

Message Notes

The Stain Stick Isaiah 1:18 Key Verse (18)



Introduction: I have watched Sis. Judy do laundry for many years and during that time I have seen her use a number of different types of detergent, pre-soak, softener etc. The names have been varied and have changed from time to time. A few years back she introduced me to a different product that she called a stain stick. Before I go any further let me give you a little background. I have to confess that I have a difficult time keeping my clothes clean and as a matter of fact I am constantly getting spots and stains on the things that I wear. I have ruined several garments that were either relegated to the rag pile or had to be thrown away. She has even accused me of changing the oil in my car with a suit on but I don't remember that incident. (She says that I have selective memory!) Enter the stain stick. The genius of this stain stick is that you can pre-treat a spot or stain and leave it for several hours of even days before you wash it and there is a good chance that the stain will come out. Now I would like to say that this stick is effective on every stain but the truth of the matter is I have gotten into some things that even the stain stick can't handle. No matter what we try we just can't get the stain out. It's permanent, and the garment is ruined and will never be the same. In our text this morning we have a picture of a people whose lives have been spotted and stained by something that nothing humanly speaking can cleanse. Their souls have a blot that cannot be removed by man's efforts and ingenuity. What is the answer? In verse 18 God sends them an invitation. How strange it seems that God would invite people to come to Him! One would think that mankind would be knocking on His door, but God seeks us rather than we seeking Him. **Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of Man is come to SEEK and to save that which was lost."** Man is lost because of his sin, and his sin has blinded him to his need for God, thus God has to seek man because man will not seek God.

Isaiah called the people to come and be clean. The only way for a man to reach heaven is to be forgiven of his sins, but he will never seek God for that forgiveness without God convicting him of his sin and calling man to Him. It is a wonderful invitation and it is an invitation that is still be extended today. First, let look at the:

I. The summons from the Sovereign

What is this invitation all about?

1. IT IS AN INVITATION TO REASON AT AN UNREASONABLE TIME

A. Isaiah's nation was in deep trouble;

B. The people had rebelled against the Lord. (2-4)

1. They chose not to think about God (3)

2. Sin was rampant; corruption was everywhere (4)

C. God had attempted to get their attention by chastening, but they had not responded. (5)

D. Isaiah describes them as a sin sick people. (6)

E. Crime and violence characterized the age

F. Rebellion didn't make sense in light of God's blessings

G. Still God invites them to "come and reason together."

H. What mercy! What grace!

I. We too are sinners, and it is not reasonable that God would invite us, but He does.

J. God goes beyond all reason and invites us to come to Him.

2. IT IS AN INVITATION FROM GOD AT AN UNGODLY TIME

A. It is God who issues the invitation.

B. God called to those who had forsaken Him. (4)

1. People who rejected His way and His Word.

2. People who had grieved and provoked His Holy Spirit

C. These people were so wicked that they reminded Isaiah of Sodom and Gomorrah. (9-10)

1. A few righteous ones kept the majority from destruction.

2. Isaiah called them citizens of wicked cities.

D. Even their feasts, which were supposed to be acts of worship, had become an abomination to the Lord.

E. Nevertheless God kept inviting them to come and be clean.

II. The source of the stain

Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

GOD COMMANDS US TO CLEANSE OURSELVES OF TWO KINDS OF SIN: FILTHINESS OF THE FLESH AND SPIRIT

A. The sins of the flesh are rather easy to spot, though most of us like to measure these sins by degrees.

1. Gal. 5:19-21

- a. Adultery
- b. Fornication - (from the Greek word, "porneia")-any sexual activity outside the bounds of marriage, set by God.
- c. uncleanness - impurity
- d. lasciviousness - unrestrained lust
- e. idolatry
- f. witchcraft
- g. hatred – **1 John 2:11**
- h. variance - quarrellings
- i. emulations - jealousy
- j. wrath
- k. strife
- l. seditions - dissensions
- m. heresies - false teachings
- n. envyings
- o. murders
- p. drunkenness
- q. revellings - (lit.) letting loose
- r. AND SUCH LIKE - includes everything else not mentioned here.

2. Now we could all agree that these things should be considered sin and should be confessed and repented of....but Paul mentions another type of sin that should be cleansed.....

B. Our text mentions, not only the filthiness of the flesh, but also filthiness of the spirit. What exactly is filthiness of the spirit?

1. The prodigal son was guilty of sins of the flesh, but his elder brother was guilty of sins of the spirit.

- a. Both are wrong but it's worth noting that Jesus forgave adulteresses and prostitutes but spoke sternly to the proud, self-righteous Pharisees.

- b. What were the sins of the elder brother? He wouldn't forgive his younger brother; wouldn't attend the feast; angry with his father; pride; boasting; self-love.
2. When David committed adultery, he yielded to a sin of the flesh; but when he covered up his sin and hardened his heart, he yielded to sins of the spirit.
3. Like the Pharisee praying in the temple, we may pride ourselves that we're better than other people and go home from the prayer meeting in worse shape than when we came.

III. The sanctification of the sinner

“...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

There are colors in Scripture that are metaphors for sin. One is red and another is black. Several years ago I heard a preacher say that, *“God takes the red blood of Christ and applies it to our sin blackened hearts and makes them as white as snow.”*

1 John 1:7-9 **“But 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 cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Snow and wool are synonymous with purity. God wants to wipe the slate clean; He offers to remove the sin stains from our souls. This is an invitation to be forgiven.

B. This was the desire of David's heart after he had sinned. He says in **Psalm 51:7**, **“Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.”**

C. God meets sinners where they are and cleanses them.

Conclusion: Now I want to return to the title of this morning's message and explain what I mean by **“The Stain Stick.”** 1 *“On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame, and I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain.”* And verse 3, *“In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine, A wondrous beauty I see, for t'was on that old cross Jesus suffered and died, To pardon and sanctify me.”*

