this thing, he shall surely die. Nathan lifts the accusing finger.

He says, yes, but thou art the man. Thou art the man. My friend, it's you that God is speaking to, not your neighbor, it's you.

You. Take it home tonight. God is speaking to you.

And he's speaking to you with regard to your sins, your transgressions, your iniquities, your corrupt condition, never having received the cleansing that the blood of Christ affords. He's speaking to you. And he says, your sins, they cannot be hidden.

They're like scarlet. They're crimson in their dye. In the Boer War, of course, the British troops were turned out in scarlet uniforms.

They had the scarlet jacket. It was during the Boer War that the khaki uniform was introduced. Why? Because there in the glaring sun, those scarlet tunics couldn't be hidden.

And they discovered that wherever they moved, they were exposed to their enemies. The scarlet gave them away. One of the most difficult colors to hide, isn't it? You folk that know anything about dyeing, the dyeing of materials, you know that scarlet is very, very difficult to erase.

It's a color that it seems almost impossible to get rid of. Ah, yes. And God says that's how your sins appear.

Dear Tom Morell, with whom we labored in St Kitts, he told me that when he went there first, he was going to baptize some meetings of a campaign he was about to conduct. And he thought he would like to put his poster outside in glowing colors. He felt it would attract the West Indians.

And so he made his poster. And of course he was very good with a brush, and he put his poster up. He thought that looks grand.

He'd got a variety of color, brilliant color. He said, but you know, I went back a day or two afterwards to look at it. And the tropical sun had bleached out all the letters excepting those that I'd printed in red, and they remained.

He said, and I looked at it, and suddenly the word came to me, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Ah, he says, what the brilliance of the sun cannot do, the blood of Christ can do. And my friend, your sins, though they're scarlet in their dye, they can be blotted out tonight.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Wonderful, isn't it? You see, friend, they cannot be hidden. But remember this, they can hide the face of God from you.

The Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you. Your sins. My Christian friend, is that why you get no answers to your prayers? Is that the reason? You once were going on well with the Lord, but you're not going on now.

You're indulging in your life many things that are contrary to the mind of God, and God has exercised your conscience many times about it. Then you complain that your prayers are not answered. And what does God say? He says that his hand is not shortened, his ear is not heavy, but he says your iniquities, your iniquities, your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins, your sins have hidden his face from you.

Wherever you find sin, my friend, it's the same in character. Fearful, deadly, opposed to all that God delights in. How glad I am tonight that God has made provision for the sinning saint.

Ah, indeed he has. When John writes his first epistle, he's writing to Christians, and he says, if any man sin, if any man from among you, from you who have come into the family of God, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Again he says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

My friend, where do we find the effectual remedy? John says, the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin. You know, I still like the old-fashioned hymns. I've heard them criticized quite recently.

But I hope, my friend, as long as I'm here, I'm going to enjoy them and rejoice in them, because in heaven I'm going to sing about the blood of Christ, and in heaven I'm going to acknowledge that I have been redeemed to God with that precious blood, washed from my sins and made clean by nothing less than the blood of Christ. Oh, precious is the flow that makes me white as snow, no other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus. I heard a theologian say one day that Catherine knew nothing of what he was speaking, when he wrote, there is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunge beneath that blood, lose all their guilty stains.

I tell you, friend, Cowper became a man of great spiritual experience, and he knew to what he was referring. He recognized that the life of the flesh is in the blood, and that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. And he knew that it was necessary for the lifeblood of the Lord Jesus to be shed, before cleansing could be obtained.

My friend, the sacrifice is made, and it's the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. You can belittle these things if you like, but if you do it, my friend, you'll belittle it to your own condemnation, and you'll rob your soul of the only remedy that makes one fit for God's presence. Yes, thank God, and there's still an interpretation that's quite true and spiritual, with regard to Zachariah's words.

There has been a fountain opened in the house of David for sin, and for uncleanness. My friend, those who were cleansed before the cross, and those who have been cleansed since it, they owe their cleansing to the sacrificial blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to make it quite clear that God has never saved, and God will never save any person apart from the work and the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whatever time a man lived, whether it was before the cross or after, my friend, it's only through the work that was accomplished at Calvary that God can and will save sinners. I have no time whatsoever for this so-called new theology, and for this modern way of presenting what men are daring to call the gospel. It's nothing of the sort.

The apostle could say, though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed. By the way of emphasis he repeats it. I tell you, friend, there's a solemn anathema upon the man who dares to detract from the wonderful message of the gospel of God.

Here we've got it tonight. God is able, through the work of the cross and the sacrifice of his Son, to say, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

And though, my friend, your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, you tonight can get rid of your sins. Whether you're a Christian or an unbeliever, you can get rid of your sins. And you can be made right with God, and you can be brought into fellowship with God through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us emphasize it. You remember that Moses entered into covenant with certain men who wanted their possessions on the wrong side of Jordan. And after he had shown to them the solemn responsibilities that were theirs, and they had pledged themselves to go up with their brethren until their foes were subdued, Moses reminds them that if they go back upon that, he says, be sure, your sins will find you out.

Now, he's not saying what we've said earlier, that your sins will be found out. There's no doubt about that. They're known to God already.

God doesn't have to search them out. He knows all about them. But what Moses is saying is this, your sins, they'll find you out.

They'll take up with you. They'll overtake you. And you'll have to look at them.

And my friend, I tell you, many a man has had to look in the face of his sins, as I have looked upon the face of Elijah. And he says, hast thou found me or my enemy? And I tell you, friend, those sins that you've indulged, why they're tracking you down, and they're taking up with you, and they'll find you out. You can't hide from them.

At the most unexpected moment, they will appear before your eyes. Be sure, your sins will find you out. A racecourse thief was saved after a life that had been very vicious.

He was saved, I suppose, he was in his early fifties. I knew him quite well. He told the story himself.

He said, I was a man of great physique. But of course, he said, in many foolish ways, I abused my body. When he was in his early fifties, the Lord met him and saved him on the racecourse.

Shortly afterwards, he took ill. Couldn't understand what was wrong with him. He decided to go to see a doctor.

Doctor didn't know him. He didn't know the doctor. The doctor examined him.

He said, well, he said, I feel I ought to tell you the truth. Would you like to know the truth? He said, yes, I would. Well, he said, it's simply this.

Your sins have caught up with you. Your sins have caught up with you. He said, what do you mean, doctor? He said, well, you haven't told me anything about yourself.

He said, but examining you, I know what you're suffering from. He said, and I know it's the outcome of your past follies. I know that.

He said, now be honest, is it true? He said, yes, doctor, it's true. Yes, he said. Your sins have caught up with you.

He said, but doctor, I want to tell you that a short time ago, he said, I accepted Christ as my Saviour, and there's one sense in which my sins have gone. And he was astonished as the doctor put out his hand to shake hands with him. He said, I'm glad to hear you say that.

He said, for I'm a Christian too, and my sins are gone. He said, but friend, I'm exceedingly sorry for you in this respect, that God has established principles from which he never departs. He says, be not deceived, God is not mocked.

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. He said, you know, even though God has dealt with your soul in mercy, and has blotted out your transgressions, he said, the physical consequences, well, he said, you'll have to face up to them.

You'll have to endure them. He said, that's a principle from which God never departs. Oh, my friend, how sad to think that late in life often men and women realize that their sins have caught up with them.

Be sure, your sins will find you out. Are you prepared to face it? Listen, God is saying to the repentant one tonight, to the one who takes the sinner's place and bows in contrition before him, I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Oh, my friend, how wonderful to know that there is nothing betwixt the soul and God.

That fearful dark cloud has gone. He lifts up the light of his countenance upon the one who believes. He imparts lasting and eternal peace.

And you can know tonight that your sins are forgiven. How the apostles delighted to preach it. Through this man, the man who is exalted to the highest place in heaven, but who still bears the marks of Calvary, through this man has preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.

And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the Lord Moses. Forgiveness. The Lord prayed for it, not for himself, but for sinners.

The Lord paid the price that would make it possible in his own blood. And my friend, the proclamation of pardon is made in his name tonight, through this man, the person of Christ. He can pardon you, he can make you anew, he can blot out your sins, he can give you life eternal.

My friend, it's all in the person of Christ. Will you receive him? Will you trust him? May God grant that you'll do it, even tonight. Amen.

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