

How to Clean Up Our Lives

Psalm 119:9-11

INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about asking her students, “Cleanliness is next to what?,” Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations, #10,202,
- B. It is so difficult to live a clean life.
 - 1. It’s difficult to turn the TV when an improper program comes on.
 - 2. It’s difficult never to tell a lie to keep yourself out of trouble.
 - 3. It’s difficult not to lose your temper, take the Lord’s name in vain, and be cruel to someone.
 - 4. It’s difficult to obey what we find in Scripture.
- C. Yet, God has called us to a clean life.
 - 1. “Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit” (2 Cor. 7:1).
 - 2. “As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct” (1 Pet. 1:15).
- D. Let’s examine the Scriptures to see how we can have a pure life.

OUR DESIRE, v. 9

- A. “How can a young man cleanse his way?”
- B. “Cleanse” means “to make or keep clean, pure.”
 - 1. The term is used in Job 15; 14; 25:4, and in both cases the word is parallel with “righteous.”
 - 2. The basic meaning of “cleanse” is “to make righteous,” “to make morally upright.”
 - 3. The psalmist is asking, “How can a man be morally pure, morally upright?”
- C. The psalmist has a desire to be clean.
 - 1. He is tired of sin — he has lived a life of sin, he’s found that sin doesn’t offer what it promises, and now he wants to be clean.
 - 2. He is tired of his broken promises.
 - a. So many of us have made these promises: “I’m going to stop this particular sin,” but temptation overpowers us and we find ourselves doing the same thing again.
 - b. The psalmist is tired of this; he wants to get rid of sin once and for all.
- D. There is a huge difference between the psalmist’s attitude and the attitude of most.
 - 1. The psalmist is attempting to clean up his life.
 - a. He might be committing some of the same sins, but he’s struggling and trying to do right.
 - b. “If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7).
 - 1) If we walk in the light, we are trying to do those things that are right. We may occasionally commit the same sins, but we’re trying to do differently.
 - 2) Too, if we’re walking in the light, we should really be trying even harder each day to avoid those sins with which we struggle.
 - 2. Compare that with how the world thinks — they aren’t interested in cleaning up their lives (except when things spiral totally out of control); they just want all the pleasure and satisfaction they can get out of life.
- E. Can you identify with the psalmist’s desire?
 - 1. Have you found yourself confessing the same sins?
 - 2. Do you long for victory over sin?
- F. Illustration about children comparing home situations, Encyclopedia of 15, 000 Illustrations, #10192.
 - 1. The preacher’s son wanted to be good without the thought of what he would get.
 - 2. Oh, that that would be our desire — to be good for nothing!

OUR DETERGENT, v. 9

- A. “By taking heed according to Your word.”
- B. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from past sins.
 - 1. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7).
 - 2. “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (Rev. 1:5).
- C. But, the blood of Jesus is not going to keep us from future sin, get sin out of our lives — the Word of God does that.
 - 1. “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you” (Jn. 15:3).

2. "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).
- D. We live in a day of powerful detergents.
 1. There is a detergent for anything.
 2. There is no stain that a cleanser cannot eradicate.
- E. Likewise, there is no sin that the Bible cannot eradicate.
- F. "Heed" basically means "to exercise great care over," "to give careful attention to."
 1. The Bible will not help us get rid of sin unless we pay careful attention to it.
 2. If we just hear the Word of God but we pay not attention to it, we will not be able to cleanse our lives.
 - a. "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mind, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man" (Mt. 7:26).
 - b. "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (J s. 1:22).
 3. Let us be those who give heed to the word of God, who pay attention to it, that we may cleanse our lives.
- G. Illustration about a young lady responding to a Catholic priest who scolded her and her brother for reading the Bible, 6,600 Classic Sermon Illustrations, p. 72, #6764.
- H. Are you paying careful attention to the Bible? Are you using it to clean up your life?

OUR DECISION, v. 10

- A. "With my whole heart I have sought You."
- B. He hears and heeds the message for cleaning up his life — he responds by giving his whole heart to God.
 1. In giving his "whole heart" to God there is no hypocrisy — there isn't any seeming to give his heart to God, while it's far from him.
 - a. "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me" (Mt. 15:8).
 - b. It's possible to appear to honor God when we do nothing of the sort.
 2. In giving his "whole heart" to God he holds nothing back — there isn't some area of his life he doesn't surrender to God.
- C. We must seek God with our whole heart; we must give our whole heart to God.
 1. "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deut. 6:5).
 2. "Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!" (Ps. 119:2).
 3. "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12).
- D. Illustration about those with unbaptized right hands, Encyclopedia of 15, 000 Illustrations, #12651.
 1. We cannot hold anything back from God ~ we must give him our all.
 2. Have you held anything back from God? Have you given him your all?

OUR DEFENSE, v. 11

- A. "Your word I have hidden in my heart."
- B. "Hide" means to conceal something with a definite purpose.
 1. Some examples of the word's use:
 - a. Moses was hidden for three months to protect him from the slaughter Pharaoh had undertaken against Hebrew male children (Ex. 2:2).
 - b. In the midst of trials, God hides his people in his presence (Ps. 27:5).
 2. In this context, the word refers to hiding the Word of God in our hearts so that we can use it in time of temptation.
- C. If we are to overcome temptation, we must have the Word of God in our hearts, as part of our being.
 1. "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart" (Dan. 6:6).
 2. "Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:1.6).
 3. Is the Word of God in your heart?
- D. If the Word of God is in our hearts, we will be able to overcome sin.
 1. When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus met each temptation with "It is written" (Mt. 4:1-11).
 2. Part of our Christian armor is "the word of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17) — we can fight with the Word of God.
 3. Scripture is profitable "for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16) — Scripture will help us be better people.
- E. Are you hiding the Bible in your heart? Is it keeping you from sinning against God?