

Moral Holiness (29.7.1985)

by Peter Maiden

God gives us the gift of sex to develop our character and conform us into the image of his son, and we must win the battle of the mind to win the battle of life.

Duration: 1:16:19

Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-15

Topics: "Holiness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Nathan coming to talk to David. Nathan tells David a story about a rich man who takes a poor man's only lamb to feed a traveler. David reacts with anger and says the man should die, showing the hardening effect of unconfessed sin. The speaker also talks about the importance of addressing sexual longing and the need for open communication about the facts of life. The sermon emphasizes the idea of personal responsibility for sin and the unfailing love of God, as well as the concept of sex as a gift that should be used according to its intended purpose.

Transcript

If you have a Bible, I'd like you to turn please to 2 Samuel chapter 11. Tonight we want to talk together about holiness. In Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 14 we're told to make every effort to be holy.

So if we're going to be holy Christians, it's going to take energy, it's going to take discipline and effort from us. It's a very important matter because Hebrews goes on to say that without holiness, no one will see the Lord. And Jesus said himself, blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

And that's what we want to talk about tonight. We want to talk about holiness, about purity of heart. But what exactly is holiness? Well in practice it means being in one mind with God.

Because God's mind is described and it's revealed in the Bible. So to be holy is to live in accordance with the word of God. We want to look tonight at one particular aspect of holiness.

It's only one part of a very large subject. We want to speak about moral or sexual holiness. How can I be sexually pure in this permissive society in which we all live? Now normally we have a good number of books on the book table about this subject.

But sadly the books are running rather low. I think many people in June and July bought books on this subject. But there's a few left which I want to really recommend to you tonight.

First of all on the whole subject of holiness, this book, *The Way of Holiness* by Kenneth Pryor. There's a great discussion in the church today about how people actually in practice become holy. Is it by faith or is it by effort or is it by both? Do you become holy just by abiding in Christ or is there action required? This book is one of the most balanced treatments of that subject I've ever read.

I want to recommend a book to you by John White. It's not this particular book though. We've run out of the book I'm recommending.

But I feel so strongly about it that I urge you as soon as you get near a Christian bookshop to try and purchase a copy. It's called *Eros or Eros Defile*. And it's all about sexual guilt in the life of a Christian.

One of the most honest books I've come across on this subject. By the way, all the books by John White are incredible value. Raise your hand if you have read a John White book.

That's very encouraging but there's a long way to go. There's a number of John White's books on the bookshelf there. *People in Prayer* is one of them.

They've got a really uncomfortable book if you don't want to sleep tonight. Then get John White's book *The Golden Cow*. It's an awful, terrible book.

It's all about how to live in a materialistic society. If you just read it for 20 minutes each night before you go to sleep, it will guarantee sleeplessness. Many of you have read Roy Hessian's book *The Calvary Road*.

This is not *The Calvary Road*. This is another of his books, *Forgotten Factors*. And it's subtitled *An Aid to Deeper Repentance of the Forgotten Factors of Sexual Misbehavior*.

Quite a number of us in this tent tonight, I'm sure, are struggling with sexual problems maybe from our past. How do we deal with that as Christians? This book will be a help to you. I haven't read this one, but it's in German as well, *Living with Unfulfilled Desire*.

I've read others by Trobisch on the subject, and that's why I can confidently recommend this book. Chapter 1, *We Love Each Other Terrifically*. Chapter 2, *A Girlfriend Has To Be Kissed*.

Chapter 3, *How Can I Find A Real Boyfriend?* Chapter 4, *My Next Girlfriend Will Become My Wife*. What do you think we should do, Klaus? I think my wife wrote it. I see.

Chapter 5 is actually called, *Klaus and I Stayed Overnight in the Same Room*. My wife did write it. Any of the books by Joyce Huggett on the bookshelf or in your bookshop at home are very, very good value indeed.

And if any of you are moving towards marriage, then a tremendous book on that subject is Paul Marston's book, *The Biblical Family*. It even deals with subjects which are very relevant before marriage. So have a look at all those books tonight.

I want us to turn again to 2 Samuel 11, I hope you're still there. And we'll read the first 5 verses. And then verses 14 and 15.

I'll read this first passage in English, and then I'll ask Klaus to read a passage in Matthew's Gospel a little later from 1 Samuel 11. In German. In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army.

They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Reba. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace.

From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite? Then David sent messengers to get her.

She came to him and he slept with her. She had purified herself from her uncleanness. Then she went back home.

The woman conceived and sent word to David saying, I am pregnant. Then verse 14. In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.

In it he wrote, put Uriah, that's the husband of Bathsheba, in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so that he will be struck down and die. Then of course to Matthew's Gospel chapter 5. We'll ask Klaus to read in German from verse 27 to verse 30.

Throughout the whole Genesis account of creation you come across these words, God saw that it was good. But then just once in chapter 2 and verse 18 you read these words, the Lord saw that it was not good. Now just what wasn't so good? Well, it wasn't good, said God, for man to be alone.

God did not intend that you or I should live isolated lives. Now some people try and live that kind of life. They lock themselves away in a monastery.

But you and I were not equipped by God to walk alone. I'm often saddened when I listen to Paul Simon's famous song. The song, I am a rock.

Do you remember the words, I have no need of friendship. Friendship causes pain and so on. There is Paul Simon trying to be something that God never intended any of us ever to be.

Whether we recognize it or not, deep within every one of us, there is an intense longing for a deep relationship with at least one other human being. Now why is that longing there? It's there because God put it there. Love comes from God, says the Apostle John.

So the need for love in my life and in your life is not only normal, it's spiritual, it's from God. Now a part of this powerful longing within each of us is our sexual longing. There was a certain man who had a 13 year old son.

And he was very, very nervous about talking to him about the facts of life. But his wife was constantly urging him. So one happy morning he said to his boy, he said, I want you to come to my office today.

And the boy knocked the office door some hours later. Father's heart missed a beat. But he opened the door and he ushered his son in.

I'd like you to sit down over there, son. You comfortable? Like a coffee? You're sure you're comfortable? Now son, he said, I want to talk to you this morning about the facts of life, sex and things like that. You know, where babies come from? And the boy said, yes, dad, what do you want to know? See, there's been a big, big change in our world in the past 20 or 30 years.

Sex used to be the subject that no one ever mentioned in public. Now on television, in your newspaper and in conversation, it's one of the most common subjects of our age. But why did sex used to be the unmentionable subject? There was a common feeling in the world that sex was dirty.

And you know, this is still a problem that some Christians have today. I'm very interested in the way you're sitting so upright and quiet tonight. I'm by no means a great charismatic orator.

The subject has made some of you sit up very straight back tonight. There are many Christians who still have a totally unbiblical view of sex. Let's try a little exercise together.

Don't get any ideas. I just want you to ask yourself a question. Ask yourself this question, was Jesus tempted sexually? Ask that question to many Christians and they're outraged that I would even think that Jesus would be tempted sexually.

But if Jesus wasn't tempted sexually, what are you saying? You're saying that Christ had every human emotion, but he didn't have the greatest emotion of all. He was hungry, he was tired, he was thirsty, but he was never ever touched by sexual desire. That's what you're saying.

And if your theology of the Incarnation is to be at all biblical, you just can't accept that. Jesus was a real man. He was tempted in every way, just as we have been.

So you can praise God tonight, that as Jesus sits at the Father's right hand and listens to us in this tent, he knows all about what we're discussing. It's amazing how difficult some Christians find it to get rid of this wrong view of sex. Joyce Huggett wrote another book, it's called Just Good Friends.

And she tells us in the book about how she wrote it. She actually wrote it on the island of Cyprus. One night she was having a bath.

And there was an earthquake on the island. She didn't realize of course immediately there was an earthquake, she didn't know what was going on. Not surprisingly she jumped out of the bath.

And went dashing through into the living room. And as she ran out of the bathroom, she says, this thought came into my mind. Jesus has come, this is the second coming.

Then she writes this. That initial sense of excitement evaporated. I looked down at my naked body.

And I thought, oh no, he can't come now. Choose this minute. I'm naked and I'm still wet.

She says in the book that she learned a very important lesson that day. She'd been telling Christians for many years and writing books about what the Bible says about sex. She'd been telling thousands of Christians to accept their sexuality, to accept their body.

But she writes, I had not after all these years reached that degree of maturity myself. So what does the Bible actually say about these things? First of all the Bible says clearly that your sexual desire and mine is God given. God made your body and that includes the sexual parts of your body.

So the physical pleasures of sex are designed by God. They are his gift to you and me. Just as life is a gift, salvation is a gift, the gifts of the spirit are gifts, so sex is a gift.

A number of years ago I was given a tremendous gift. It was a motor car absolutely free. With that car I was also given an instruction manual.

Now I'm not a technical person so I didn't read very much. But I did realize you had to put petrol in the petrol tank and oil in other parts. Now I could have picked up that manual and I could have said no, no, no, no, I am not going to put petrol in the petrol tank.

I am going to be free. I am going to put oil in the petrol tank. The manufacturer of this car is deliberately trying to restrict my freedom.

It's so typical of the 20th century. We can't do anything that we want, can we? We are always instructed to do everything. But was the manufacturer really trying to restrict my freedom? Now his intention was to help me to get the very best out of that car.

When God gave you and me the gift of life and the gift of sex, he gave us an instruction manual. And God did not, did not give you and I this instruction manual to restrict our freedom. He gave us this manual so that you and I might get the most out of this life, might enjoy it to the full.

Now no one can read their Bibles without seeing that God restricts sex to be within marriage. Why did God do that? Did he restrict sex because sex is bad? No he didn't. He restricted sex because it's so good that it can only be fulfilled within that deep relationship of marriage.

All through the Bible you've got that great Hebrew verb, to know, to know. Now that verb which speaks of knowing God, for example, is exactly the same word which refers to sexual intercourse. To describe knowing God and to describe sexual intercourse in the Hebrew they use exactly the same word.

Why is that? Because to really know God requires the total commitment of your life. And to really enjoy sex involves total commitment to your partner. Jeanne Andrews in one of her books writes the following.

Sleeping with a man is never enough. We want to really belong to that man. We women hunger for permanence.

That's why the Bible restricts sex to marriage. Because it's the only way that it can be truly enjoyed. Now if you want to live by God's manual you've got to be very careful at this point.

Don't be like that couple intending to be married who say... What difference does a piece of paper make? We're in love, we're committed to each other, we're going to be married, why wait for a piece of paper? We're in love, we're committed to each other, we're going to be married, why wait for a piece of paper? Why can't we enjoy sex now? Well what makes a person married? Is it merely being in love with another person? Is it having sexual relations with another person, is that what constitutes marriage? But what does God say about that? After all marriage was God's idea wasn't it, so he should know. And if you think about it the first marriage that God performed was the absolutely ideal marriage. Adam didn't have too many women to choose from did he? And Eve didn't constantly have to accept the advice of her mother-in-law or her mother did she? It was an absolutely ideal marriage, God's marriage.

So what has he got to say about marriage? Under God and under almost every normal society in the world marriage involves a public declaration. No two people are married unless at least a third person knows about it. So the declaration involves the couple and the public.

The couple declare that their love is mutual and exclusive. For a Christian couple of course they do that not only in the hearing of the public but in the sight of God. And the public look on and they seal this marriage by their presence.

They see that these two people are no longer available to anyone else. That's God's order for marriage. And he says, because I love you, and because I want the maximum for your life, I command that sexual relationships are limited to be within such a relationship.

Now I'd be very, very surprised if there's anyone in this tent who doesn't agree with me so far. If you don't you can come and surprise me afterwards. But let's just summarize.

God made you and me with a desire for relationship. Part of this desire is our sexual desire. That's a gift to us from God, it's not dirty, it's a holy gift.

But because God wants us to really live, he says I want you to use that gift within the marriage bond. But because God wants us to really live, he says I want you to use that gift within the marriage bond. Then you say, what's all of this about? I mean it's simple.

Why have a special meeting about it? Well the problem is that all over the world and all over the church, Satan has warped this God-given desire for relationship. Well the problem is that all over the world and all over the church, Satan has warped this God-given desire for relationship. And because of this, some of us are finding it very, very hard to cope with our sexual desire.

And because of this, some of us are finding it very hard to cope with our sexual desire. When Adam sinned, one of the first things which was affected by his sin was his view of his sexuality. When Adam sinned, one of the first things which was affected by his sin was his view of his sexuality.

His whole idea of himself as a man was immediately affected. His whole idea of himself as a man was immediately affected. He felt shame.

He felt strange because he was naked. He felt strange because he was naked. He immediately had a desire to cover himself.

Sin had warped his view of his sexuality. He immediately had a desire to cover himself. Sin had warped his view of his sexuality.

So rather than praising God for our sexual gift, some of us in this tent tonight are just wishing that we didn't constantly have to struggle to cope with it. So rather than praising God for our sexual gift, some of us in this tent tonight are just wishing that we didn't constantly have to struggle to cope with it. So let's look at the question, why do we have to struggle with such problems? So let's look at the question, why do we have to struggle with such problems? Maybe some of you are struggling with masturbation.

Maybe some of you are struggling with masturbation. And you sometimes cry out, Lord, why? Why do I have this torment? Others of you in this tent are struggling because you know that God did give you a longing for a relationship, but you are a very lonely individual. So why are we allowed to have such problems? Why can't we just get saved and go straight to heaven? No problem.

But like every gift, the gift of sexuality is given to you and I to develop our character. I've got three children and I give them gifts to develop their character. I couldn't wait for the birthday when I could give my son a

cricket bat.

Now some of you won't know what that is, but I was seeking to develop my son along a very important English line of character. And every one of us in this tent is either going to be given by God the gift of marriage or the gift of singleness. Both of those are gifts from God.

And God gives you either of those gifts to conform you into the image of his son. That's his intention. Now God has chosen to give me the gift of marriage.

And I can tell you that marriage has changed my character. Not much, someone says. You look at me for a moment, if it's not too painful.

You see, I have a blue shirt. You see that? And this is almost, well it's near blue, it's related to blue, yes? These are blue trousers. And I even have blue trainers.

I got the socks wrong. Before I was married, it could have been, you know, pink, yellow, brown. I had no interest in colour coordination.

Somebody even photographing my colour coordination. You know, marriage has changed me in other ways. Before I was married, I got dressed or undressed in a certain fashion.

I won't give you a visual aid at this point, but this is how I used to take my trousers off. I would loosen my trousers and just let them drop to the floor. And then one steps out of the trousers and into bed, right? You leave the trousers exactly in that position.

It's very efficient because the next morning you step right back into them. So you should see me now. I still can't get used to it, but laying them flat on the bed, trying to get a crease.

Marriage changes you. Every gift that the loving God gives to you, He gives to you for this purpose of moulding your character in some way. But I want to assure you tonight that when God gives you this gift of sex, He gives you the power to cope with it.

So how do we cope with the gift of sex, which can appear to be not a gift, but an overwhelming problem in our lives? Well, according to Jesus, the whole key is your heart or your mind. In Matthew 5 you see that Jesus shows us the problem is more than just adultery. Jesus says, you've heard that it was said, do not commit adultery, but I tell you anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery.

Already committed adultery in his heart. And the whole emphasis of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is on the heart or the mind. If you and I can win the battle of the mind, we're well on our way to winning the battle of life.

But if you lose at this point of the mind, then everything is very soon lost. Now God gives us a very clear instruction if we want to win the battle for the mind. It's in Colossians 3 and verse 2. Set or fix your mind not on earthly things.

Fix your mind on the things that are above. And then in verse 5, put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature. Sexual immorality, impurity, lust and so on, these things have to be put to death.

And then listen to Philippians 4 and verse 8. Whatever is true and noble and right and pure and so on, Paul says, I want you to think about those things. Now those are commands of God, aren't they? Which

you can either obey or disobey. God says, I want you to fix your mind on these things.

I want you to think on these things. And if those are commands of God, here's a promise of God. You will keep him in perfect peace, writes Isaiah.

Whose mind is stayed or fixed on you. So we must ask ourselves tonight, what is destroying our purity of heart, our purity of mind? Maybe it's certain films. Maybe it's certain magazines.

Maybe it's certain relationships in your life. It's destroying your purity of heart. Well God says, if you're serious about these things, it's quite simple.

You've got to control what enters your mind. Don't feed your fantasies if you want purity of heart. You have to put certain things to death.

That's a very ruthless idea, isn't it? You have to put those things to death, which destroy your purity of heart. A. W. Tose says this, you will be as holy as you want to be. That phrase has been a tremendous help to me over the years.

How much do you want purity of heart? Control what enters your mind. Let's go one step further. We shouldn't only be seeking victory for ourselves at this point.

You should be seeking, I should be seeking to help brothers and sisters in this area. An unwise sister can do enormous harm to a brother in this area. And the same is true of us men.

We can destroy women in this area if we're unwise. And we give this message a high profile at our OM conferences, because the OM team situations can be especially difficult in this area. You may find yourself on a mixed team in this coming month, and you may be living comparatively very, very close together.

And though God has delivered us over the years from many problems in this area, we have to be honest and say that we have had some. Generally men and women are aroused sexually by different things. The man is often aroused, you can't generalize, but he is often aroused by what he sees.

So you've got David on a rooftop, he's in his mid-forties and he's on holiday. And his eyes alight on a beautiful woman bathing and zonk, that's all he needs. He is aroused simply by what he sees.

Now women generally are aroused much more by relationships than by what they see. You will find that many women are aroused by touch. And when they find someone taking a special individual interest in them, that's very arousing for many women.

So if we really want purity of heart, if we really want it, we can help one another, can't we? Your sisters can be careful how you dress. I'm always afraid of extremes in this area. And if you all come with ankle-length skirts tomorrow, I will be devastated.

Of course, God doesn't want us to deny our femininity, but he does want us to be careful in what we wear. And brothers, we need to be careful as well. I'm worried about extremes again, even if I say this.

You've all heard of the infamous OM social policy. Some of you will hear about it tomorrow. I think it's a very important policy.

I think it's saved us from great difficulty in the last 27 years. But I have seen it taken to awful extremes. You visit a team where the team members are going extreme on this issue.

You're standing in a room with a sister. And a brother comes in. He immediately looks at you.

What are you doing there? And of course, he doesn't want to look at the sister. So he keeps his head firm in front. Walks right out of the door on the other end.

We don't want to be extreme. But brothers, we do want to be careful. We want to be thoughtful about these matters.

Now let me just mention a few further areas, specific areas, where I find Christians who face difficulty. I find a lot of Christians struggling with masturbation. Is it sin or is it not? Can that ever be victory? Dr. Weatherhead was once asked, is masturbation sin or is it not sin? And this was his reply.

It depends whether the picture on the screen in your mind at that time could be shown to the Lord Jesus without shame. Fantasizing is often the problem, isn't it, when it comes to masturbation? But it's not the only problem. For many, it becomes obsession.

It can become compulsive, almost addictive in our lives. And when it becomes like that, it becomes a bondage which holds you in its grip. And no Christian can ever be content with that.

It's an absolute denial of the joy and of the freedom which Jesus died and rose again to obtain for us. A third problem with masturbation is that it can often be love turned in on itself. Remember, sexual desire is part of a desire for relationship.

Masturbation is often a cry of sheer loneliness. But is there victory? Yes, there is. I, like 99% of all men and 75% of all women, according to the Kinsey Report, have struggled in this area.

And I've personally been through the obsession struggle with masturbation. But gradually, before marriage, the Lord gave more and more and more victory in my life. And really, you know, it's like that, isn't it, in our struggle against all sin.

Put your hand up if you expect immediate deliverance from all pride tonight, forevermore. Not one of us would even expect that. We don't expect immediate, eternal deliverance from laziness, do we? But for some reason, we feel that God must deliver us.

Now, forever, from this one particular sin. What am I saying about masturbation? I'm saying, get it in perspective. Don't ever minimize it.

But don't ever sensationalize it. And when the devil tells you, you're no good, if you can't get immediate victory from this problem, that's a lie from hell. Now, another area I just want to mention is homosexuality.

Some in this tent tonight are struggling in this area. I say that because of the commonly known percentages of people, and Christian people are still people, you know, who struggle in this area. It's a much higher percentage than Christians like to imagine.

Now, the Bible has some very, very strong things to say about homosexual practice. 1 Corinthians 6, verse 9. Don't you know, the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived, neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexual offenders will inherit

the kingdom of God. I came on O.M. for the first time when I was 17 years of age.

And after a summer on O.M., I went into full-time Christian work in England. And for 18 months, I worked in a caravan, traveling around Britain in a caravan with another evangelist. The first day I was working with this senior evangelist, just before we were to go to bed in this caravan, he said, Peter, I just want to talk to you for a minute.

He said, I want you to know that I'm homosexual. I haven't practiced homosexuality for 30 years. But I do have homosexual desires.

I seek to put them to death in my life every day. But if you're careful, Peter, in your behavior, you can be a tremendous help to me. I have the highest, highest regard for that man.

He was living in victory. And I believe that his victories brought tremendous glory to God. About six months ago, I went to a church, which I often go to, to preach.

I went for a series of Sundays. And I noticed that a young man, who was a very, very gifted preacher, wasn't present for about three of the Sundays that I was there. So I asked one of the elders about his absence.

He said, no, Eric hasn't been with us for about four months. So I went to visit him. I said, what's wrong, Eric? Why haven't you been these last three Sundays while I've been? He said, well, seeing you ask so honestly, I'll tell you.

He said, I've never told anyone else. I've been struggling with this on my own for 18 years. But he said, I'm going to struggle no longer.

I no longer believe in a loving God. If God is loving, why has he allowed me to be like that? He said, I'm homosexual. And the next opportunity I have to practice, I'll tell you, I'm going to take it.

And the next time I have to practice, I'll tell you, I'm going to take it. What a tragedy. Know one of the reasons for that tragedy? He'd never shared that problem for 18 years with one other Christian.

Maybe he didn't have confidence in Christians who would understand. We feel in Operation Mobilization that it's important that people with this problem share it with at least one other Christian leader. Not because we want to gossip, if you share it with one of us leaders, that's as far as it will go.

But we want to pray for you and we want not to put you in places of intense gossip. difficulty and temptation. There are a number of Christian men and women in this movement, some of them have been with us for many years, known to me, who struggle in this area, and they're going on for God and doing tremendous work in His service.

I've taken this message at the last two summer conferences, and while everybody else leaves at the end of this message in about 15 minutes or so, we ask people who want help just to stay, and we ask all the OM leaders to come and be available to people who want help. In June I talked to a young woman, never shared it with anybody. I spoke last month to a man in his thirties who was molested as a child by his parents, and had never ever shared it with anybody.

I've spoken with a number over the years who just before they came to this conference were in bed with a woman just maybe a day or two days before they came to the conference. I've spoken with others who are

suffering from the tragedy for them of a broken relationship, maybe just a few days before they came on OM. What we will want to say to people like that is there is tremendous hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Some months ago now I was preaching up in Glasgow. It was a Saturday night, and after the meeting we went to a very, very large wealthy home. When the occupier opened the door it was obvious the thieves had been, and the house was ransacked.

I stood back a little astonished obviously, and I watched this man. Do you know what he did? He headed straight for his office. He came back with his insurance policy.

He just went all through the house, and he was asking himself as he went, is it covered? Are the candlesticks covered? Is that work of art covered by the policy? You know the biblical word atonement is a word we use in insurance. And the wonderful thing about redemption is that it covers everything. There is not one sin which is not atoned for by the blood of Jesus Christ.

There is not one perversion, there is not one obsession which is not covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. And there is not one perversion or obsession which the power of that blood cannot break tonight. We have just seen in 1 Corinthians 6 Paul describing the male prostitutes, the homosexual offenders.

In 1 Corinthians 6 we see that. And he says to those Corinthians, and such were some of you, you were male prostitutes, you were homosexual offenders. But you are washed, you are justified.

We would plead with you not to go from this conference at the end of this week limping in defeat into this summer campaign. You are going to be preaching a gospel of forgiveness. Are you enjoying God's forgiveness yourself? You are going to be telling people that Jesus satisfies.

Is he satisfying you? Can the gospel really be true for you and me if we don't get some of these things dealt with in our lives? Let's just close by looking finally at David. He is this great man of God and Dr. Luke tells us he is a man after God's heart. And yet we find him in 2 Corinthians 11 in total abysmal failure.

But in 2 Samuel 11 we find him in adultery and murder. How did it happen? Well it began long before 2 Samuel 11. Way back in Deuteronomy chapter 17 God gave instructions for those who were to become kings over Israel.

He said I don't want you kings to acquire a great number of horses when you win battles. I don't want you to take the silver and the gold. I want you to dedicate it to my temple.

And I don't want you kings to take a large number of wives or your hearts will be led astray. David was tremendously faithful when it came to the horses. He always dedicated the silver and gold to God's temple.

But David had a weak point in his life. And he did not guard that weak point. One of the first things I teach my children is about the fire.

I put a guard around the fire. I teach them not to touch the fire. We are often far less sensible with our own lives aren't we? We don't put a guard around those weak areas, those chinks in our spiritual armour.

Because of his lack of wisdom David fell. Now what did he do? Absolutely nothing. He lived as though he had never sinned.

You read through chapter 11 you will find David still going to the temple. Still making sacrifices to God. This went on for nine months.

Living in unforgiven sin as though nothing had ever happened. David was sitting in his tent, you have been singing, you have been raising your hands but you know there is unforgiven sin in your life. How did David feel during those nine months? It wasn't until after nine months the baby was born that Nathan came.

So how did he feel during those nine months? You listen to him, he tells us, Psalm 51. I know my transgressions, my sin is always before me. He cries out to God, let me hear joy and gladness, the bones you have crushed, let them rejoice.

You know unconfessed sin did something drastic in David's life. It began to alter David's whole character. David's whole character was altered.

Do you remember what happened when Nathan came to talk to David? He told him a little story about a rich man who had a lot of sheep. The poor man just had one little lamb. One day a traveller came to the rich man and he wanted food.

The rich man went out and he took the one lamb of the poor man and he gave him that as a meal. Listen to David's reaction to that story. David burned with anger against the man.

He said the man who did that must die. If ever there is an overreaction anywhere in your Bible that's it. The Lord of God made clear conditions for that situation.

The law said the man should give the poor man he had stolen from fourfold. He should have given him four sheep but David said no, death. That's what unconfessed sin does to a man.

The Lord of God made clear what unconfessed sin was in our lives. It hardens us. It hardens our hearts.

It makes us hard people. You notice how some people are very, very hard when others sin. Often the reason when people are really hard about other people's sin is there is unconfessed sin in their own life.

Nine months of tragedy for David. But then David's prophet Nathan came. He brought the word of God.

You know it's the word of God which often leads to Psalm 51. When Nathan came what did David do? The first thing he did not do, he did not cover up his sin any longer. He says verse 3, I know my transgressions.

My sin is always before me. You see how he takes personal responsibility for his sin. He says it's my sin, my transgression.

It's much easier isn't it to blame the devil for your sin than to take personal responsibility for it. Have you noticed how much easier it is to say I need to be delivered from the spirit of pride than it is to say I need to repent of my pride. You notice how easy? I hope you are willing to take personal responsibility for your sin tonight.

I hope you are willing to take personal responsibility for your sin tonight. But not only did David not cover up, he did not give up either. See how he speaks about the mercy, the unfailing love of God in verse 1. That idea in verse 1 is the idea of covenant, God's covenant in love with David.

Isn't it a fantastic thing for you and I to know that whatever we are like tonight, whatever the past has been like, God has entered into a covenant to love us. It's unbreakable, it's unfailing, it's eternal. It's unbreakable, it's unfailing, it's eternal.

You may feel filthy and wicked, but God loves you. Then notice how David trusted in the completeness of God's forgiveness. See how he uses the word cleansing and the word washing thoroughly.

He speaks about being whiter than snow. He speaks about being whiter than snow. He speaks about God blotting out his transgressions.

You know David went away from his meeting with Nathan feeling absolutely clean. I just want to say to you, you can walk out of this tent tonight, whatever the past or the present is like, you can walk out of this tent feeling whiter than snow. One John chapter, one John 1 tells us the blood of Jesus Christ goes on cleansing us.

Now as in the previous two conferences, I believe that God wants to deal with some issues in our lives tonight. And I just want to ask you to carefully follow these instructions. I'm going to close in prayer in a minute's time.

And the majority of you no doubt will just want to leave. Maybe some of you will want to go and think, have a walk or something. The majority of you will want to leave.

I just ask you tonight to leave without talking. Don't talk until you're well away from the tent. Because God wants to put some things right in people's lives tonight.

Some of you will want to just deal with these things alone with God. You just stay exactly where you are for as long as you like and pray and read the scriptures and get these things right. But if you want to talk to an OM leader, as everybody else leaves, I just want you to walk and occupy the front seats here.

And OM leaders, male and female, are available to come and sit beside you and just chat with you for as long or as short as you like. Please, don't go limping into this summer. Go in victory, whiter than snow.

Let's pray together. Father, we want to thank you for Calvary. We want to thank you for the blood of Jesus Christ.

We want to thank you that that sacrifice was sufficient for all our sins. And we want to thank you that it's sufficient to break the chains of sin in our lives. Thank you that we have a risen saviour and through his risen power we can be free.

Lord, speak to us. We want to thank you. Give us the grace of repentance.

Give us the faith, we pray, to trust in you. In Jesus' name, Amen. Now please just leave as quietly as you can.

And those who want help, come forward.

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