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The Humbling Nature of Sin

“When I kept silent *about my sin*, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long” (Psalm 32:3 NASB).

In the Church, “sin” is often treated like a dirty word. No one likes to talk about it in regards to the Christian life, because it makes us feel uncomfortable and inadequate—it’s a ding to our pride. Yet, each one of us is not without sin. John confirmed this: *“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us”* (1 John 1:8). Yet he also says, *“No one who is born of God practices sin”* (1 John 3:9a). How do we reconcile these two verses? Well, Scripture makes a distinction between struggling with sin and practicing, living, or continuing in sin. Every Believer struggles with sin, but sin is not our calling or profession—Jesus Christ is our *“upward call of God”* (Phil. 3:14b), and His will is our profession, thus, we confess our sin, for *“if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9).

Often, when we are confronted with our sin by the Holy Spirit’s conviction or by our fellow man, our first reaction can be to feel exposed, like we’re under a microscope, or someone is taking a picture of us without permission. We often feel “picked out,” guilty and shameful, because we feel we are “losing face.” Why is this? Well, sin proves our inadequacy before God and others, and we like to control how we are seen by others, because we don’t like feeling judged. So, we put our “best face” forward to “cover up” our inadequacy and shield our pride, because our “best face” is how we want to be seen. All sin is facilitated and sheltered by this *“boastful pride of life”* (1 John 2:16), which has a crush on the attitudes and behaviors of the world.

Like all Believers, David struggled with sin. Yet, his un-confessed sin tormented him—he was living with his “best face” forward, but he was hiding ugliness in his life and ignoring it before God. When Nathan the Prophet confronted him with his sin, David could have easily denied it and tried to make it “disappear.” He had a lot of face to lose! But just as God had said that David was *“a man after His own heart”* (1 Samuel 13:14b), he confessed his sin, let go his pride, and took responsibility for what he’d done, humbling himself before God.

Like David, we also have an ugly side—our flesh nature. Rather than try to ignore and conceal our sin because it makes us uncomfortable, our sin is an opportunity to come before the Lord in humility to confess it. There is no shame in this. You are not “losing face” with God, because He already knows your inadequacy! He knows every hidden crevice in your heart’s deepest, darkest cellar. God wants you to surrender the things you deny exist or don’t want anyone to see. He wants you to let go of the “image” of yourself that you want to be true and accept the reality of what you truly are—an inadequate sinner saved by the grace through His Son, Jesus Christ. Entrust your sin to Him, “lose face” before Him, yield your pride to Him, for *“God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”* So *“humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you”* (James 4:6a,10). We cannot mature or grow in our relationship with Christ if we do not humble ourselves and confess to Him the sin in our lives.

Do not shrink back from His light of revelation upon your heart, for *“we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul”* (Heb. 10:39), *“so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming”* (1 John 2:28b). Even so, Amen.

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