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# The Messenger



*"... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10:15*

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**A Weekly Publication of the Christians Meeting at  
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**Website: [westlakechurchofchrist.org](http://westlakechurchofchrist.org)**

**Sunday: AM Bible Study – 9:30 a.m., AM Worship – 10:30 a.m., PM Worship – 5:00 p.m.; Wednesday: PM Bible Study 7:30 p.m.**

***Dedicated to the Proclamation of the Truth in the Spirit of Love (Ephesians 4:15)***

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**Listen to PROVE ALL THINGS on 730 AM WKRE, Sunday mornings from 8:15 to 8:30.**

## **The Cry of a Guilty Soul**

*by L.A. Stauffer*

Nature can be brutal in so many ways. We know about droughts, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes and the havoc they have wrought on the world and on mankind. But we are also aware of a world of predators among animals. A cat can pounce on a bird or a mouse, kill it, eat it, and feel no sense of guilt or remorse. That's because he's an animal and has no moral or ethical sense. Animal predators are simply acting the way God programmed them. The same can be said of trees that produce fruit, the sun and the moon who rule the days and nights, and the elements of the atmosphere that produce rain and snow.

But man, despite what evolutionists attempt to tell him, is different. He is not an animal and has a conscience about his actions, whether right or wrong. That's because he was created in the image and likeness of God. He has a spirit like God's and a mind that can reason, understand God's instruction, and discern between good and evil. And when he violates these principles, he, if not totally hardened by past practices, feels guilt and sorrow.

We see a genuine heart of remorse in several of David's psalms where this "man after God's own heart" opens up and vividly describes his pangs of grief over sin (Psalms 32, 38, 51). He had sinned grievously when he committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of one of his soldiers, and then sought to cover it up first through deception and then by murder. In a penitent spirit he openly acknowledged his sins and in anguish cried out to Jehovah, His God, for forgiveness. Listen to David's words and the grief and pain he felt:

*"For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine indignation. Neither is there any health in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over my head: As a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds are loathsome and corrupt, because of my foolishness. I am pained and bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with burning; and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am faint and sore bruised; I have groaned by reason of the disquiteness of my heat" (Psalm 38:2-8).*

Guilt and the pain that follow sin is good – for it brings sinners face to face with their Creator and with their violations of the Creator’s laws. It also brings change of behavior and draws transgressors nearer to the One who will judge them in the final day. But this demands the “mind,” the “heart” of David who not only suffered from guilt, but saw cleansing from God as the only way to peace and rest for the soul. Hear him in another psalm plead for mercy and forgiveness:

*“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin ... Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice” (Psalm 51:1-2, 7-8).*

Man’s problem today is that he is so bombarded with the “animal-view” of man and with the humanistic philosophy of “no creator” that his heart is insensitive to the concept of law and of sin as a violation of law. TV, movies, the internet, immoral comedians, and liberal talk show hosts exploit the passions of the flesh until men become as “brute beasts” and “creatures without reason” fit for destruction and slaughter (see II Peter 2:12; Jude 10; James 5:5).

Few of us see ourselves as having gone this far into sin, or as far as David went. But the more we trash our minds with the open filth of a society that is daily becoming as heathenistic as ancient Greece and Rome, the sooner we will become hardened to sinful behavior and the easier it will be to rationalize guilt, justify evil conduct, and minimize sin. Where there is no sense of wrongdoing, there are no guilt pangs, repentance, confession, and correction. When there is no correction, man is left in sin to face a Creator who is hostile to transgressions of His law and who refuses eternal fellowship with those who dwell in the darkness of sin (see I John 1:5-10).

God has spoken plainly, brethren: *“Vengeance belongs to me, I will recompense ... The Lord will judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”* (Hebrews 10:30-31). Do your sins really bother you, brethren? Or, do you casually shrug them off with – “Oops, I made a mistake.” Sin is serious and feelings of guilt and the cry of a guilty soul are the foundation of repentance, cleansing, and eternal fellowship with God.

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## **News and Notes:**

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

*“...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” - James 5:16*