

# I Have Sinned

by Jack Hyles

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*Jack Hyles emphasizes the importance of confessing one's sins and the transformative power of humility in seeking forgiveness from God.*

**Duration:** 54:53

**Scripture:** Exodus 9:27, Exodus 10:16, Numbers 22:34, 2 Samuel 12:13, 2 Samuel 24:10, 1 Chronicles 21:8

**Topics:** "Repentance", "Faithfulness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his experience as a public speaker and his struggle with three specific words. He emphasizes the importance of hard work and the negative consequences of stealing, referencing the Bible's command to let those who stole steal no more but rather work. The speaker also discusses the allure of sin and its temporary pleasures, contrasting it with the everlasting joy found in a relationship with Jesus. He shares the story of Job, highlighting his unwavering faith despite losing his possessions, health, and even the support of his friends and wife.

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## Transcript

I have sinned. Ten people in the Bible made that statement. Our Lord reminded us that if a man says, I have sinned, and by the way, did you know that's the hardest statement that a fellow can make? It's not hard for me to say, Dr. Billings has sinned.

He came up tonight in the study and he said, I've got, somebody said, did Brother Hiles ask you for help on his sermon tonight? He said, no, he didn't, but I listed 67 of his sins this afternoon. That's easy, isn't it, Doc? List my sins. It's easier for me to list Perkins' sins.

It's easier for me to list Fisk's sins. Oh, I'd have to buy some more paper. It's easier for me to list the sins of others.

But I guess the three hardest words in the English language to say are the words, I have sinned. Unless two words are three words, I am sorry. I've preached three and a half times a day for 16 years.

I guess I spend an average of three hours a day on my feet talking to crowds. Which means, though I'm not an eloquent speaker, I am a public speaker. I speak in public, I heap.

And so I am as at home, honestly, right now, as you ladies would be if you were in your kitchen washing dishes, or as you students would be if you were in the dorm studying. I mean, this is where I live. I spend

more of my time doing what I'm doing right now than any other single activity of my life.

And so I speak a lot of things, but there are three words that I have a hard time speaking. I feel every time I begin to make that, young people, that little speech, I feel like a child in first grade saying, Mary had a little lamb. As a colored fellow said, he said, The Bible says it's okay to steal and not to work.

Now, the Scripture says, Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him work. He says, I read in the Bible, it says, Let him that stole steal, no more let him work. And that's about the way I feel when I say these three words.

Though I make my living, much of it speaking, and though I speak before crowds like this almost every day, and several, yesterday to a convention in Houston, Texas, and tomorrow night near Washington, D.C., and so forth, it's that way, and then the next week in Kingsport, Tennessee, and then the next week somewhere else, and the week before last in Toronto, Canada. And though I speak much, whenever I get to a place where I say, I am sorry, I don't do that with the eloquence of Apollos. You know why? There's somebody whispering in my ear, who has a forked tail and has smoke on him and wears a red suit, that says, Don't you say that.

It's so much easier for me to say, He has sinned. Or you have sinned. Or they have sinned.

But the Bible says there is special reward for that person who says, I have sinned. I don't like anniversaries. I'm getting too old for that.

And I personally do not, I don't all want to mention it. But tonight, I complete my 13th year as your pastor. 13 years.

When I first walked in the pulpit of this church, the thing that I asked God to give me the quickest, was to give me people who could say, I have sinned. I have sinned. I wanted God to give me people impressionable to conviction.

People responsive to the message. To come to the altar and kneel and say, I have sinned. I have sinned, said Berio.

In Exodus chapter 9, verse 27. In Exodus 10, verse 16. As he saw the hail mixed with fire, running along the ground and all in the field.

The herbs and trees were broken and killed. And as he saw the locusts and darkness and the crops eaten by locusts, Berio said, I have sinned. I have sinned, said Balaam.

In Numbers 22, verse 34. As he saw the angel, or as the donkey on which he was riding, saw the angel. I mean, that's always been funny.

Balaam was leaving the will of God. And he came to a place and the angel came and stopped him. The donkey he was riding saw the angel.

And Balaam didn't see the angel. And the donkeys turned to the right and turned to the left and ran into the wall and crumpled beneath Balaam. And Balaam said to the donkey, get up! He didn't say get up, but that's what he meant.

He had been from Texas, he didn't know what this said. Get up! And the donkey wouldn't get up. It got up and went down again.

And Balaam hit him again. The donkey turned around and said, what did you hit me for? And Balaam went to Westville. But Balaam realizing he was outside the will of God, the angel in the way, Balaam going to Moab, leaving the perfect will of God for his life, and finally he said, I have sinned.

I have sinned, said Saul. In 1 Samuel 15, verses 24 and 30, as he saw Samuel, Saul had been commanded by God to destroy the Amalekites and everything that pertained to the Amalekites, destroy the oxen and the sheep and everything else. And Samuel came and said, did you destroy everything? And Saul said, oh yes, I destroyed everything, just like you said.

And Samuel said, well, what mean the lowing of the oxen and the bleeding of the sheep? Is that right? Oxen low and sheep bleed. And the lowing of the oxen, the bleeding of the sheep. And Saul said, oh, forgot to tell you, I didn't kill them all.

I kept the best oxen and the best sheep for sacrifices. I forgot to tell you. And Samuel looked at Saul and said, to obey is better than sacrifice.

And Saul said, I have sinned. I have sinned, said Saul, when David spared his life and David was in the cave and Saul was chasing David to kill him. And Saul went to sleep outside the cave and David and his servants came out and there was Saul lying asleep.

Saul had pledged to kill David. He was looking for him at the time to take his life and David could have pulled his sword and pierced the heart of Saul and killed him. Somebody said, David, here's your chance.

There's your enemy. There's the man dedicated to your destruction. Now he's asleep.

Kill him. David said, I can't lift up my hand against God's anointed. Oh my, that's a wonderful, I made that statement years ago.

I'm not going to lift up my hand against God's anointed. He may not be as good a preacher as I think he ought to be, but I'm not going to let words go through my lips to try to tear him down. He may, if he's God's man, I don't want to hurt him.

He may hurt me, but if he's God's man, I don't want to hurt him. He may criticize me, but if he's God's man, I don't want to criticize him. And I'll say this to you students 10,000 times before you get your diploma, but you resolve right this moment, no matter what they say about you, no matter what they say about this church, let no student from our campus leave our campus and speak an unkind word about any man of God who believes this Bible and is God's anointed.

Let nobody from this church ever retaliate to anyone who criticizes us. Let others talk about us. Let us talk well about them.

Let others criticize us. Let us not criticize them. Let others hate us.

Let us love them. Let others speak unkindly about us. Let us speak kindly about them.

There should be no place in the vocabulary of the First Baptist Church ever to criticize a church that believes this book or a man who believes the Word of God. I have sinned, said Saul. When he awakened

and looked up and there was David standing over his body, realizing that David could have killed him and taken vengeance on Saul, Saul looked up and said, I have sinned.

I have sinned. I have sinned, said David. In 2 Samuel chapter 12 and verse 13, as he heard the message of Nathan, after his awful sin with Bathsheba and Uriah, and all of a sudden little Nathan came and told the story of the ewe lamb, and David said, where is a fellow like that? And Nathan said, darth the man.

David said, I have sinned. I have sinned, said David. In 1 Chronicles 21 verse 8 and 1 Chronicles 21 verse 7, I have sinned, said David.

In 2 Samuel chapter 24 verse 10 and 2 Samuel 24 verse 17, I have sinned, said Shimei. We talked about Shimei this morning. It was Shimei who hurled dust at King David.

It was Shimei that cursed King David as he fled toward Maanaum. And when David came back from the land of Maanaum to once again ascend the stairway and sit on the throne of Israel in Jerusalem, Shimei said, I have sinned. I have sinned, said Pereo.

I have sinned, said Balaam. I have sinned, said Saul. I have sinned, said David.

I have sinned, said Shimei. I have sinned, said Job. Job 7 verse 20.

His pride crept into his heart. Job was the best Christian in all the world. The one such a great Christian that God said to the devil, Is thou considered my servant Job? No better like him on the face of the earth.

Job was the best living Christian. The best Christian in the world. And because he was, he became proud.

He lost his health. He lost his money. He lost his children.

He lost the loyalty of his wife. He lost everything that was holy and righteous to him. And Job was sitting in the ash heap of the city dump, scraping himself with a piece of metal, scraping the corruption that was flowing from his sores off his body and setting in live coal so he could keep himself from hurting quite so much because of the awful disease and pain accompanying the disease of Elephantias.

And all of a sudden Job began to think, I withstood. I lost my kids. I didn't yield.

I lost my riches. And I didn't yield. I lost my health.

And I did not compromise. I lost the faithfulness of my wife. But I did not compromise.

I lost my friends. But I did not yield. I must be a pretty good fellow.

And pride, pride crept into the heart of Job. And I have sinned, said Job. I have sinned, said Micah, in Micah 7, verse 9, as he looked at his people and saw a reflection of himself in his people, as he saw the wickedness in the lives of his people and realized that they were but reflections of his own life.

I have sinned, said Micah. I have sinned, said Judas. As he held thirty pieces of silver in his hand, realizing he had sold the Savior for thirty pieces of silver, but more than that he had sold his own soul for thirty paltry pieces of silver, Judas stands there holding that little handful of money for which he had gotten for selling the Son of God and betraying the Son of God.

And Judas all of a sudden throws the money on the ground and hangs himself. But before he does, Judas says, I have sinned, I have sinned, and that I have betrayed innocent blood. I have sinned, said Achan, in Joshua 7, verse 20, as he held the money in the Babylonian garment that he had taken in Jericho, in the city of Cursed, from which nothing was to be taken by God's people.

When the people of God came toward the city of Jericho, God said, Don't take a thing. It's an accursed city. Don't take a thing.

And Achan saw about a hundred and eighty dollars. He saw a nice garment, a nice coat for his wife. An Achan city won't matter to take a little money and a little garment.

You recall the awful story, how that Achan took the money and took the garment and hid it in his tent. The battle of Ai was lost, and Joshua called the people together and said, Who's sin? They cast lots, and the lot fell toward Achan. Achan was brought out before the entire camp, his wife beside him and his children beside him.

You see, God is for capital punishment, and Achan was stoned to death, and his wife was stoned to death, and his children were stoned to death, commissioned by God to be stoned. Achan said, I have sinned. I have sinned, said David.

I have sinned, said Achan. I have sinned, said Job. I have sinned, said Micah.

I have sinned, said Judas. I have sinned, said the prodigal son in Luke 15, 18 and Luke 15, 21, as he returned home from the far country. Having spent all, he began to be unwanted.

He faint would have filled his belly with the husk the swine did eat. All of a sudden he came to himself, and he said, How many of my father's servants are in better condition than I, and they have food to spare? I will arise and go to my father. He arose and came back to the father and fell on his face, and the first three words he said, I have sinned.

I have sinned, he said in verse 18. I have sinned, he said in verse 21. I have sinned, said Job.

I have sinned, said Micah. I have sinned, said Pharaoh. I have sinned, said Balaam.

I have sinned, said Saul. I have sinned, said David. I have sinned, said Shimei.

I have sinned, said Judas. I have sinned, said the prodigal son. I have sinned.

Ten people in the Bible said, I have sinned. Ah, and the word of God says, if a person means that, he looketh upon men. And if any say, I have sinned.

It doesn't say if any little sinner said it. If any say, but you say, preacher, I am an alcoholic. If any say, I have sinned and perverted that which was right.

And he profited me not. He will deliver his soul from going into the pit. And his life shall see the light.

But you say, preacher, I have killed a man. If any man say, I have sinned. God says, I will forgive him.

But you say, preacher, I am a wicked man of adultery and sensuality and perversion. I have sinned. I have sinned, preacher.

God said, if any man say, I have sinned. But you say, priest, you don't know what I have done. A man walked down this aisle a few weeks ago.

He looked at me and he said, preacher, God won't forgive me. I said, come now, 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. He said, preacher, you don't understand. These hands took a man's neck and choked him to death.

I saw him die. I killed a man. And I said, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. He said, you don't understand. You don't understand.

He said, these hands have reached around the neck of a little innocent girl, 13 years of age. And I forced her to lie down. And I raped that little 13-year-old girl.

He said, these hands choked that little girl almost to death. God wouldn't forgive me. Come now, let us reason together, I said, 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 any man say, I have sinned.

Not if any good man, not if any non-murderer, not if any non-drunkard. If any man say, I have sinned. It doesn't matter what you've done.

If you say, I have sinned, and mean it, God will forgive. If any man, if any man who's in deep sin, if any man who's killed someone, if any man who's been a wicked drunkard, if any man who's been a guilty of treason, if any man who's been a communist, if any man who's been a pervert, if any man who's been a homosexual, if any man will say, I have sinned. Tonight your justice near to God is an admission of your sins.

I will deliver him from the pit, says God, if he says, I have sinned. Note who said, I have sinned. Notice who said it.

David. Oh, you mean righteous people are supposed to say, I have sinned. Oh yes.

David, the man after God's own heart. The sweet psalmist of Israel. The sweet harpist of Israel.

The greatest king that ever sat on the throne in Jerusalem. David said, I have sinned. If the great king David, a man after God's own heart, acquiesced to say, I have sinned, don't you think Dr. Robert Billings ought to say, I have sinned, and Mr. Ron Perkey ought to say, I have sinned, and Mr. C.W. Fisk ought to say, I have sinned, and Dr. Jack Hiles ought to say, I have sinned? Absolutely so.

Who said, I have sinned? David, a man after God's own heart. Who said, I have sinned? Saul, the first king of Israel, chosen by God from everybody who lived in Israel to be the king. The greatest man in all... But young people, you be still while I'm preaching.

Saul, chosen by God as the greatest man in all of Israel. I have sinned, said Saul. The king of the Jews, I have sinned.

At one time the greatest man in all the land, I have sinned. Who said, I have sinned? Job. Job, best Christian in all the world.

Greatest Christian on the face of the earth. One of whom God was proud. One about whom God said to Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? There is none like unto him.

He is a perfect, mature, and upright man. He hates evil. He hates sin.

Job, who reared his children for God. Job, who stood up for God. Job, who one day came home from work and they said that all ten of your children have been killed.

Can you feature it? Can you feature it? I talked to a little lady one day who told me that all four of her children had been killed in a terrible, tragic explosion at a school. But Job came home one day to find that all of his children... Young folks back in the back, you sit still while I'm preaching. And I'm not kidding.

You turn your head around and look at me, fella. Let me make an announcement here tonight, as I've made before many times. You do what you want to.

You bring in this church fifty hippies if you want to. But I don't care what you do. You're going to behave when you come to First Baptist Church of Hammond.

You're going to do it. Now you just are. I've said it before and I'll say it again.

Nobody's going to read a manifesto from this pulpit unless he's got more soldiers than we have. We're going to have proper behavior. We're going to have respect.

We're going to have attention. We're going to have it. Job was the best Christian in all the world.

His children all killed at the same time. And Job could have said, God's not good to me. But Job said, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.

See Him as He sat in the air, sheep of the city dumb. See Him as He scrapes His body with the potter, the piece of metal scraping the corruption that's rolling down off His body. See Him as He hears His wife say, why don't you just curse God and die.

See Him as His friends come and say, yeah, you're getting paid for your sin. See Him as He loses everything that's holy. See Him as His riches flee, His camel, His sheep, His donkeys, His oxen, everything taken.

And Job said, I know that my Redeemer lives. Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. That's the kind of fellows that said, I've sinned in the Bible.

Who said, I've sinned? Micah, the one who looked down through heaven's telescope and saw the future. The one who 500 years before there was ever a Bethlehem's manger, looked down and saw the manger. And the Christ child being born in Bethlehem and said, the baby shall come in Bethlehem of Judah.

Micah, the one such a good Christian that God let him write a book in the Bible and let him see the birth of the Christ child. Hundreds of years before it happened, Micah said, I have sinned. Who said, I have sinned in the Bible? Balaam.

Balaam was the greatest preacher of his generation. We sell him short sometimes because he left the will of God. But though Balaam left the will of God, he preached the truth in Moab.

He was the greatest prophet of his generation. And yet Balaam came to the place where he said, I have sinned. Let me ask you a question, ladies and gentlemen.

Do you think it may be that Balaam was a great man because he could say, I have sinned? Do you think it may be that one of the reasons for David's greatness was his willingness to say, I have sinned? Do you think one reason why Saul became a great man was that Saul could say, I have sinned? Do you think one of the reasons why Job was a perfect and upright man was that he was willing to say, I have sinned? Let me say, my dear friend, you will never in this world be all God wants you to be or do all God wants you to do. For you have learned to quit talking about others and talk about yourself. There is nothing so little.

There is nothing so wicked. There is nothing so vile. There is nothing so unchristlike.

There is nothing so satanic. There is nothing so unscriptural. There is nothing so hurtful.

There is nothing so deadly. As for God's people to talk about each other, away with that kind of garbage in this church and in Christian circles. What kind of Christianity is it that picks at somebody else and talks about somebody else and speaks unkindly about somebody else? Let us hear the words of Admiral Dewey whose men were fighting each other on the board ship and Admiral Dewey said, Hold it men, those are our enemies pointing toward the Dutch fleet.

Would God we could stop to realize as long as liquor runs like a river in this area we don't have time to criticize each other. Would God we had enough intelligence and spirituality to realize as long as dope is in every school in this area we don't have time to fight each other. As long as the dirty communists are trying to destroy our nation.

As long as the hippie crowd is trying to destroy our freedoms and our capitalistic society we don't have time to fight each other. It is time we stood shoulder to shoulder and said for the grace of God we are not going to tattle and talk and criticize and be unkind and hate each other and not speak to fellow Christians. In God's dear name learn to say I have sinned not she has sinned.

Learn to say I have sinned not he has sinned. Learn to say I have sinned not they have sinned. Learn to say I have sinned not you have sinned.

There is a thing a church of Jesus Christ needs and a thing a Christian needs to come to a place in his life where he quits talking about somebody else and falls on his face and says with Job I have sinned. And says with David I have sinned. And says with Micah I have sinned.

And says with the prodigal son I have sinned. And says with Saul I have sinned. And says with Balaam I have sinned.

I go to church. I go to church too. I go across the country preaching and when I preach I hear other preachers preach.

And I kneel at the altar like you do. I never ask you to do a thing I won't do myself. I kneel like you do.

I have wept on altars all across this country. Oh my old heart gets so busy trying to raise money and counsel with people and build a Sunday school and meet an airplane schedule and take care of all the

business of a church the size of this. And my heart grows cold sometimes not because I don't love the Lord.

Not because I don't believe the Bible. Not because I don't pray. But I just get so materialistic.

Oh time and time again across this country when I've heard a man of God preach I always try to listen with a listening ear and a listening heart. And I've gone to the altar and I've fallen on my face and I've said oh God I have sinned. Oh God I have sinned.

Don't ever get too high to do that. May I say to the administration of the college and high school and grade schools learn to say I have sinned. May I say to professors in college learn to say I have sinned.

May I say to teachers in high school and grade school learn to say I have sinned. May I say to men whose signature can sway big business deals learn to say I have sinned. May I say to a hundred deacons on our board learn to say I have sinned.

May I say to the pastor of this church learn to say I have sinned. May I say to the choir learn to say I have sinned. Oh if Job the best Christian in the world said I have sinned.

If David the best king that ever sat on the throne of Israel learned to say I have sinned. If Micah who saw with heaven's telescope the coming of the Christ child hundreds of years before he came learned to say I have sinned. If Saul the king of Israel chosen by God as the first king learned to say I have sinned.

How much more should Jack Hiles learn to say I have sinned. I have sinned. One night I was in California.

Dr. Billings you recall those days you used to come to my office and say preacher we need to build a million dollar building. And I said doc I don't think we can get it with \$300,000 remember that. And Dr. Billings would say of course he didn't have to raise the money he could have a lot of faith.

He could say preacher I think we're going to need a building that costs a million dollars. And I said now doc trim that down take \$300,000. And one night I was in California.

And I'd been reading Jeremiah chapter 32 verse 17. Oh Lord God the Bible says that stretched out thine arm and made the heavens and the earth and there's nothing too hard for thee. And I got up beside a freeway and I walked up and down the freeway side to side of the freeway.

And I said oh God don't you have a million dollars. Don't you have a million dollars. And I prayed and the Lord pricked my heart of unbelief.

And I opened the Bible to every verse in the Bible where I could find there's nothing impossible with God. Over there when, I laugh because to me it's always funny. When the angel came to Sarah and the Lord came to Sarah and Sarah was 90 years old.

And the Lord said you better start knitting sweetheart. And Sarah said what. And the Lord said in about nine months you're going to go to the St. Margaret's maternity ward.

And Sarah said ha ha ha ha. And they called her laughter because she laughed. And that's not the funniest part about it.

When Abraham came home Sarah said I got news for you sweetie face. That's all in the Hebrew you won't find that in English now. That's in the Hebrew.

I got news for you Abraham said what is it? Said your hearing aid broken. No I got news for you. He said what did you lose your glass eye? You heard about the fellow you know that got married.

And they went back home after the deal. And the wife took off her wig put it in the drawer of the chest of drawers. And then she took out her glass eye and put it in the drawer.

Took out her false teeth and put it in the drawer. Unscrewed a wooden leg and put it in the drawer. Fellow stood there with his hands on his hips.

And she said what's the matter sweetheart? He said I'm trying to figure out whether to sleep in the bed or in the drawer. I don't know which one. And so Sarah said the sweetie face guess what? And he said what is it? Did you lose your eye? Are you hearing aid? What is it? She said daddy.

What are you talking about? She said we're going to have a baby. And Sarah laughed and Abraham laughed and the doctor laughed. And everybody laughed.

And the Lord came to Sarah. And the Lord said there's nothing too hard for God. And I read about that.

I read about it when the angel came to Mary in the gospel of Luke. And told her that she was going to give birth. Thou shall bring forth a son.

Thou shall call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins. And Mary said but how can it be? And the Lord said with God all things are possible.

Learn that student in college. There's nothing too hard for God. So I walked up and down beside the expressway.

And I fell on my face in some weeds. And I said dear God. I spent most of my life trying to tell preachers you can do anything in the world.

And here I am. Don't think you've got a million dollars. And I said I've sinned.

I've done wrong. I'm sorry. I want you to forgive me.

Oh I ask God to keep my heart tender toward my own sins. Oh may I always be willing to kneel and say I've sinned. May I never be so proud that I can say yeah those come forward to the altar but not me.

I don't need that. There's not a person in this room tonight. I don't care how many degrees you have or how big a preacher you are or how long you've been saved or how many Bible classes you've taught or how important you are in this church.

There's not a person in this room tonight including this speaker that ought not to come to God regularly and say oh my God I've sinned. I've sinned. I've sinned.

Notice what caused the admission of their sins. Notice why they said I've sinned. In the case of David it was preaching.

Preaching. Boy I like Nathan. They asked Nathan to speak at the prayer breakfast, the president's prayer breakfast.

He preached on a little ewee lamb. You knew your Bible you'd know it's you lamb. I heard a preacher one time preach a whole sermon.

Now in East Texas we had some cokers or preachers of which I was one of. And one preacher preached one time on the lackey 310. And one said, one of my deacons got up in Texas and said, he said, I want to know I love all the palms but the 23rd palm is my favorite.

One preacher in East Texas was preaching on Psalm 104. He didn't know much Bible. He'd just been called, just started school.

And he looked over to Psalm 104 and it was in the Roman numeral CIV. And he said open your Bibles to the pislum sieve. I want to preach on the pislum sieve.

Old Red Shaw preached a sermon on the Philippines 419. One preacher preached on the little ewee lamb. Nathan stood before the king at the prayer breakfast and he ruined the whole meeting.

David had him to come to speak for him, to tell him, speak on the religious tradition of our great land. But little Nathan stood up and said, did you hear at one time, let him tell you a story. One time there was a fellow who had a whole flock of sheep.

He had a neighbor who just had one little ewe lamb. And he went and came down to sacrifice. He got his neighbor's one little lamb.

He had a whole flock. David said, who is it? That will wake you up for a while, kid. Who is it? And Nathan pointed his finger at David and said, darn it, the man.

Preaching. Say what you want to say, ladies and gentlemen. Say what you want to say.

But there's nothing in this world will ever take the place of convicting of sin of people's hearts like preaching will. I'm in old fashioned preaching. We have not in, I've been preaching here 13 years.

I've been preaching 27 years. This October we have never in 27 years ever taken away the pulpit on a Sunday morning or a Sunday night or a Wednesday night to have anything take the place of preaching. Never, never, never, never.

Preaching. Herschel Ford said preaching is teaching with a tear in the eye. Again he said it's pouring back to people in a flood what they send up to you in a vapor.

Preaching. Preaching. What is it that causes men to say I have sinned? Preaching.

Preaching. May it never be said, never be true that there goes forth from this pulpit as long as there's a First Baptist Church in Hammond. Preaching.

What else causes people to admit they have sinned? The dregs of sin. The dregs of sin. The prodigal son got in a hog pen and eating his own, putting his own stomach, the husk that the hogs were eating.

He tasted the last taste of sin. And ladies and gentlemen, listen to me. Sin has beautiful lights at the front door, but the back door is a dark, lonely place.

Sin has a mighty pretty front, but sin always has an ugly back door. The first day in sin is the nicest day you'd ever spend, so enjoy it. You'll never spend a day that nice again.

Every day in sin is worse than the day before, but every day with Jesus is better than the day before. The worst day you'd ever spend for Christ is the first day because they get better all the time. The best day you'd ever spend in sin is the first day because it gets worse all the time.

The lights get darker and they get dimmer and they get lower and sin tastes worse and worse all the time. A man sat in my office this last week, looked at me across the desk and said, Sir, I am a homosexual. His lips began to quiver and he said, But I don't want to be.

I don't want to be. And I talked with him a while. He said, Would you help me? Would you help me? I don't want to be.

I don't want to be. Would you help me? And I said, I'll meet with you. I'll talk to you.

I'll do all I can. But here's what he said. He said, You don't enjoy it much after a while.

He said, It's fun at first. The appetite is made. But he said, It doesn't satisfy like it used to.

And he said, It gets worse all the time. Hear him, sinner. It gets worse all the time.

Hear him, wicked man. It gets worse all the time. Hear him.

A dolphanic. It gets worse all the time. Hear him, drunkard.

It gets worse all the time. Hear the Christian people. It gets better all the time.

Every day is better. The dregs of sin. What causes admission to say I have sinned? The dregs of sin.

When Judas Iscariot tasted, felt that little thirty piece of silver. It's an amazing thing how pretty that silver looked when he got it. It's an amazing thing.

He saw thirty pieces of silver and he thought, Boy, what could I do with that money? I want it. He got those thirty pieces of silver in his own hands. It's amazing, ladies and gentlemen, how much fun it looks to be before you do it.

And how empty it is once you get it. I have sinned. Why? He went to the dregs of sin.

What else? The righteousness of God's people causes folks to say I have sinned. When Saul saw the righteousness of David, he said, I have sinned. When Shimei saw the righteousness of David, he said, I have sinned.

And then the presence of God causes folks to say I have sinned. When Balaam saw the presence of God, he said, I have sinned. Now what are the sins of these fellows? The sin of hurting God's people.

Saul and Pharaoh and Shimei committed that. Let me stop and say this again. I don't know why any of us should want to hurt the rest of us.

There's a famous preacher in this country. A famous preacher. One of the most famous.

Criticized me and our work and a few other churches. He didn't mean to. He's for us.

He didn't mean to hurt us. He just spoke carelessly to someone. Just trying to boost himself just a little bit.

It was not a real unkind statement. I wrote him a letter and I said, my dear brother, I'm not writing in defense of myself. But I'm writing in defense of thousands of young preachers who look to both of us as leaders.

And I'm begging you for the sake of those young men in our country. Let's present a solid front. And that famous preacher, the big man that he is, wrote back and he said, I have sinned.

I have sinned. I did wrong. I know it.

I knew it when I did it. He said, forgive me. And I'll ask others to forgive me.

I know the best preachers in America. I know the pastors of the largest churches in America. There's not a big shot among them.

There's not a proud, cocky one among them. Just a group of men who are sinners who have learned to say, I've done wrong. I've done wrong.

I've done wrong. Oh, you've heard me tell about that night, that day when Linda who sang in the Ebon Aires a while ago, was about to bleed to death. Out at Dyer Mercy Hospital her tonsils were taken out and they couldn't stop the bleeding.

And the nurse picked her little bloody body up and ran her down the hall and said, doctor, doctor, doctor. And I went in the room alone and I said, oh, God, what is it? What is it? What is it? And I saw the face of a man to whom I wouldn't speak. And I said, I'll make it right.

I'll make it right. A few months later God gave me the chance to make it right as I met him at an altar of a church and looked at him and said, sir, I have sinned. I have sinned.

What sin? The sin of criticizing God's people. What are the sins? Leaving the will of God. What are the sins they commit? Saul committed disobedience.

Job committed pride. David committed a sensual life. Adultery and murder.

Prodigal son committed a wasted life. Saul and Judas and Achan stole from God. And they said, I have sinned.

I have sinned because I have robbed God. I have sinned because I have not tithed. I have sinned because I have taken something that was a curse.

I have sinned because I wanted money for myself. I have sinned because I didn't give God what's his. I have sinned because I have pledged I didn't keep the pledge.

I have sinned because I have a sensual life. I have sinned because I left the will of God. I have sinned because I was stubborn and rebellious.

I have sinned because I criticized and hurt the people of God. I have sinned because I have pride. Dr. Billings is right.

There are 67 sins all to confess. 167. 1,067.

10,067. That's one reason why I never defend myself. When folks criticize me because I'm afraid too often, it's right.

Oh, when Shimei and Thurman this morning, when little Shimei came and cursed and swore at David, threw dust in his face. And David's servant said, let me chop his head off with a sword. Let me pierce his gizzard with a sword.

David said, don't touch him. He's probably a messenger from the Lord sent to buffet me. I was over in East Chicago, Indiana.

It's been about 11, 12 years ago now. Knocked on the door. The lady came to the door.

I will forget it. Stuck her big, had a big nose. I mean, it wasn't a nose.

It was a bill. And she stuck that beak through the, she had a chain on the door, you know, and just stuck her beak through the, all I could see was a big kind of a funnel with two holes sticking out. And I said, I'm Pastor Heil from First Baptist Church of Hammond.

She said, yes, I know who you are. I couldn't see her mouth. I could just see her nostrils contracting.

I know who you are. And she said these words exactly, I'll never forget it. She said, I was in your church last Sunday.

I said, yes, that's why I came by. She said, I just got to say one, three things to you. And I said, what is it? She said, your pianist played too fast.

And your singer sang too fast. And you preached too fast. And I couldn't get out of that place fast enough.

And she said, besides, if all I've heard about you is true, you ain't much anyhow. My first impression was to take two ice picks, one for each eyeball, let her have it. I couldn't see her eyeballs and ice picks don't fit in nostrils too well.

So I said, lady, they're all true. She said, what? I said, they're all true. I'm not much.

And I said, really, I mean it. I'm just a sinner. And I said, lady, I hope you'll pray for me.

I want to do better. I hate me worse than you do. I said, if you would just let me come in, I'd like to tell you some of my sins and things I do that are wrong.

And I want you to pray with me that I do better. She opened the door all the way then. Big old tears began to roll down her cheeks.

She said, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. In 15 minutes, she was a child of God, born of the Spirit of God, came to our church the next Sunday, was baptized. You know why? Because the preacher said, I have sinned.

I have sinned. I have sinned, said Job. I have sinned, said David.

I have sinned, said Saul. I have sinned, said the prodigal son. I have sinned, said Balaam.

I have sinned. I have sinned. Now what to do? Confess it.

1 John 1.9, if you confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins. I was just thinking. And Becky was a little tight.

She got chocolate brownies. Remember the brownies, you know what I'm talking about? But before they were cooked to me, there never has been a cookie that tastes as good after it's cooked as it does when it's in the pan. When I used to scrape the pan, my sister and I used to fight over who scraped the pan.

And I always wondered why Mama cooked that stuff and made it hard. The goo was a lot better than the cookie was, you know. Little Becky got in the goo for the brownies.

And she's just a little tight. She's now married and the preacher's wife. She got a handful of that stuff and tried to hit her mouth and a little of it did.

You know how you do? You try to push at them. And the fingerprint's all over. Chocolate all over her face.

She got another handful. She plastered her, ripped down her wrist, down her neck. She had it in her hair, nose, eyes.

I walked in and I said, Becky! Have you been in the cookies? She said, That's where most of us are, isn't it? Huh? Pride shows all over our faces. And we say, We don't bring a sinner to Christ every six months. Have you sinned? Haven't prayed five minutes today.

Have you sinned? Haven't read a chapter in the Bible today. Have you sinned? The first step to forgiveness is confession. Admit it! Face up to it! As they used to say in Texas, Face up! Face it! Admit it! Confess it! A preacher that won't confess his sins is not worth standing behind a pulpit.

Don't you recall when Isaiah saw the Lord hide holy lifted up, and his train filled the temple? He saw the seraphim. Don't you recall? Isaiah saw the Lord. He said, I have seen the Lord.

What did he say? He said, Woe is me! Why? For I am undone. For I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Woe is me.

I have sinned. After you confess it, ask forgiveness. After you ask forgiveness, forsake it! I was thinking tonight.

Thirteen years ago, this morning, I looked in your faces for the first time as your pastor. I thought about it tonight, while Pam Stukesberry was up here. I noticed Pam.

I recall one of the first things I noticed when I came to Hamilton was, a cute little old girl with a big smile, about five years old, had one of the sweetest smiles I ever saw. One of the cutest little girls I ever saw. It's a shame she had to grow up and look like she does now.

Had one of the cutest smiles I ever saw. Little Pam Stukesberry used to come to me and jump up in my arms. Now I'd never be able to hold her.

She jumped in my arms, kissed me on the cheek. I was thinking about Pam Wolbert. I came to Hamilton.

I walked in the pulpit on the first Sunday. Little Pam Wolbert was about four years old. Just a cute little four-year-old gal.

Others of these kids sang tonight. The beginners. And nursery.

And one or two of them, if you'll forgive me for saying it, were still in diapers. You know what I've tried to do from this pulpit? I've tried to get you to be the kind of people who are willing to fall at an old-fashioned altar and say, For I'm as convinced as I am that I'm standing behind this desk that the Sunday morning services are only caused because of the Sunday night services. We've pruned the orchard and kept the orchard in shape on Sunday night.

And the fruit has just fallen off the trees on Sunday morning. I have sinned. I have sinned.

Are you lost tonight? That's the first step to being saved. I have sinned. That's why people want to join the church and go to heaven.

They want to bypass saying, I have sinned. That's why the folks teach the doctrine of baptism saves you. They want to bypass, I have sinned.

That's why they teach that the cup is holy and the communion cup is the way to heaven. They don't want to say, I have sinned. That's why they say a priest can forgive you.

They don't want to look to God and say, I have sinned. That's why they say good works will save you. They don't want to say, I have sinned.

But nobody will walk through golden streets or walk through gates of pearls or sip the heavenly drink that God gives us nor see the tree of life nor fish out of the river of life nor face Jesus in heaven forever unless he's come face to face with his sins. I have sinned. I have sinned.

Tonight if you're here and you don't know that you're saved, face your sin. Face your sin. Tis your sin.

You say, well, Brother Hiles, I just don't like that loud preaching. No, that's not your trouble. The thing keeps you from God's your sins.

Well, I just don't believe in the way you do it here, first Baptists. I know. Because you don't want your sins exposed.

It's your sin that keeps you from God. It's your sin that keeps you from God. It's your sin that will send your soul to hell.

It's your sin that keeps you from falling on your face and getting saved. Tonight if you're not saved, admit it that you're a sinner. Admit that two thousand years ago the Son of God became sin, took upon himself your sin and mine, stood before the God of all eternity with your sins charged to his record and my sins charged to his record and had God pronounce judgment on his own dear Son and say, Guilty! Guilty for the sins of Jim Vineyard.

Guilty for the sins of Jack Hiles. Guilty for the sins of John Colston. Guilty for the sins of Ray Broadway.

Jesus, my Son, is guilty for the sins of Dr. Billings. My Son is guilty for the sins of C.W. Fisk and the sins of Ron Perkey. The sins of all the world.

God turned his back on his Son and there in the midnight of eternity the Son of God said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? I'll tell you why God forsook him. He was paying for my sins and yours. Tonight if you'll admit you're a sinner and admit that Jesus paid the penalty for your sins and rely on that payment as your hope for heaven, you can have every sin forgiven.

Your name written in heaven and you can have a home in heaven eternal in disguise forever. Would you trust him tonight? Tonight if you're a Christian and you've sinned, say it. Have you been critical? Have you hurt Christians like Shimei? Have you been proud like Job? Have you been sensual like David? Have you been wicked like the prodigal son? Have you left the will of God like Balaam? Have you rebelled and not fully obeyed God like Saul? Have you stolen from God like Achan? Say, I have sinned.

For he looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not, he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. And he is that light. I have, have you? Let us pray together, please.

It's hard to say it, isn't it? It's awkward, isn't it? You know why? We haven't practiced it much. You know why it's easy to say he has sinned? Because we've practiced it so much. You know why it's easy to say you have sinned? Because we've practiced it too much.

You know why it's easy to say they have sinned? Because we've practiced it too much. But the infrequency of I have sinned causes us to be awkward when we have to say it. Every head is bowed, please.

Every eye is closed. Members alike. I have sinned, said Achan.

I have sinned, said David. I have sinned, said Saul. I have sinned, said Job.

I have sinned, said Pharaoh. I have sinned, said Balaam. I have sinned, said the prodigal son.

I have sinned, said Micah. I have sinned. I have sinned.

I wonder how many Christians would say tonight, Brother Hiles, the Lord has spoken to me about a sin in my life tonight. The Lord has spoken to me about a sin in my life tonight. I have sinned.

Pray for me, Brother Hiles. Would you lift your hand, please? All over the building. God bless you.

Our Heavenly Father, tonight, may we admit it, confess it, ask forgiveness, and forsake it. Bless these dear ones who have said tonight,

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