

# (I Want an Answer) Will I Ever Be Found Out?

by Stephen Olford

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*The sermon emphasizes the certainty of sin's consequences and the necessity of repentance through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 55:38

**Scripture:** Numbers 32:23, Job 40:4, Matthew 4:18-19, Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23

**Topics:** "Moral Conscience", "Sinful Nature"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a man who becomes drunk and neglects his faithful dog. One night, an intruder enters the man's garage, but the man is too intoxicated to respond. In a fit of anger, the man throws a chair at his dog, killing it. The next morning, the man realizes that his money and belongings have been stolen. The preacher uses this story to highlight the lack of shame and moral conscience in today's youth, emphasizing the importance of a strong conscience and the consequences of sin. The sermon is based on verses from Romans chapter 3, which describe the sinful nature of humanity and the need for God's judgment.

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## Transcript

May I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and welcome you once again to our service here and to those of you who are listening over radio land. I want us to look together at some verses from Romans chapter 3. Romans chapter 3 has a background to a lot of what I'm going to say tonight. Romans 3 and it's verse 10.

The Apostle Paul is here penning the picture of the world as it appears before God. He has divided the world up into three divisions and now he groups them as one in the presence of God, shut up to God's judgment, guilty before him. And here is the verdict as he quotes from the Old Testament, verse 10.

There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth. There is none that seeketh after God.

They're all gone out of the way. They are together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Their throat is an open sepulcher. With their tongue they have used deceit. The poison of ass is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Now we know that what thing soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.

For there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We stop on that semicolon and return to verse 23 for emphasis. For all have sinned and are coming short, and are coming short of the glory of God.

May God write that solemn passage upon our hearts. And then I want us just to turn for one moment to a verse in Numbers 32-23. And I'm using that as my text, and bringing it into the context of this passage in Romans.

Be sure your sin will find you out. Be sure your sin will find you out. Now if God may enable me throughout this week, starting tonight and right through until Friday, I want to answer a question that I've been asked in my time in the course of my evangelistic work.

And under the general theme of, I want an answer, I want an answer, I'm going to try to bring the positive, the positive answer to the questions that you have seen already in the press. Tonight, will I ever be found out? Will I ever be found out? And I have upon me a tremendous burden, and I, you know, ask Christian people over the radio and here before me to pray right the way through my preaching tonight. Because I haven't a message which is popular, nor a message which is easy to deliver.

But nevertheless, a message which I must preach, if I'm not going to shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Will I ever be found out? Will I ever be found out? I want to speak tonight on God's infallible detective, or the infallible detective. Be sure your sin will find you out.

Now it's amazing how many people imagine that they can avoid, resist, or camouflage this infallible detective. It's amazing how many religious people hide behind the religion. How many churchgoing people hide behind their churchgoing.

How many so-called moral people hide behind their morality. How many educated people hide behind their education, and explain away such things as sin as being just a relic of the past, or some form of behaviorism which one day will be eliminated and eradicated by the process of evolution in which we find ourselves now. How many people try to rationalize away this, this factor of life, this issue of life, which cannot be evaded or escaped in the last analysis, the Bible calls sin.

But my friends, tonight I want to demonstrate from the scriptures, and from experience, and from history, how sin is bound to find every one of you out. Every one of you out. For be sure your sin will find you out.

And I want you to consider, first of all, how sin finds men and women out by its inward experience. By its inward experience. Be sure your sin will find you out.

Now the Apostle Paul, in verse 23 of Romans 3, says this, For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And that can be well translated, for all have consciously sinned. For all have consciously sinned.

Not only have we sinned in Adam, our first parent, but we consciously sin today. For all have consciously sinned and come short of the glory of God. As I look back into history, as I look into my own heart, I can find eloquent testimony to the voice of inward experience.

And I want to just call one of those voices from the Old Testament, a few from the New, and a few from history, to give evidence here tonight that sin finds men and women out by inward experience. Will you go into the early chapters of the Old Testament for a moment, and into the early periods of history? And I want you to see a man called Job. He's been called upon to suffer in a very amazing way.

He's been called to visualize God in all his glory. And he's been called to face up to the fact of his own sinfulness before God. And I want you to hear the word that groans from his soul as he realizes just what he is before the Holy God.

Listen to him. Behold, he says, behold, behold, I am vile. Behold, I am vile.

When Charles Wesley wrote his hymn, *Jesu, Lover of My Soul*, he used that word, vile and full of sin I am. Thou art full of truth and grace. It's been interesting to see how that hymn has gone through various changes, particularly when it's suffered at the hands of modernists and men who don't hold the true condition of man in his depravity before God.

But listen to the voice of Job. Behold, he says, I am vile. I come through the pages of the Old Testament, and I hear another man.

He has seen the glory of God in the temple. In the previous chapters and early chapters of Isaiah, we hear him challenging men and women right, left, and center of him. Six woes have been delivered.

Woe unto you! Woe unto you! Woe unto you! Woe unto you! He's condemning men right, left, and center. But presently he catches a vision of God in his temple. The glory of the Lord has filled the temple, and he quakes as he trembles before the brilliant whiteness of that light that beams from the throne.

And his language has changed. He's no longer calling men, Woe! Woe! Woe! He now looks into his own life, and he cries the cry of a leper. Clapping his hand over his mouth, he cries, Woe is me! For I am undone.

I am a man of unclean lips. It's the cry of a man who's seen himself in the light of the holiness of God. The voice of inward experience.

I come into the New Testament, and I just cite one instance of an individual named Peter. Peter has come to know his Lord in some way, but not in a deep way. And at the memorable occasion, Jesus had been out preaching in his boat, and as the sermon had concluded to reward Peter, he had pushed the boat out to catch some fish to reward his disciple Peter.

Peter, who was doubting whether or not this miracle could ever happen, held the word of the Master, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and immediately a great, great multitude of fishes was encompassed in that net. This miracle revealed to Peter that Jesus was not just the Jesus he knew. There was something more than that.

For one moment, the flash of deity seemed to burst forth from the humanity of Christ, and as they neared that beach, you remember, Peter threw himself prostrate before the Master and cried, Depart from me, for

I am a sinful man. Oh Lord. Suddenly he became aware of his sinfulness, his unbelief, his defilement, his depravity, and he says, Woe, woe is me like Isaiah.

Woe is me like Job. Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man. I go into the epistles, and I'm quoting from the brilliant intellect of the first century.

His name is the Apostle Paul. A tremendous intellect, a man of great learning, a man who graduated from the school of Gamaliel, a man who was a religious zealot, a man who was, as touching the law, he said, blameless. But presently he sees a vision of himself in the glory and whiteness of the throne of God.

He sees his inner depravity and defilement and sinfulness, and I want you to hear a cry that rings from his soul as he dictates that letter to Gaius, that great acropolis of the Christian faith, the Roman epistle. Listen to him. Listen to him.

O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? O wretched man that I am. Paul's discovered that he's a sinner. Paul's discovered that he's depraved.

Paul's discovered that he is full of defilement before the holiness of God. And if that weren't enough, I can go right outside the compass of the Bible, and I can begin to quote from history. Take only the Roman empire and take only the Roman period for a while, and listen first of all to the language of Horace, the Roman poet.

He says, I see and approve what is good, but I follow the worse. There's a perversity within me. There's a dent.

There's a tendency to sin. Listen to Cicero. That great statement, listen to him, nature has given us of knowledge, but we corrupt it by our many immoralities.

I turn from Cicero and I call upon Seneca, the great philosopher, and he says what? He says this, we are all wicked. We are all wicked. What we blame, what we blame in others, each will find in his own bosom.

I come to a philosopher of our own age, who just before his death, some years before his death, two or three years before his death, was so shaken by C.S. Lewis, Professor C.S. Lewis of our own country, that he came to a knowledge of sin and then to a knowledge of the Savior, and he wrote that book. He wrote that book in which he just undid all the harm he had ever done in his philosophical writings. I refer to the late Professor Job.

He says, I've come to a sense of sin. I've come to a sense of sin. No man had rationalized away sin in popular philosophy and psychology like Professor C.E.M. Jode in our generation.

I've read his books. There were some of the books that used to send me right away from the church at one time, as I shared last Monday evening. But he says, now I've come to a sense of sin and I deduce from my many omissions and commissions that I'm a most miserable sinner.

Men and women here tonight, I want to tell you something from my own heart, and I want to tell you it in terms of personal experience. There is a verse in the Old Testament that runs something like this, As faith answereth to faith in the water, so the heart of man to man. As I look into a puddle of water and see there reflected the likeness of my own faith, so as I look into my heart tonight, I see reflected there the likeness of your heart.

And I don't care who you are, where you come from, what your name is, what your upbringing is, what your religion is, what your morality is, what your decent laws of living are. I know this, that if my heart, if my heart is so full of sin, so is yours. For as heart as faith answereth to faith in the water, so the heart of man to man.

And I know that outside of the grace of God and the cleansing of the precious blood and the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit, I am actually and hopelessly undone. I'm a man of sin and defilement and depravity. And what is true of my life is true of every other life bowed in God's presence here this evening.

It's the voice of inward experience. But not only does the voice of inward experience teach us that we sin consciously, it teaches us that we sin continually. For the text says, for all have sinned and are coming short, coming short, continuing to come short of the glory of God.

And I look back into the early chapters of Genesis, and I hear that word that comes down through the centuries as God looked down upon Noah's day, and God saw the wickedness on the earth, and behold, it was very great. And that the imagination of a thought of man's heart was only evil continually. And I want to say, men and women, the reason why I've got this message upon my heart tonight is just this, that sin is going to find you out, and is finding you out.

It isn't because you sin intermittently and spasmodically. It's because you continue to sin. You've sinned today.

You've sinned in words. You've sinned in thought. You've sinned in, listen, you've sinned in action.

You've sinned by your very influence amongst men and women upon whom you're exacting an impact all the time. Man sins consciously. Man sins continually.

But what is most solemn is that man sins culpably. He has for all sinned and comes to know that he is sinning against God, against God, his Creator. Professor M. O. Brunner says the conception of radical evil is that it's radical sin.

That man, when confronted with a law, is not confronted with an impersonal law of good. Man is confronted with the will of his Creator. And every time you sin, my friend, you sin however much you harm other people in your sin as we shall see in a moment, you sin finally, in the last analysis, against God.

And it's David who puts it in these words after his great sin with Bathsheba, "Against thee, against thee, O God, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." And I want to tell you young people, Jer, and I want to tell you older ones, however serious or not serious you consider sin to be tonight, I want to tell you that sin is going to find you out not only because you sin consciously and continually, but because you sin culpably. And tonight, tonight, all sins ever committed have been against God. Every sin you have committed has been a clenched fist in the face of God.

Sin finds men and women out by inward experience. But I want to go deeper, and I want to point out that sin finds men and women out by its irresistible effects. Sin finds men and women out by its irresistible effects.

Be sure your sin will find you out. And I've learned from experience that it's not very difficult to detect the deceitful boy. It's not very difficult to find out, listen, the impure girl, the fallen woman, the drunken man.

Jesus put it this way, whosoever committed sin is the slave of sin. Let me repeat that. Whosoever committed sin is the slave of sin.

And it doesn't matter how much you try to hide it. If you're a sinner, my friend, if you're a sinner tonight, then you're a slave to sin. And all slaves carry marks.

There is the mark of the so-called moralist sinner. There is the mark of the so-called religionist sinner. There is the so-called profligate sinner, and he's got his mark.

C. H. Spurgeon once put it this way, that sin is as great a rebel in satin as it is in rags. And one of the greatest sins that any man can ever commit is the sin which is done in the name of religion. The damning sin is the religious sin so often.

I'll never forget, I'll never forget in all my life hearing parts of the testimony of that great man of God who holds one of the most popular and yet deep pulpits from a spiritual point of view in the city of London. I refer to Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones. Some of you've heard his name from this pulpit again and again this past week.

Some of you've heard his name from the lips of your own pastor here, Dr. Paul Reeves. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones is not a doctor of theology, nor is he a doctor of divinity. He is a doctor of medicine, and his mind was disciplined to read not only medicine but to study especially the heart, and he was a Harley Street heart specialist, which is the very top ranking, top ranking category of doctors in our country.

I understand that in his younger days he attended royalty at Buckingham Palace, and he was set for one of the highest positions, I suppose, in heart troubles and ailments in our land. I don't know just when that man was converted, but I do know this, that as he practiced as a Harley Street specialist in one of the posh studios of Harley Street in our country, a tremendous vision was given to him and a burden as he attended to the nobility and the high society of our great metropolis life. Again and again he put his stethoscope against the chests of men and women who were called the elite of our British life, who were living immoral, sinful, defiled lives of debauchery.

Time and time again he had diagnosed heart trouble and had given the cure and had seen them stand on their feet again, only to see them come back in due course to the same studio to be consulted, to be consulted concerning their heart trouble. Do you know that man, and I can hear him saying it now, came to the conclusion that it was no good to be a heart specialist? He was only mending people's physical hearts to send them back to sin just as badly as they had before. There was only one solution, only one solution to this business of getting people right, and that was to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And he left Harley Street with a tremendous financial screw to go down to a little inconspicuous church in South Wales to begin to preach the gospel, and God so honored him that he's become one of the greatest preachers of our country today. But I can hear him saying, I can hear him saying to young ministers, I can hear him saying, listen men, listen men, preach a radical message. Preach sin until people quake.

Preach sin until they can't sit in their seats. For until people know how big sin goes, they'll never believe that Jesus Christ ever had to go to the cross. We have no conception of what the atonement is until we realize the depths of depravity in the human heart, the irresistible effects of sin in spoiled characters, spoiled characters.

And I'm talking to men and women here who've got wonderful clothes on, who've come out on this lovely, lovely summer night looking so charming and beautiful, that if only I could x-ray your crime sheet, if only I could expose tonight the sins of your life, if only I could give you a revelation by the power of the Holy Ghost of the depravity of your nature, not one of you would sit here a moment longer. You'd be chasing down the street with scorching tears down your faces, crying, crying to the mountains to cover you because of the sinfulness of your life. The irresistible effects are seen not only in spoiled characters and ruined lives, but listen, in seared consciences.

And this is one of the most solemn things I've got to say tonight, seared consciences. The Apostle Paul speaks of consciences that are cauterized as with a hot iron, rendered insensitive, just like a poker, red-hot poker placed upon the flesh, sears the flesh until it becomes insensitive, dead to pain. So men and women become insensitive, insensitive to sin.

And listen, when I talk about sin, if there's no sense of shame in your heart tonight, if I talk about sin tonight and there's no sense of guiltiness in your heart, then God have mercy upon you, young person. God have mercy upon you, older person, because it may be that you have already been cauterized, you've been seared as with a hot iron, and that's why, that's why, that's why you're not alive to the seriousness of the subject with which I'm dealing here now. But I want to tell you, my friends, one thing that concerns me more than anything else amongst young people today is that where twenty-five or fifty years ago there would have been a blush of shame, there would have been a streak of red rising from the throat to the face of young people when certain stories were spoken in public, when certain things were said today, it just shrugged off as if it were the dumb thing with the spirit of, I couldn't care less.

I want to remind you, my friends, what Solomon says in one of his writings, fools, he says, fools make a market sin. And I want to tell you that when the conscience dies, when the conscience is seared, when the conscience is dead, the whole personality is open to the inroads of all manner of evil. Don't ever forget the story of the man who lived with his one dog in a little garret away in the city of London.

He climbed up to his garret night by night, and his dog, faithful dog, would meet him there. But the man took to drink and began to drink away his money and his health and his honor. And one night, the worst for drink, he climbed up into that little garret.

The dog leapt to welcome him, but there was no response from this inebriated man. He flung himself down on a bed and snored away, and at midnight an intruder called. When the intruder opened the door, it wasn't locked.

The dog began to bark and bark and bark, but there was no response from the sleeping man. Presently out of the depths of his inebriated sleep, he arose, and with a temper, with a temper, he picked up a chair and threw it at his dog, striking the dog at a vital point in the head, and the poor beast rolled over dead. Next morning, next morning, bleary-eyed and thick-headed, he climbed out of his bed to see his dead dog, and alongside of his dead dog he saw the open safe of the only money he had in the world, and everything gone.

The dog had barked, had barked, had barked, but he had slain his dog. The conscience in your life has barked and barked and barked, and you've allowed that conscience of yours to be stuck again and again and again with this hot iron until tonight it's insensitive. And the reason why you're not scared, the reason why you're not moved, the reason why you're not concerned about your sin, my friend, is because of your feared conscience.

Once that conscience is dead, once that conscience is dead, even in the name of religion, even with a chorus on your lips, even with the precious blood being mentioned by some of you, all manner of evils can just torment that personality of yours and bring it eventually to doom. God have mercy upon anyone here with a feared conscience. But I want to go a step further, and I want to say this, the irresistible effects of sin are only manifest themselves in spoiled characters and sealed consciences.

But the irresistible effects of sin demonstrate themselves in social context. For the Bible tells me that no man liveth unto himself, listen, no man liveth unto himself. And I said I was talking about a solemn point a moment or two ago.

I don't know that there can be anything more solemn than this. Listen, no man liveth unto himself. No man liveth unto himself.

There isn't a single fellow, man or woman in this audience or over the radio listening to me today who isn't influencing people right, left, and center every time you breathe, every time you live, every time you move amongst us. Whether you want to or not, whether you want to or not, no man liveth unto himself. We are essentially social creatures, and you're either leading men to heaven or you're leading them to hell.

There's no neutrality. There's no neutrality. Big brother leads little brother astray.

Big sister teaches little sister to swear. Older woman tempts younger woman to take her first drink. Older man shows young man how to gamble.

And I want to tell you, my friend, it doesn't matter how you live or how decently you live, there are impulses leading your life which either help men heavenward or hellward. And as I told you last Monday night, one of the things that God brought me to my knees about before I gave myself to the ministry was just this, oh God, oh God, even as a worldly Christian, I've been leading people to hell, to hell. Take me back to my university.

Take me back to my college. And there were five fellows who were headlong for hell that I had to rescue before I came into the ministry. And thank God every one of them was converted.

But I want to tell you this, my friend, there are fellows in your office, in your university, in your college, in your home that you're either leading to heaven or to hell because every single time you live, every time you speak, every time you think, you're influencing other people. You show me your friends and I'll tell you your character. You show me the people with whom you mix and that'll give me an index of your type of life.

And I want to say here tonight, my friend, that social context is one of the irresistible effects of sin because you're making an impact upon society every day you live. Some of you may be playing with sin in the quiet of your life. I want to warn you.

I want to warn you. Listen, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Social context, social context.

Have a habit of showing up. Some men's sins go beforehand to judgment. Other men's sins follow after, says the apostle.

Some men's sins are open, going beforehand to judgment. Other men's sins follow after. He was a young university man at Cambridge.

He was reading medicine. One night, in spite of the warnings of some of his better-thinking pals, he said, I couldn't care less. I'm going to go to town tonight.

I'm painting the town red. I'm going on the spree. I'm going to have a good time tonight and who's going to stop me? And he did, and he did.

The early hours of that morning, he climbed back somehow or other without the proctor of the university or of his particular college knowing anything about it, and he got back into his bed, bleary-eyed and thick-headed. Next day, the lectures didn't go too well, but it was all forgotten. It was the excitement of one night.

Now years have gone by. He has qualified, and he's taken over the practice of his father in London, and he's about to step into faith, for he's done well at medicine, and he's in his consulting room, and in comes a patient, and he begins to examine that patient. But for some reason or other, he just can't see the patient properly.

A curious sort of dimness has come over his eyes. He brushes his eyes again and again, but somehow he can't penetrate this curious haziness that's come over his vision. He excuses himself and goes out and washes his face.

He examines his eyes. There doesn't seem to be anything wrong with them, and back he comes. He has to dismiss his patient.

This persists. Day after day, he decides to go and see a specialist. That young man whose story is true went to see one of our top-ranking specialists in London, and the young doctor sat before him, and this old man studied him, studied him, diagnosed him, examined him, searched him, probed him, and then he bent over him, and he said, young man, I want to ask you a very serious and personal question.

Tell me. Tell me. Tell me.

In your student days, was there ever a night or a day when you sold, when you sold your wild oats? Was there a night or a day in your experience when you said you couldn't care less? You'd do what you wanted to. Who was going to stop you? His face burned. He admitted that he was guilty.

Said the specialist looking down at him, I'm sorry, young man. You're reaping the harvest of that night. You're incurable.

You'll go stone blind. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Be sure your sin will find you out by its inward experience, consciously, continually, culpably, by its irresistible effects, spoiled characters, feared consciences, social contacts.

But if somebody isn't shaken and desperately moved in the presence of God by such teaching from the word of God and proof from history, I want to add just one other thing that makes me quake to even speak of it, but I've got to. Sin will find you out, my friend, either one or another. If it's not by its inward experience and irresistible effects, it'll find you out one day by the inevitable exposure of eternity.

The inevitable exposure of eternity. For God requires that which is past. Be sure your sin will find you out.

You may try to hide it under indifference tonight and carelessness tonight. You may try to hide it under resistance tonight. You may try to hide it under a religious cloak of many years in the Christian faith, so-called.

You may try to hide it in a thousand ways, but be sure your sin will find you out. Be sure of it. Be sure of it more than the fact that you're in this place tonight.

It'll find you out. For the Bible says that there is no thing covered which shall not be revealed. There is no thing hidden which shall not be made known.

There is no creature that shall not be made manifest in his presence, for all things are open and naked unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Be sure your sin will find you out. You say, how's it going to find me out in eternity? I'll tell you in three ways.

It's going to find you out, first of all, by your words. Yes, your words. Your words.

Listen to this. Every idle word that men shall speak, every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof at the day of judgment, for by thy word thou shalt be justified, and by thy word thou shalt be condemned. If I preached that fifty or sixty years ago, some of you would stand up and say, nonsense, nonsense, nonsense.

How can words ever be stored? How can words ever be repeated? How can words ever be recalled? Tonight, however, I can tell you that scientists tell us that the very walls of this church are recording every single sermon I've preached. We don't need tape recorders. One day it'll be possible to bring back off these very walls every single intonation, every inflection of my voice, every word.

But if that weren't convincing enough, what about our tape recorders? What about the way we can record everything that's ever said? I was at a place a little while ago in our own country where a trick was played on myself and the family and a number of others. We were sitting around the table merrily having a meal and speaking away when all of a sudden attention was called to the fact that the radio was on, and we listened because an important announcement was about to be said. And we listened.

The knob was turned, and instead of the British announcer coming over BBC, I heard my own voice. I heard my wife. I heard my child.

I heard everybody at that table say some foolish things, some important things, some completely indifferent things, and there the whole procedure of the whole evening was played back to us, and not one of us knew it. We laughed. We looked at one another.

But I tell you, it stuck home to my heart. Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof at the day of judgment, for by thy word thou shalt be justified. By thy word thou shalt be condemned.

You know, my friend, there is never a word you've ever said that isn't recorded. There is no word that you've ever said, not even an idle word, that isn't recorded in heaven, and one day is going to be played back before you, and you've got to stand or fall to what you've said. Taken in evidence against you.

Not only is there an exposure of our words, but there will be an exposure of our, listen, of our works. For I hear that word coming down through the centuries from the book of the Revelation, and they stood great

and small before that great judgment throne that we were hearing about in song just now, and every man was judged. Every man was judged according to his works.

Every man was judged according to his works. As a tree falls, so it lies. As a man lives, so he dies.

And you know, my friend, as you're living now, you sow a thought, you reap an action. You sow a thought, you reap a word. You sow a word, you reap an action.

You sow an action, you reap a habit. You sow a habit, you reap a character. You sow a character, you reap a destiny.

And your character, your very character, is determined by the way you're living every day. And that's going to go right through with you into eternity. You think that you're going to escape from this life somehow or other, but you're not.

You're going to carry it with you. I know the story of a hunter in the jungles of Central Africa who roused one of the great big African snakes, and he saw that it was hopeless to try and fight it, and he began to escape. And he plunged through the jungles where the snake was right after him.

He thought, how can I escape? I can't climb a tree. It can climb. I must run.

I must run. And he made for the river. This was his only hope.

He came to the brink of the river. He plunged into the depths. He said, now I'm safe, now I'm safe.

As he emerged on the other side of the bank to his utter horror and consternation, the snake was behind him. The snake had gone clean through the river. It was after him.

There are men and women in this place tonight who say, all right, I'll live as I like, and then I'm going to dive into the river of death, and it's all forgotten. It's all forgotten. Listen, my friend, on resurrection shore, that life of yours of sin will follow you right to the great white throne of God, and your day's work of today, your day's work will come before the God who tonight's your Savior, but then will be your judge.

And if that weren't enough, there's something else that's going to be exposed and revealed in that day, not only your words, not only your works, but your omissions to that which is lacking in your life, your wants. For the word that comes to me down through the word of God in the Old Testament tonight is this, that in that day men will be weighed in the balances and found wanting, found wanting. Jesus looked into the face of a young man and said, one thing thou lacketh, because he lacked a relationship to God, and his name was wanting in the Lamb's book of life.

For whosoever's name was not written in the Lamb's book of life was cast into the lake of fire. And my friend tonight, there's not only your words that are going to be exposed, not only your works, but your wants, the things that are lacking in your life to make you right with God. And I would be in the shoes of any man, woman, and child in the sound of my voice throughout radio land or in this place tonight who hasn't got right with God.

I've proved, I've proved to you tonight so simply and perhaps so inadequately that the sin, the sin which you commit day by day is going to find you out. Be sure your sin will find you out. How? By its inward experience.

How? By its irresistible effects. How? By its inevitable exposure. And I want to ask you, my friend, will you get right with God if touching that matter of sin in your life? Will you get right with God tonight? Will you come to Him in brokenness and repentance? Will you come to Him for cleansing? Will you come to Him for forgiveness and pardon? My Bible tells me this, and I want you to listen very carefully to these words.

He that covereth his sin shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall find mercy. Blessed be the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. But, oh, I beg of you, I beg of you as you come in confession tonight, don't bring the confession of Pharaoh.

Pharaoh cried, I have sinned, I have sinned, I have sinned. But it was a confession of fear, a confession of fear. And when he had made that confession, he waited until the judgments of God upon his land were halted, and then he hardened his heart again.

He hardened his heart, and he returned to the vomit as the dog, and to the wallowing in the mud as the fowl. And he went on living as if nothing had ever happened. A woman in Richmond, London, my own church, came to me in a frightened state of mind, an unconverted woman, a little while ago.

She said, Mr. Olson, what shall I do, what shall I do? I said, what is it, woman? She said, in a wicked fit of temper, because I'd been drinking, I beat my little boy. And he ran upstairs, and he threw himself out of a top window, and he's just dropped and cracked his head, and he's dead. And I got his blood upon my hands.

I tried to calm that woman. I tried to lead her to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. I tried to show her that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses from all sin.

But you know, as soon as that little life had been buried, as soon as that little life had been forgotten, that woman, who was just frightened because of what she'd done, returned to her same drink, returned to her same life. And tonight she's in a worse state, as far as I know, than when I met her. She wouldn't repent.

She wouldn't repent. She merely said, I have sinned, but it was a cry of fear. It wasn't a cry of repentance.

Don't you cry like Judas. Judas is scared. He said, I have sinned, I have sinned, but it was a cry of remorse.

When he had flung the money down in the high priest's court, he went and hanged himself and went to hell. It was too late. He never, never knew salvation.

He went to his own place, the Bible says. He was the son of perdition. Don't you cry like Saul.

Don't you cry like Saul. I have sinned. I have sinned.

But his heart wasn't broken, and God had to reject him categorically, and he never became king, and he never came into the blessing of God. Oh, if you cry tonight, I have sinned, will you use the language of the prodigal son? He said, I have sinned. He has said, I have sinned.

But it wasn't a cry of fear to be regretted. It wasn't a cry of remorse to be lamented. It was a cry of real brokenness, and repentance was demonstrated in that he retraced his steps right to the very one against whom he had sinned, and he said, Father, Father, Father, I have sinned before thee and before God.

I have sinned before God and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son. And because of the brokenness of his spirit, because of the depth of his repentance and confession, he received the embrace of love.

He received the kiss of forgiveness. I ask you here tonight, my friend, listen to me. Will you come to him? Will you come to him in brokenness? Will you cry from the depths of your soul, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

God, be merciful to me, a sinner. And will you believe in that wonderful verse, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin? And will you look away to Calvary, and will you say, Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, believing that thou hast died for me, believing thou hast shed thy precious blood for me, in humility, in repentance, in brokenness, I come, I am coming, Lord, coming now to me. Wash me, cleanse me in the blood that flowed from Calvary.

Will you pray that? Will you make that your response to the challenge of tonight's message? Will you bow lowly at the cross in penitence and true humility? Will you receive the cleansing that the precious blood of Christ affords? Will you enter into forgiveness tonight, into peace tonight, into justification by faith tonight? Will you do so right now, whether over radio land or right here in this audience as we bow together in prayer? Will you bow your head right now in prayer? Will you mean business with God? Will you let the Holy Spirit fall upon you? Will you get right with God and do it now? Will you get right with God? He tells you how. O come to Christ, who shed his blood, and at the cross get right with God.

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