

A SPIRITUAL HOUSECLEANING

Psalm 51:1, 2

Introduction:

- 1. There used to be a TV sitcom called “The Odd Couple.”**
 - a. Two men shared an apartment.**
 - b. One was very sloppy, the other very clean.**
 - c. My college roommate and I could have inspired the show.**
- 2. I believe the adage, “Cleanliness is next to Godliness.”**
- 3. We give our homes a good cleaning every now and then.**
- 4. Spiritually, Christians need to “clean house” from time to time.**
 - a. We need to examine ourselves (2 Co. 13:5).**
 - b. We must get rid of attitudes that can keep us out of Heaven.**

Discussion:

- I. LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES FROM AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT.**
 - A. Forgiveness is essential to salvation.**
 - 1. Without God’s forgiveness, we would have no hope.**
 - 2. Christ made forgiveness possible by the cross (Eph. 1:7).**
 - 3. He set an example of forgiveness for us (Lu. 23:34).**
 - B. If we will not forgive others, God will not forgive us (Mt. 6:12, 14, 15).**
 - 1. I met a man who had killed another years before.**
 - 2. He believed the truth, but had not obeyed it.**
 - 3. Relatives of the man he had killed were in the church and would not accept him.**
 - C. We must also learn to forgive ourselves.**
 - 1. Peter denied the Lord, was forgiven, and became a tireless worker in the kingdom.**
 - a. Judas betrayed the Lord, but took his own life.**
 - b. Peter was able to forgive himself; Judas was not.**
 - 2. Paul persecuted Christians unto the death, but was forgiven and served sacrificially (1 Ti. 1:12-14).**
 - 3. We must accept forgiveness and move on (Phil. 3:13,14).**
- II. LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES FROM A NEGATIVE SPIRIT.**
 - A. Some by nature are more cheerful than others.**
 - 1. Nothing reflects more on Christianity than a grouchy spirit.**
 - 2. “Some were born in the objective case and the cranky mood.”**

B. Christians have reason to be cheerful, positive and optimistic.

1. Our sins are forgiven (Co. 1:14).
2. God hears our prayers (1 Pe. 3:12).
3. Christ is our Advocate and High Priest (1 Jn. 2:1; He. 4:15).
4. Heaven is our eternal home (1 Pe. 1:3, 4).
5. Lincoln suffered from depression, but observed: "Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

III. LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES FROM A CRITICAL SPIRIT.

A. The Pharisees were hypocritical.

1. They "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (Lu. 18:9).
2. Even the Son of God did not receive their approval!

B. Jesus warned against harsh, critical judgment (Mt. 7:1-5).

1. If Jesus forbids all judging, we would not be able to distinguish between good and evil.
2. He was forbade unrighteous judgment (Jn. 7:24).

C. A teacher held up a sheet of white paper before his class.

1. There was one tiny black dot in the middle.
2. He asked the class: "What do you see?"
3. Everyone answered: "A black dot."
4. They did not notice all the white margin, just the tiny dot.
5. It is easy to see another's faults but overlook his good.

Conclusion:

1. A man who had an evil spirit depart from him (Mt. 12:43-45).

1. When the spirit found no place to go, he returned to the man.
2. He found the place he had vacated empty.
3. He found seven other more wicked spirits to dwell with him.
4. If we cleanse ourselves from sin, and do not replace sin with righteousness, we are worse off than before.

2. Let us replace an unforgiving spirit with forgiveness.

3. Let us replace a negative spirit with faith, hope, cheer, and optimism.

4. Let us replace a harsh, critical spirit by looking for the good in others' lives.