

Clean Slate

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Communion / Purification; Atonement; Forgiveness / Psalm 51:7–12

In this life, we all make mistakes. Thankfully God has created a provision that we may have a clean slate and start over. In this sermon, we are going to be learning about God's atonement and miraculous offering of a clean slate.

A young boy in Korea was a houseboy for some American soldiers. Sometimes they thought it was funny to play harmless jokes on him. They would tease him. They would tie his shoe strings together. They would lock him out of the house.

Eventually they realized that their practical jokes were not viewed as funny by the boy so they apologized. He said, “That’s okay, I will stop spitting in your soup now.”

Burden of Sin

- In this life,
 - sooner or later,
 - need for cleansing.
- God allowed sin
 - to be heavy

- so we can see
- we need help.

[Genesis 3:8-10](#) (ESV)

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees

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of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”

- Adam and Eve
 - don't fully know
 - what sin is.
- But they feel it...
- They know
 - they crossed boundary
 - against God.

- They know
 - they are naked...

Separation From God

Isaiah 59:2 ESV

but your iniquities have made a separation

between you and your God,

and your sins have hidden his face from you

so that he does not hear.

- Sin causes separation.
- Natural law of Universe
 - gravity
 - thermodynamics
 - entropy

Gravity

- every particle attracts every other particle in the universe with a force that is

proportional to the product of their masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between their centers.

- A layman might say
 - “What goes up must come down.”
 - “We are constantly be pulled toward the center of the earth.”
- It’s a law.
- Not like speeding.
 - You can’t break it,
 - even if you wanted to.
- Try to jump off building.
 - learn the hard way...
- Natural Law

Sin Separates

- Separates everyone
 - us from God
 - us from each other
- Reason?
 - see there is problem.

Guilt/Shame

- David speaks of
 - weight of guilt

Psalm 32:3-4 ESV

For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away

through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;

my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. *Selah*

- In David's sin,

- many other didn't know
 - But God did.
- His sin
 - was eating him up.
- We need guilt
 - it shows us
 - there's a problem.
 - need a savior.

Years ago, visiting one of the London prisons, I heard a statement made by one of the prisoners that impressed me very much. He said to me, 'You do not know what a relief it is to be found out.' We discussed the matter at some length because I wanted to understand and I wanted to see what he meant. What I discovered was that for years he had been aware that being a professional thief was not exactly what he had aimed at. He had a sense of honesty, of loyalty, of integrity, and yet this sense of integrity did not help him overcome his problem, because whenever he made an attempt at changing his life, he felt stuck.

One day he was caught. There was a very very great feeling of shame, of distress, and then a sense of liberation: 'Now I have no need to hide who I am, or rather, who I was. There is no need to be hypocritical, to be what I am not. I can now become whatever I choose. I can either remain a thief, in which case there are ways in which I can behave well enough in prison to get out of it soon enough to go back to my job, having learnt a great deal from my fellow

| inmates – or else I can choose to change and start anew.

Confession

- [Psalm 32](#), same chapter
 - David talks about
 - being forgiven.

Psalm 32:1–2 ESV

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,

whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,

and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

- He talks about confession.

Psalm 32:5 ESV

I acknowledged my sin to you,

and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”

and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah*

- David’s sin serious
 - Theft
 - Rape
 - Murder
 - Dishonesty
- Seemingly less than
 - God removed Saul.
- David tried to hide
 - but heart troubled.
- After addressed by Nathan
 - Seeks forgiveness.

Psalm 51:1–3 ESV

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

- Listen to his prayer
 - sincere
 - heart searching
- Continuing...

Psalm 51:7-9 ESV

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness;

let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

- My favorite part of prayer
 - verse 10-12

Psalms 51:10-12 ESV

Create in me a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence,

and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

and uphold me with a willing spirit.

- Earnest Confession
 - sincere repentance

Sin Forgiven

- Scripture is replete with

- promises of
 - God's forgiveness

1 John 1:9 ESV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalms 103:12 ESV

as far as the east is from the west,

so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Micah 7:18-19 ESV

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity

and passing over transgression

for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever,

because he delights in steadfast love.

He will again have compassion on us;

he will tread our iniquities underfoot.

You will cast all our sins

into the depths of the sea.

Isaiah 55:7 ESV

let the wicked forsake his way,

and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

- God loves forgiveness.
 - Part of His character.

- He longs to
 - heal
 - forgive
 - cleanse
 - pardon.

- All he asks
 - we come to Him

There was a king who had suffered much from his rebellious subjects. But one day they surrendered their arms, threw themselves at his feet, and begged for mercy. He pardoned them all. One of his friends said to him, “Did you not say that every rebel should die?”

“Yes,” replied the king, “but I see no rebels here.”

- Like this King,
 - our King
 - views us
 - loving children.
- We all need cleansing
 - God offers
 - clean slate
- **Purpose of Communion**
 - **cleansing**
 - **re-baptism**

Forgiving Self

- God wants to forgive.
- Problem is...
 - we don't accept.
- Often,
 - we don't
 - forgive ourselves!

Two little boys had quarreled. But the next morning, Johnny took his cap and headed for Bobby's house again. Surprised, an older member of the family said teasingly, "What! Going to play with him again? I thought you quarreled only last evening and were never going to have anything more to do with each other. Funny memory you have."

Johnny looked a little sheepish, dug his toe into the carpet for a moment, then flashed a satisfied smile as he hurried away. "Oh, we are good forgetters."

- We need to be
 - like these boys.

- If we have repented
 - be a forgetter.
 - God is...

Appeal

- Take time to
 - confess
 - repent
- If done
 - accept and believe
 - you are forgiven.
- Forgive yourself.

If you see a tall fellow ahead of a crowd,
A leader of men, marching fearless and proud,
And you know of a tale whose mere telling aloud
Would cause his proud head in anguish be bowed,

It's a pretty good plan to forget it.

If you know of a skeleton hidden away
In a closet, and guarded, and kept from the day
In the dark, whose showing, whose sudden display
Would cause grief and sorrow and pain and dismay,
It's a pretty good plan to forget it.

If you know of a tale that will darken the joy
Of a man or woman, a girl or a boy,
That will wipe out a smile or the least bit annoy
A fellow, or cause any gladness to cloy,
It's a pretty good plan to forget it!