

A Two-Fold Disease and a Double Cure

by Aaron Hills

The sermon teaches that the disease of sin is a two-fold condition that affects humanity, and that the double cure of pardon and sanctification is available through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Ephesians 5:25

Topics: "Original Sin", "Sanctification"

Description

Aaron Hills preaches about the disease of sin in two forms: voluntary sins we commit knowingly and the sinful propensity inherited from our first parents. He emphasizes the need for a double cure: forgiveness for past sins through repentance and faith in Christ, and sanctification to cleanse the heart from the inbred sin principle. Hills highlights the importance of drawing near to God, resisting the devil, and purifying our hearts to overcome the conflict between the old sinful nature and the new nature in Christ.

Transcript

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded." -- James 4:8.

Health is the normal condition of moral beings. It is evidently what the Creator planned for all the beings He made. When He had finished His creative work He looked upon it all and pronounced it "very good." It was superlative praise for superlative wisdom to bestow.

Think of a world without ache or pain with the tides of vitality pulsing everywhere, and the tint of health upon every cheek, and a God of love brooding over all, and imparting His perfect life to every being! That was our world as it came from the hand of its benevolent Creator.

But a hostile spirit came upon the scene. Fallen himself he hated God and everything good or God-like. And with malignant hand he hurled a temptation at the heart of humanity and shattered the divine image in every soul. "Hence came sin and all our woe." The first sin induced "the sin principle:" the sin principle brought "the death principle." Hence the ravages of pain and disease and death passed upon all men "for that all sinned."

I. Notice, the disease of Sin exists in two forms. There are:

1. The voluntary sins that we purposely commit. Men choose to steal. Men intend to lie. Men plan to wrong their neighbor, to commit some crime of violence or deed of infamy. We perform evil acts with a wicked

intention, when we know we are doing it against the protest of conscience -- the voice of God within us. Men do such deeds when they know that the laws of God forbid them, when the laws of men condemn them and prisons yawn for them.

But in spite of conscience, and the laws of men and of God, and threatening prisons and shame and disgrace, still moral beings who know better, willfully, purposely, defiantly commit sins and repeat them day after day. And these sinful acts form sinful habits. Sinful habits form a sinful character and the sinful character becomes fixed, eternal unlikeness to God. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Damnation is the penalty! We are all undone forever unless these sins are forgiven and this penalty is removed.

2. But what made anyone want to sin? Whatever prompted anyone to swear or lie or steal or disobey God? Why is it that anyone should ever be so willfully foolish, so deliberately, insanely unwise as to turn from the path of virtue and righteousness which leads to blessedness and heaven, and choose the path of sinfulness which leads straight to eternal death? How can any human being with a conscience and common sense and moral reason be so blind to self-interest, so indifferent to his future good as to run in the way of evil as if enamored of damnation? Nay, how is it that all the human family do it with one common consent? Ah, why?

The Greek New Testament Lexicon gives the clew to the mystery. It gives two sets of definitions of the most common word for sin in the Greek language: "Hamartia."

(a) "Error, offense, sin" -- in other words, our voluntary sins.

(b) "The principle or cause of sin, proneness to sin, sinful propensity." Here, then, are the two forms which the disease of sin takes in human experience.

First, we notice that all the progeny of the human family, while yet young in years, begins to sin purposely; and we further notice that all keep it up through life unless the grace of God intervenes to prevent it. This is undeniably a matter of universal observation and experience -- the first feature of the disease.

Secondly, thoughtful souls begin to ask, What is the cause of this universal sinning? Why could not some tribe or family somewhere, be immune to this universal disease? Nobody has ever found a satisfactory answer to these questions, but in the Word of God. It informs us that our first parents by their first sin brought on themselves a radical derangement of their moral nature -- a proneness to sin. Then they begot children, each of whom inherited this principle of sin or proneness to sin. And by the simple law of heredity it has been passed on as an inheritance to every member of the human race.

This is not only a scriptural but a scientific explanation of the universal disease of sin. It completely brings to light and covers all the facts of the case. We all have sinned because we all inherited a sinful propensity. Back of every wicked choice ever made since the first, was an evil appetency or propensity that prompted it.

Here, then, we behold the two forms of the malady of sin:

(a) The voluntary sinning.

(b) The abnormal propensity that prompts it and produces it.

II. Observe there is a double cure for this two-fold disease.

1. The first remedy brings pardon of all sins that are past, and prompts a man to go out of the sin business. He purposes by the help of God "to sin no more." "He that is born of God sinneth not."

And where does this remedy come from? "God so loved the world (sinners) that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." The atoning death of Christ made it possible for God, the Father, to pardon the sinner, set aside the penalty, on condition of repentance and faith in Christ, restore him to the divine favor, and treat him as if he had never sinned. This brings reconciliation between a holy God and the guilty soul. A new family relation is set up. The man, instead of remaining a condemned sinner with the penalty of death hanging over his head, is now adopted into the heavenly Father's family to feast on the bounty of pardoning love. Thus the first and most visible form of sin's disease is cured.

2. But what about that sin principle, that inward heart-propensity to sin? That must manifestly be dealt with in an entirely different way. Voluntary sins can be forgiven; but forgiveness will not cure the propensity to evil with which he was born, and for which he is in no wise responsible.

But there is a remedy: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it." -- Eph. 5:25, 26. The pardoned souls who are now in God's family and form His "Church" are now to be "sanctified" by being "cleansed" from that "sin-principle" or "propensity to sin" which regeneration -- the first work of grace -- did not cure or reach.

Once I nearly lost my first-born child, my precious baby girl, by a severe case of eczema. After months of doctoring in vain, at last a skillful physician came, who gave the first remedy for the burning eruption. But a second radical remedy was needed to reach the root of the difficulty -- by removing the condition of blood which produced the painful sores. So it is with God's dealing with sin. The first remedy cures the outward manifestations of sinning; but sanctification -- the second work of grace -- is needed to cleanse the heart, the fountain of all iniquity, from inbred sin.

III. Look now at the text:-- "Cleanse your hands ye sinners: and purify your hearts ye double-minded." The "hands" represent the doing faculty -- the evil choices of the will. The sins must be forgiven and the sinning stopped. But the depraved heart must be cured of its depravity by the medicine of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which Christ administers. It "cleanses the heart by faith." -- Acts 15:8, 9.

"Purify your hearts ye double-minded." The sinner has only one mind which is bent on the self-gratification of sins. The sanctified man has only one mind -- and that is to live for the glory of God. The unsanctified Christian is the only person who has "a double mind." In regeneration he had the principle of grace implanted in him; but the old "sin principle" or "evil propensity" has not yet been removed. So when he would do good evil is present with him. There is a perpetual conflict in his soul, which will never end until his heart is purified from the carnal mind.

Look now at the context -- James 4:7, 8: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh unto you . . . Be afflicted and mourn and weep." How these commands ring out like the sharp crack of a woodsman's rifle! No hint here at moral inability -- but always an assumption of present ability to obey God's commands. We cannot forgive ourselves or sanctify ourselves. But we can consent to let God do it for us.

We are all by nature sick with the disease of sin. But a great physician has come to our city -- the Lord Jesus Christ, with an unfailing cure for our disease. He will not force His remedies upon us any more than

any human physician does; but He opens an office near by and advertises His remedies in a Holy Book. If we will only "draw nigh" to Him and ask for His help, He will cure us "without money and without price."
"Rock of ages, deft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee; Let the water and the blood, From Thy wounded side which flowed, Be of sin the double cure: Save from wrath and make me pure."

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