

He Is The Potter, We Are The Clay

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[0 : 00] Well, as God would help me, I'd like to concentrate on the three verses which we read in Isaiah chapter 64. Isaiah chapter 64.

So read again verses 6 to 8. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.

We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind take us away. There is no one who calls upon your name, who arouses himself to take hold of you, for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.

But, but, now, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are our potter.

We are all the work of your hand. When Isaiah wrote these words, the people of Israel, God's people, were in a desperately low spiritual condition.

[1 : 31] God had said to them, all can be forgiven. All can be forgiven. Just confess your sin and return to me.

But Israel were in such a low spiritual condition, they did not know how to confess their sins or return to God.

So, in effect, what we have here is the prophet Isaiah teaching them and showing them how to confess your sin before God, and how to get right with God again.

So, as God would help me, we would like to look at these two aspects of God, of the word that God is demonstrating to us here in these three verses.

First, the prayer of confession, verses 6 and 7. And then, secondly, the prayer of help, in verse 8.

[2 : 45] So, verse 6, the prayer of confession. We have all become like one who is unclean. You see, God made man upright.

But we have perverted that which is right. Although created in the image of God, we human beings have marred the image of God upon us.

And we have become unclean. Through our own work. As a starting point, we've become unclean before God.

But I want you to notice, it's not so much what we have done that we're to begin confessing. As if we're saying, oh, that thing I did, that was wrong.

It was terrible. We try to divorce it away from us. You cannot separate sin from the person committing sin.

[4 : 02] We are unclean. We're to confess not so much what we've done. Of course we're to confess what we've done. But we're to confess what we are.

We are unclean. You see, you and I do not fall into sin. Surprised?

Adam fell into sin. He was made upright. He was made perfect. He was made sinless. But he fell into sin.

You and I do not fall into sin. You and I are born in sin. Shaped in iniquity. That's what we are.

And we have to learn to begin to confess what we are. Not just what we're capable of doing and sometimes have done.

[5 : 01] It's what we are. In other words, lesson number one is we're to confess our sinfulness. And our sinnership.

We're to confess our tendencies. Our inclinations. Our readiness to sin.

Because we're born with a bias towards sin. Lesson number one. Lesson number two.

Our righteous deeds. Our Bible text is telling us. Are like a polluted garment.

The point is our righteous deeds. Do you notice? Our righteous deeds. Not our bad deeds. Our good deeds.

[6 : 00] If they confess your good deeds. They're sinful. You see. God is an absolute being. And he requires absolute perfection.

And we just can't do it. It's not in us. Our good deeds.

We have to learn. Are not pluses. With God. They're actually minuses. Because he requires.

Because of his nature.

Being holy. He requires absolute perfection. And we fall short. Oh, we do very good. We do the very best we can.

But they are not perfect. And God's nature is absolute perfection. So he requires absolute perfection from us.

[7 : 01] And we can't do it. If you take our relationship with God. And compare it to a balance sheet.

It is not enough. That our balance sheet with God. Is at the all square level. Not enough. It's to be in the credit balance.

That's why Christ's death. Paid for all our sins. All that's in the negative balance. But we also require Christ's righteousness.

To put us in the credit balance. And that's why he lived 30 odd years. A perfect life. He produced a righteousness. That was legitimately transferable.

You see Christ. Was righteous in heaven. But the righteousness. Which he had in heaven. Was. Non-transferable.

[8 : 04] To human beings. But the righteousness. Which Christ produced on earth. Transferable. To humans.

Worked out. For the specific purpose. Of giving. To human beings. Who just. Could not. Be good. Enough. That's lesson.

Number two. We're to confess. What we are. Number one. We're to confess. That our.

Righteousness. Are just. Not.

Good enough. Lesson. Number. Three. We all. Feed.

Relief. Situation. Serious. Out of Christ. Our situation. Is very.

[9 : 05] Serious. What's the message? What's the lesson? We all. Feed. Like a leaf. It's a principle. Of. Deterioration. We do not.

Get better. With age. We're fading. Like a leaf. The nature. Of sin. Is to. Deeper. The nature.

Of sin. Is to. Spread. My friend. We're getting. Worse. With age. You. Young. People. Here. And any. Young. People.

Listening. You. Might. Be. Hearing. A whisper. In your ear. It. Would. Be. Far. Easier. To. Become. A. Christian. When. I'm. Older.

What. A. Lie. What. A. Lie. From. The. Bottomless. Pit. Of. Hell. It. Gets.

[10 : 02] More. Difficult. The. Older. You. Get. You. Set. In. Your. Ways. Your. Your. Your. Your.

Your. Your. Your. we've only so long for the situation to change that's the point that's lesson number three fading like a leaf not getting better and better getting worse and worse we've only so long left to get things right lesson number four we've become unclean our righteousnesses are filthy rags polluted we're fading like a leaf lesson number four our iniquities like the wind take us away do you notice present tense oh they have taken us away but they're taking us further and further and further away the longer we live the further away we come from the only source of help we've separated ourselves sin separates sin divides sin isolates sin alienates our iniquities like the wind take us away that term take us away is a very strange term and I spent yonks looking at it now I am no

Hebrew expert please I assure you of that but that term take us away I discovered was translated in the authorised version angel ESV version at least 14 times as something else it's translated I found it very strange armour bearer Saul's armour bearer strange isn't it what's the lesson what's the message our iniquities armour bearer armour bearer hmm that's worth looking at that's worth checking it out isn't it it's not the message this sin the more we commit sin we're building an armour around ourselves so that when the arrow of truth comes to us it just bounces off no effect that's pretty serious right it's pretty serious we're building a shell around ourselves so that's when the truth tries to penetrate it just bounces off listen number four sin builds a shell and armour around us and it gets harder and harder and harder the longer life goes on serious stuff this but there's one more other thing we have to say there's one other part of the message that we've got to look at in the

prayer of confession no one calls upon your name verse 5 isn't it 6 sorry 7 no one calls upon your name all we're back to the beginning all can be forgiven if you call on God all can be forgiven if you call on God isn't that wonderful God has come the second time to bless the human race he came the first time to Adam our first father and said do this and live don't take that fruit from that tree in the middle and not only Adam will you and your wife get to heaven but you and the whole human race will get to heaven do I need to spell out what happened you know what happened he failed miserably and you and I are born sinful you and I are born by nature on the road to a lost eternity so God when he came the second time it's as if he said you human beings

I can't trust you I can't trust you to do anything I said to you you can have as much fruit as you like you can eat of as many trees as you like you can eat as often as you like except this one but no you couldn't do it you can't do it I can't trust you to do anything so here's my second way to bring you to heaven you don't have to do anything you just have to believe you just have to believe I sent my son to the place called Calvary to pay for your sins just believe that unbelief in Christ is the greatest sin because all can be forgiven if you just believe my friend if you're not a Christian do understand your big big big problem is not something you've done your big problem is something you haven't done because everything you've done can be forgiven it's something you haven't done is a problem you haven't accepted the sacrifice God provided for the payment of your sin believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and all is forgiven so we change the subject now that's the prayer of confession what you are even your righteousness is accountable to God falls short we're fading like a leaf we're getting worse we've isolated ourselves from

[17 : 56] God and we just don't call on his name how serious not to call on God's name so we look now secondly at the prayer for help we've looked at the problem now the remedy you see if you leave here unconverted will you leave with this by nature your situation you are utterly helpless to save yourself but listen while you're utterly helpless you are not hopeless there is hope you are helpless but you're not hopeless you know where I learnt that a children's puzzle

I tried to do a puzzle one day in a house and I thought I knew my scripture and one of the questions was is this what the Bible says that you sinners are without God and without hope in the world is that scripture no it's not without God and without hope in the world is not scripture do you know what the scripture says do you know what Ephesians chapter 2 verse 12 says having having no hope and without God in the world ah there's a difference eh having no hope there is hope but you haven't got it my friend however sinful you feel there is hope there's hope in God get hold of it so the prayer for help in verse 8 who does the prophet turn to in his helplessness the potter we're clear we're clear that

God's a potter and we read about the potter now oh Lord you are our father we are the clay and you are our potter we're all the work of your hand you see a genuine true confession is not just a complaint oh there is a complaint the complaint of sin but it doesn't stop there a true confession isn't all negative because the Bible tells us without faith it's impossible to please God even though you confess your sin accurately without faith impossible to please God a true confession should always include a genuine desire for cleansing and renewal have you got that

I tell you that is not natural have you got a desire to be cleansed from sin that is not natural there are lots of people with conviction of sin and they go into convents and they try to harm themselves self harm without faith however accurate your description of yourself is it doesn't please God if you have no faith in the remedy God has provided we need cleansing and we need renewal and only God can do that only the potter can remold the clay that's why

I read in Genesis in Jeremiah 18 what did the potter do when the clay he shaped in his hand was all marred and warped what did he do you know I had read that a few times and still never got it maybe you like me I thought he threw it away is that what we read is that what we read in Genesis 18 did God throw away the marred spoiled clay no he remolded it he reshaped it and God is in the same business today reshaping remolding the clay the New Testament well no the whole

[23 : 31] Bible gives us examples of God reshaping the misshapen clay let me just mention four there's Jacob you all know he was God chose Jacob rather than Esau I think that's amazing you know what was Jacob doing when Esau was keeping the fifth commandment supplying good meat for his father what was Jacob doing salutary God chose God chose him you know what he's doing double crossing his father on his deathbed now come on that's pretty serious eh bad that's pretty bad double crossing your father on his deathbed

God chose him to remold him and he can do the same with you he can remold you he remolded Jacob double crossing his father on his deathbed about as low as you'll get there's Manasseh Manasseh in the Old Testament a godly godly father he was the son of a godly father but do you know what he did whenever he got to the throne whenever he became king you know you know what he did you know the first thing he did he and did the godly reforms of his father and did them and then a godly son godly home he began to worship the sun the moon and the stars isn't that pathetic eh a godly home gives it all up and starts worshiping the sun the moon and the stars manasseh and then that's not good enough doesn't get anything heavenward so what does he do isn't it sad he turns downward to the bottomless pit and he tries the occult pathetic isn't it and then he burns that doesn't work either by the way and then he burns his own children his own child I'm never sure one or more he burnt to please the pagan god Molech but you know this manasseh is in heaven why because he repented and prayed to god and asked god to forgive him and god did not turn round and say to him manasseh you gave me up for the stars and the moon try them now to get you out of your predicament god's not into that god cannot do that god has bound himself up to hear the cry of the poor and the needy so friend be poor and needy spiritually before god go to god and tell him you're spiritually bankrupt and he'll hear you and forgive you and bless you and remold you into the image of christ god's into remolding i'm needing a new car and i can't get anyone on the island to buy it too far gone that's what they said to me i'm going to try the mainland i don't know what will happen you're not too far gone friend god can remold you there's two from the old testament god's in the business of remolding sol of tarshish now i don't know about you but i always thought the most difficult person in the world to convert was the atheist apparently it's not you see you ask an atheist what he believes and i'm always sure he won't tell you what he believes in he'll tell you what he doesn't believe and i'm told by those who study these things that the most difficult person to convert is the dyed in the wool religious bigot and that's exactly that's exactly what sol of tarshish was walking along the damascus road and in his pocket his crock documents to try and eradicate christianity from off the face of the earth but with these documents in his pocket god the holy spirit spoke to him and christ met him the resurrected christ met him on the way and remoulded sol of tarshish until he became the famous great apostle paul god's into that that's why he sent his son remoulding misshaped pots of clay we are the clay god is the potter and then there's mary magdalene now are you as way off as i was when i used to think of mary magdalene i used to think of this what a sweet gentle gracious lovely girl she is oh just a sweet young girl your heart goes out to these lovely girls you see you think lovely mary magdalene before christ met her seven devils inside her i tell you if she walked in here you'd move over your seats christ took her christ met her christ remoulded her into the image of himself god's into that business christ is into that business that's why he came he remoulds the misshapen clay we could go on there's a woman of samaria sleeping around sleeping around christ forgave her told her all things she did saved her evangelizing going out she did christ god remoulds remoulds into the image of christ well that's it we are the clay god's the potter just three lines left in my notes god in christ can remould you he can remould you reshape you line two god loves and delights to remould the clay it's a pleasure he loves it he delights to do it it's not something he needs to do because he promised it and i better keep my word he loves it he delights to do it to remould the clay line three god will remould you if you ask him but you have to ask him whatever you do ask him you do not have the bible tells us because you do not ask and christ himself said everyone everyone who asks receives may god the holy spirit make his word effectual to every one of us let's bow our heads take