

# What Is Wrong With the World

by Peter Brandon

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*The main problem with the world is not external, but internal, and the solution is not just changing the environment, but changing man through conviction of sin and the revelation of the Holy Spirit.*

**Duration:** 44:07

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:1

**Topics:** "Repentance", "Human Nature"

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## Description

Peter Brandon addresses the profound question of what is wrong with the world, emphasizing that the root issue lies within human nature itself. He reflects on King David's sin with Bathsheba and his subsequent repentance as depicted in Psalm 51, illustrating the necessity of acknowledging our sins and seeking God's mercy. Brandon argues that societal changes alone cannot rectify the moral decay, and true transformation begins with a broken and contrite heart before God. He highlights the importance of understanding sin, conviction, and the need for genuine confession to experience true forgiveness and restoration. Ultimately, he calls for a return to God as the only remedy for the brokenness of humanity.

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## Transcript

The subject is a vast one. What is wrong with the world? And of course we shall try and answer that from the word of God. Now we're going to turn to the scriptures.

We're going to read from Psalm 51 and we are going to commence at the verse 1. This is a Psalm of David where Nathan the prophet came unto him after he had gone in and sinned with Bathsheba. And he writes, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sins.

For I acknowledge my transgression and my sin is ever before me. Against thee the only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and clear when thou judgest. Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold thou desirest truth in the inward path and in the hidden path thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which thou has broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it.

Thy delight is not in burnt offering, but the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion.

Build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering. And then shall they offer bullets upon thine altar.

Now God will bless to us the reading of that portion of his word. I think it's true to say that more people now are asking that question than at any other time probably in the last 50 years. What is wrong? In the Daily Telegraph just after the last war they had a series of articles on what is wrong with the world.

One man who was an educationist said that we should give everybody free education and that would change the world. Well in the old country they had free education but I can assure you it hasn't changed Britain. Then another person suggested that we need a welfare state so that anybody and everybody could be cared for.

And when a person is unemployed then if we look after them we shall change the whole society. Well we have a welfare state and sometimes those unemployed get more money than those who are employed but we have not changed Britain. Then there were others who told us that we all needed proper housing, good housing, give a man a garden, give him a house.

So we had good housing and some of the people still do not pay rents for their houses. But it hasn't changed them, we are still finding in some places even in this modern day coals in the bathroom and so on. So you can see changing the environment and changing society will not change man.

What then will change him? Well my dear friends I'm not going to say it's going to be easy but number one we must be absolutely honest with ourselves. Number two we must be honest with our God. And number three we must be absolute honest with the remedy.

You see the moment we become honest with ourselves and honest with God and honest about the remedy then something can happen. In that paper where they were talking about what is wrong with the world there was one man that wrote the shortest article and he was a brilliant poet and his name was GK Chesterton and this is what he wrote. Dear sir, what is wrong with the world? I am wrong, yours truly, Chesterton.

And that man hit the nail right on the head. About a year ago Mrs Thatcher was talking to the nation just before she left office and then she wrote these tremendous words and actually she said them and then they were written and this is what she said. The Prime Minister who is 64 next week acknowledged in the

speech at the Guildhall City how her youthful ideas and aspirations have not been realised in adulthood and this is what she said.

For years when I was young in politics with all the hopes and dreams and ambitions it seemed to me that if we got an age where we had good housing, good education, a reasonable standard of living then everything would be set and we should have a fair and much easier future. We know now that that isn't so. We are up against a real problem of human nature.

So you can see even the world's intellectuals are beginning to see that there is something wrong with human nature. Now the greatest man probably in the Old Testament was King David. Furthermore I would say he was one of the very few intellectuals that ever lived.

Now when we talk about an intellectual we don't mean a professor that has a chair in the university. He may be clever on one subject but ridiculous on others. When we talk about an intellectual we mean someone who has a grasp of a number of subjects and quite frankly in world history there have only been a few intellectuals and one of them was King David.

He was a brilliant soldier, an outstanding shepherd, a unique theologian, a wonderful poet. He was a man that had a very high moral life and this man probably as I've said a few moments ago was one of the greatest kings that ever lived. And right in the zenith of his reign he fell into sin.

It was in the year when the kings went out to battle that unfortunately he got lazy and one night he was wandering about on the veranda and that's what happens when we have a lazy mind and he saw an object of beauty and he fell aloft and within 25 minutes he committed a moral sin. And unfortunately he covered it and after covering his moral sin he thought that he could put the husband to death who was a military man. And in a very cunning and crafty way he had this man put in the hottest part of the battle and he was killed and so he was not only an adulterer he was a murderer.

This man eventually was discovered by God and exposed and after his life was exposed he went into the presence of God and he wrote psalm 51 that's one of the greatest psalms in the book. And in that psalm King David gives us first of all his comprehension or understanding of sin. Secondly he gives us his conviction of sin and then we see his remarkable confession of sin.

Now may I say this as clearly as I can. One of the big problems in modern evangelism and please note this, is that the preacher bombards the will and he tries to extract from his areas a mental decision or a commitment. No wonder they don't last.

So what do we have with modern evangelism and we see it all over the world. We hear of 50,000 people trusting Christ and we look for them and we find there's only about 500 standing. Now what is basically wrong? Number one there isn't the real conviction of sin.

Number two there isn't the revelation of the Holy Spirit. It's just a mechanical profession. Now can I say as nicely as I can we don't want that here.

That only hinders the work of God. When a man is going to be truly saved and this applies too to a woman there must be a real knowledge about sin. We must wait until there's real conviction of sin and then there be true confession of sin and then we shall see this marvellous thing the workmanship of Christ Jesus and I'm sure all want that tonight.

So David goes into the presence of God and we can see this man shaking his head and weeping scores of tears because of his sins and he uses three words to describe his misdemeanor. One is sin, the other is transgression and the third is iniquity. Now don't muddle them.

What does the word sin mean? It means to misdemar. The word came from a Jewish archer who shoots for the gold we would call it the bullseye and he misses the target and it transgresses and in those days it was called sin and they would say you've missed the mark. Now what does it mean when God says that we have missed the mark? What mark? Therefore we must now go right back to the beginning.

When a car goes wrong and you can't put it right you take it to the garage and when they can't put it right invariably the manager will say it will have to go back to the maker and that's right. Now when the world is not getting right or going right and we can see it all over the world broken marriages, broken families, broken lives it's time that the human race began to say well shouldn't we get back to the maker for that's what we're going to do tonight. Now when God made this lovely world in which we live he made it for man and when you go out to the countryside and you look around and you see the lovely rolling hills and you see the beautiful flowers and you hear the song of the birds and you hear the chuckling of the water your heart's thrilled and you say this isn't that lovely and sometimes after a hard day in the garden and when it's all over you go round your garden and you have a look at it and you say no doesn't that look lovely.

Now what's happening the creation that God has given to you brings a sense of glory to you and that's right but why did he make man? We can see that he made creation for the pleasure and the glory of man but why did he make man? Did he make man for a joke? Of course not he made man so that man might please and glorify him in every single detail and therefore sin means this instead of pleasing God I pleased myself or I pleased my family or I pleased someone else. Now can you see dear friends how many times we sin? Now I know I must make this practical but it's as simple as this supposing now I'm hoovering the carpet and I'm grumbling when I do it that's sin I should do it for the glory of God. Supposing now I'm working at the lathe and I don't like the job and I'm grumbling why did he give me that job that's sin I'm not doing it for the glory of God.

Everything that we do and the glory of God's not in it that is basically sin. Now the scripture that we all quote and we misunderstand all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that's why nearly everyone in the human race sins profusely every day but then someone might say to me how do we know how to glorify God? Well the next meaning of the word sin shows us sin is lawlessness let me give you the scripture and then explain it. Whosoever transgresses the law or whosoever transgresses the law commits sin for sin is a transgression of the law and that put in modern language simply means sin is lawlessness.

Now here is something that I believe is quite wonderful there is only one place in the whole universe that's out of gear with the will of God. Every star all the planets the whole universe obeys God but there's only one fear that works in opposition to God and that's this planet earth and the people on it. Isn't that amazing probably the most beautiful planet of all and yet on that planet people that he made for his glory rebel against him.

No the will of God is not dictatorial he doesn't shout at you like a sergeant major. The will of God is not vindictive and all friends I do want to make this clear the will of God is parental. All do hear this he longs to bless the human race.

He doesn't like to see broken people he doesn't like to see smashed up marriages he doesn't like to see broken boys and girls he hates it. God longs and longs to bless men and women but you see sin means

this I want to go my own way I want to do my own thing irrespective of the will of God. Therefore in that great land of Eden and you mustn't imagine that that was like your back garden it had four rivers going in and out of it so you can tell the size of it in that great land of Eden there was only one command and that was that man should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and would you believe it man violated the will of God and so brought sin into the world.

But now we come to this word transgression what does that mean well that's quite simple to explain. If you see a notice keep off the grass and you walk on it you're a transgressor or if you see a notice no exit and you walk straight in you're a transgressor or if you see a notice no litter and you throw it down that is a transgressor. But then you say that's the law that we know has God given to us some laws yes only 10.

Now I know when I say sometimes that God has given to us 10 laws 10 commandments people frown and they say we don't need prohibitions but that's ridiculous. How could you play a game of football without law and a referee just imagine that. How could you play a game of cricket when men like Lillian Thompson were playing a few years ago without a referee be very dangerous.

How could you play a game of rugby without a referee you see this idea that we mustn't have laws forgive me letting down my hair tonight is a load of rubbish. You couldn't run society without laws but God has only given us 10 and we have all broken nearly every law in the Bible. Now I can't go through every one of them but let's take the first and let's put it in its proper order thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart with all thy soul with all thy mind with all thy strength and thy neighbour as thy self we've all broken that one.

Ah but someone might reason and say but Mr Brandon there's two I haven't broken what are they? Thou shalt not kill. Do you know what John said in the epistle? He said if you hate your brother you're a murderer. In the Old Testament God was concerned with the action but when they had more light in the New Testament his concern with the thought that promotes the action.

Who's innocent now? Ah but someone might say that's lived a moral life I've never committed adultery. Jesus said if you look and lust and the thoughts in your mind it's as bad as the act who's innocent now. Now can I say this as carefully as I can? The 10 commandments were not the product of a judicial council.

The 10 commandments was given to us purely and exclusively by God. It's God's holy law and we have broken every one of those commandments. What happens if you break the law of the road? If a policeman discovers you what happens? You're punished.

Can you imagine us breaking almost every rule that God has given to us and no punishment? Forgive me being a little practical but wouldn't it be ridiculous if you had a thousand offences and you stood before the high bar and you said not guilty and the judge gave you a toffee apple and bogey. Wouldn't that be ridiculous? You see when you break the law then you're punished and therefore God has a punishment only one and this is what the word says. To Adam the day that you you will die and he died spiritually and he died physically and the scripture says the soul that sins it shall die.

You say what does that mean when I break one of the commandments I fall down dead? No if that were the case none of us would be alive. But you see that death simply means this that just as physical death is the separation of the soul from the body spiritual death is the separation of the sinner from God and it's as simple as this. Here's the circuit going through that circuit there is a diffusion of electricity.

If there was a short in that circuit it doesn't mean to say the circuit is not there but the electrician says the circuit is dead. He doesn't mean to say the circuit is disintegrated but he means that the circuit is broken there's no diffusion of electricity going through the circuit. Now the line between us and God is dead.

It's broken because God is holy and we are sinful and here's the flashpoint. Now I'm not going to shout this it's too serious but if you die with your sins unforgiven you will be eternally separated from God and that is eternal death that is out of darkness and that's why my dear friends it's absolutely vital for us to be forgiven of our sins. Now we must go a little deeper with this word iniquity it has to do with a moral twist.

How can I put this over to you? Have you ever seen someone that's born a cripple? There's lots of things that they cannot do. Have you ever picked up a bowling green ball they call it the wood and no matter how much you try and bowl that ball straight it won't go straight. Why? Because it's biased.

Now the word iniquity means that man's got a bias and that bias is sin and therefore the psalmist says we were shapen in iniquity and in sin did our mother conceive us. Now we must try and answer a very difficult question. Man is doing wonderful things today even in that gulf war he's using his brilliance in the realm of brutality isn't it but there's brilliance in it.

Take for instance space research to think it's mind-boggling that probably we shall be able to get human beings on Mars. Then think of the computer. The computers now are being made and they're so wonderful that they reckon in 10 years time they can render 50% of the world unemployed.

Marvellous invention you've got. And you see the more you look at modern man you can see that his brilliance. Take for instance in the realm of sport.

Quite frankly it's amazing that a human man can actually run a four minute mile. Now that is tremendous and even in the hundred yards to think some of them can do it just under 10 seconds. But I'll tell you what they can't do.

They can't keep the ten commands. Can't stop losing their temper. Can't stop lying.

And so we can see scientific advancement and moral decadence all over the world. Why? Mrs Thatcher put her finger. It's on it.

It's human nature. You see when we were born we were born with the genes of thinness. And like seeds that grow they begin to invade the whole of the personality.

So that man is permeated with sin. And therefore when David went over his life with God he said this with tears. Oh God I have missed the mark.

I have violated the ten commandments. Oh God I realize I've got a depraved nature. I was shapen and iniquity.

Only sin did my mother conceive me. But this is strange but true. You can know all that and say so what? So what? Do you know I have seen people coming to gospel meetings like this and for a whole week I've preached on sin.

Because if you can preach on sin for a whole week and then preach the cross you'll get one or two really saved. You say where's your scripture for that brother Peter? When Paul wrote the Romans he gave us three chapters on sin and five verses on the remedy. You see the point? Once we know our need then we

shall accept the remedy.

But I have seen people leaving the hall thanking me for the message. Unmoved, unimpressed, unsealed. Conviction of sin comes.

Now how was God going to convict David? You see in those days the Holy Spirit hadn't been poured out like it was today. There was a man in his kingdom who was a mighty man of God. A man that I love.

Can I say a man of spiritual pure steel. His name was prophet Nathan. And he was alone with his God for he knew God intimately and God came right down to him and told him the whole story of David.

He must have blushed. He must have said, Lord I can't believe it. That's true.

And the whole of David's life was exposed to him. Now he said I want you to go into the room and point it all out. Now when you consider he was great one of the greatest kings on the earth at that particular time there were difficulties because he had the right and the authority to put Nathan to death.

So Nathan went to the palace, asked for an audience with the king, was shown into the courtroom and in came King David looking quite innocent and high. Nathan said to him your majesty I want to present to you two men. Yes, begone.

One's rich the other's poor and he knew David loved poor men because he too was a poor lad. The rich man had herds and flocks in abundance, yes. The poor man had nothing save a little pet.

It was a hew lamb that was like a daughter to him. There came a wayfaring traveler to this man and this rich man was so miserly and mean he spared the take of his own flock and he killed this man's little hew lamb right in front of him and cooked it and gave it to that vagabond of a traveler. David was hopping mad.

He was steaming with infuriation. He could hardly control himself and then he said this the man that's done this thing shall die and pay fourfold and then old Nathan waited and said go up with me. It hit him like that.

His life was exposed and the whole of his life was exposed before him and at that moment he had to make a decision put this man to death or humble myself before God. Now friends if he had put a little finger on Nathan God would have struck him but he didn't do that. He went into the presence of God under deep conviction and he prayed this prayer.

I know my transgression in other words he was saying I'm not concerned one iota about Bathsheba although I realize I've sinned against her. I'm not concerned about the sins of Israel it's my sin my sin it's haunting me. Now that's the first sign you know you're being convicted.

God puts a ring all around you and then builds a sacred wall and he comes into that sanctum and he points at you and he says it's your sins I'm talking about now and you look up and you say with tears I know my sin my transgression. Then he moves away from that and somehow when he heard Nathan speaking he tried to forget it and he would call his lad and he would say bring forth the arrows and he would go out and try and shoot a venison in order to appease his conscience but once he was shooting it he would hear the word thou art the man and he would throw them down and say bring them in. Then he would call for food and he would call for drink that was intoxicating with the gall and he would try to drink himself into a stupor but once he was doing it the voice said thou art the man.

It roared at him like a lion it bellowed at him like an elephant it screamed at him like a vulture it hooted like an owl and at last he said this my sin my sin is ever before me. Couldn't get away from it that's conviction. Do you know I've seen men under conviction unable to sleep for a fortnight tossing on their beds and then kneeling by their bed paralyzed with greed saying oh god take away this awful conscience.

That's conviction and then he starts to calculate and he says this what have I done and then he looks he says I'm no longer pure I'm an unclean man he looks at his hands and he says I can't pray again lifting up holy hands I'm dirty with sin. He looked right into his own heart and he realized he had damaged himself completely. Secondly he looked around and he looked at Bathsheba and said yes I damaged that life and then he looked at the child that was struck with judgment and said my fault and then he looked at the whole of Israel and said I've sinned against them and then he got the biggest shock of all he looked up and he saw the heart of God hurting wounded and he wrote these words it's not against Bathsheba it's not even against myself against thee and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight.

Now can I go over some facts if you have been messing about with girls you've been singing against God if you have been committing private sins it's all against God every single one and this man was broken so that he comes into the presence of God and he looked at himself and every single spiritual bone in his body was broken oh he says the bones that you have broken may rejoice and then he gets light. It's a broken and a contrite heart thou will not despise. Friends would you forgive me if I just let down my hair and let fly.

One of the missing links in evangelism is this we've missed the holiness of God and we've missed the vileness of sin and what we're seeing is the devil's masterpiece imitated conversion and it's not the real work of God but in real conversion you get a glimpse of God's holiness and you see the utter vileness of sin and you loathe yourself and you long for forgiveness now when that takes place there's the real work of God transpiring broken weeping turning from sin he begins to plead and he uses three words and with this I close blot out my transgression. Now the word blot doesn't mean to say you've got bad deeds and he puts a blood on it they didn't have ink. The word blot means to erase.

It's the idea that the book of sins had been recorded and his sins were in that book and he was saying Lord give me a clean sheet how can I put this over to you. One Christian I knew there in England was a great soul winner and he used to do it with his car. Every day he picked up someone put them in the seat and spoke to them about the saviour.

He was passing through one of our main towns and he saw a man waiting for a lift and he stopped and said come in mate and he came in and sat down. He says what's your profession? He says I wouldn't like to tell you. He says I'm not shockable.

Well he says I tell you then. He says I'm a pickpocket. I've just come out of prison.

So this man was telling him all the things he had done in his life and they were terrible and he was just going to give him the gospel when there was a blue light behind him. He was going over the 30 mile an hour limit first time ever. He was doing 45 mile an hour and the policeman took his name number and address and he was going to have quite a heavy fine and he was dreadfully upset and he said to his fellow passenger that's the first time I've had a driving offence in my life and I'm very upset.

That's a bad testimony for a Christian. And the passenger got out he said don't worry about that policeman you won't hear from him. He said of course I will.

He took my name and number. He said I've got his book. Got it.

I've got his book. Now can you see the point. Now that's exactly what he was praying there.

Erase it. I want a clean sheet. And this is the great thing I want to share with you but how can God do that.

Last night we saw that it was impossible for a holy God to forgive sin cheaply. If he could you would never have peace. Therefore the next word he uses is wash me thoroughly.

Now it doesn't mean to say wash with soap. I wish you could see the meaning here. If we saw a leper here tonight all of us would feel sick.

If he were full of leprosy. And if that man was miraculously healed so that there wasn't a spot of leprosy on him he had to do then two things. He had to go home and wash himself.

And then he had to wash his clothing. And he would never wash his clothing with soap and water for they didn't have soap in those days. He would do it by dopping.

He would take his clothes and smash them against the smooth stone and knock all the dirt out. Says David I'm a leper I'm unclean. I need to be washed by beating.

Have you got that? And you know the one that was beaten not David but the Lord Jesus Christ. The only sinless person that ever lived. Went to the cross.

Bore our sins and bore the judgment. And listen to this verse. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

And the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we're healed. No cheap forgiveness. And as we were saying last night we're not forgiven by the word of the Lord.

We are forgiven through the blood of Jesus. That's how we can be washed. And through that precious blood that was shed all griftless all our sins can be forgiven.

And then he uses a word and I'm going to quote now from David now. Cleanse me from my sin. And he says there's no English equivalent and it means this.

Cleanse all my past sins every single one of them. Cleanse all my present sins those mountain of sins that I've committed. Cleanse them every one of them.

And Lord you know all about my future sins and you know all about my up and downness. Cleanse even my future sins. But David Barron says that's not coming to the end of it.

And then it means this. So cleanse me and pronounce me clean. That all my sins look as though they're un-sins as though they've never been committed.

And the Lord can cleanse us like that tonight through his precious blood. And he can look upon us after we have been cleaned. And he sees us in Christ.

And he sees the righteousness of Christ upon us. But what's the secret? It's coming to a point where we're broken. Coming to a point where we're sick and tired of iniquity.

Coming to a point where we turn from sin and turn to God with a desire for God to rule and regulate our lives. And it's throwing ourselves on Christ.

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