

Series: Psalms

Title: Casting Down the Worker of Iniquity

Text: Ps 36: 1-12

Date: May 10, 2018

Place: SGBC, NJ

Psalm 36: 9: For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light...12: There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

Every believer is made up of two men. In every believer there is the old man with which we are born the first time, *which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*. And in every believer there is the new man with which we are given in the new birth, *which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*. (Eph 4: 22, 24) Within every believer these two men are opposed to each other. The old man is a *worker of iniquity* and only sins. The new man, in which Christ dwells in Spirit, is holy in which we worship God.

How is our old man of sin subdued? How is our old worker of iniquity cast down? How is the new man renewed so that we worship God in spirit and in truth? The apostle Paul tells us it is by the Holy Spirit. The Corinthian's were walking after the lust of the flesh by going back to the law as they used it to bite and devour one another. Paul said,

Galatians 5: 16: *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

The Holy Spirit wars against our old man of flesh so that we cannot fulfill the lust of the flesh as we would. There is a lot more lusts of our flesh that we would do but the Holy Spirit of God subdues our flesh so that we cannot do the things that we would. That is why Paul exhorted them to "*Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*"

It is the subduing of the old man of flesh in a believer that Psalm 36 is speaking of. It declares that "*there*", in the light of Christ, the worker of iniquity is cast down and shall not be able to rise.

Psalm 36: 9: For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light...12: There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

Subject: Casting Down the Worker of Iniquity (Or Renewing the New Man)

Proposition: In Psalm 36, we behold Christ casting down the worker of iniquity in a believer by revealing to the believer his own sinful flesh and Christ is renewing the new man by revealing to the believer the goodness of God toward his people. Thereby, Christ casts down the old man within the believer and renews the new man.

Psalm 36: 1: « To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD. »

We are looking at the Psalms as the words of the Son of David, according to the flesh, that is, the words of Christ Jesus, David's Lord. Christ is the Servant of the LORD serving God by bringing God's people to him created anew in the righteousness and holiness of Christ. This is Christ speaking in David's heart.

THE REVELATION OF OUR OLD MAN OF FLESH

Psalm 36: 1: The transgression of the wicked, saith within my heart, *that there is no fear of God before his eyes.* 2: For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. 3: The words of his mouth *are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.* 4: He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way *that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.*

When a believer is overcome by his old, sinful flesh, the Spirit of Christ speaks into our new man revealing to us the sin of our old, wicked man of flesh—“*The transgression of the wicked, saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.*”

I agree with Robert Hawker that every commentary makes this to be David speaking about other wicked sinners. But this is what Christ reveals to us about our own sinful flesh. We do not need to look at others to see the transgression of the wicked. It is in our own sinful flesh. Our new man is created by God’s grace in the new birth. But there is still in us the same old corrupt nature we got from Adam. Therefore, as a regenerated believer, the apostle Paul said, “*with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with my flesh, the law of sin.*” (Rom 7: 25)

Paul said, “*O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” When our old man begins to reign over us, the only way we are delivered is by Christ speaking in our new man, revealing to us the sin of our old man.

First, Christ makes us see ourselves as the wicked by speaking within our hearts and bringing us to confess what our old man is—“*The transgression of the wicked, saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.*” Like he did in the first hour, the Holy Spirit reveals to me that *I am the wicked.* In my fleshly man there is “*no fear of God before his eyes.*”

Christ reveals to us that our old man of sin is flattering us in iniquity and deceit—“*For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.*” If I think myself good then it is my sinful flesh flattering me in my own eyes with iniquity and deceit. If I think my sin is not really that bad then it is my sinful flesh flattering me in my own eyes with iniquity and deceit. If I think I am better than others then it is my sinful flesh flattering me in my own eyes with iniquity and deceit. If I think I have plenty of time so I do not need to be so zealous to seek God then it is my sinful flesh flattering me in my own eyes with iniquity and deceit.

Christ reveals to us the only thing our old man of sin does is sin—“*he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed.*” Why will we lie on our pillow tonight thinking of a thousand worldly things we need to do tomorrow rather than thinking on what we have heard tonight? Our old man of sin deviseth mischief upon his bed.

This old sinful part of us makes you and I end up walking in sin against God—“*he setteth himself in a way that is not good.*” We are not without excuse. When Paul said “*It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*”, he was not excusing himself. (Rom 7: 17) My sinful old man is as much me as my new man is me. When my sinful flesh sets me in a way that is not good, it is me that did it. Christ brings us to confess this about ourselves.

Within every believer, the carnal mind is still enmity against GOD but “*he abhorreth not evil.*” In the new man, we love God and abhor evil. But in our old man, we abhor God and love evil. (Rom 8: 7)

By the Holy Spirit of God Christ subdues our old man by revealing to us how hateful our old man of sin is—“*For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, UNTIL his iniquity be found to be hateful.*” How long will my old man flatter me and deceive me in sin? Until Christ makes me behold how hateful the iniquity of my old man

really is. Then, once again, like he did in the first hour, Christ reveals to us that our old man is hatred against God. God said then,

Jeremiah 2:19: Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that *it is* an evil *thing* and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear *is* not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

So it is Christ who gets the glory in all ways for delivering us from ourselves. “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Rom 7: 24-25) This is true in the first hour and it is true in every hour since.

A man told me once that he had almost gotten control of his sin. A truly sanctified child of God never boasts that he is growing more and more holy and less and less sinful. When a sinner makes such a boast that is a sinner’s own sinful flesh *flattering him* into thinking he is holier and holier. But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, he delivers his people from the body of this death by revealing to us in the inner man that in our flesh dwells no good thing!

THE REVELATION OF GOD’S CHARACTER AND GOODNESS

Psalm 36: 5: Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. 6: Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. 7: How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. 8: They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. 9: For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

When Christ has brought us to behold the sinfulness of our fleshly man then Christ speaks within the new man, magnifying the greatness of God and his grace to save us in spite of us. The Holy Spirit of God bears witness with our new spirit, bringing us to behold and cry out—“*Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.*”

First, beholding the greatness of our own wicked flesh, Christ magnifies the mercy of God toward us—“*thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens.*” I see the LORD is great in mercy when I am brought to behold God withholding from this sinful-wretch everything I deserve. We never understand God’s mercy, and never glorify God for his mercy, until we are made to see what wicked sinners we are. The only thing a man reveals by expressing his disdain for God to save by sovereign mercy is that he has no idea what a cursed sinner he is.

Also, when Christ makes us behold what an unfaithful rebel we are in our flesh then Christ magnifies to us the unchanging faithfulness of God—“*thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.*” God is faithful to fulfill every covenant promise he made to his Son and to his people in his Son. Nothing makes us behold God’s unchanging faithfulness toward us as when Christ makes us behold what wretched sinners we are and that God is still faithful to us. When he reveals our sin to us,

Lamentations 3: 15: He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. 16: He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes. 17: And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity. 18: And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: 19: Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. 20: My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.

Once he has humbled us by revealing our sin, then Christ magnifies God's faithfulness in our inward man and here is the result.

Lamentations 3: 21: This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. 22: *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* 23: *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

Furthermore, when Christ reveals to us how unrighteous we are, Christ magnifies to us God's righteousness—*"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast."* God is righteous. His righteousness rules all that God does.

Numbers 23: 19: *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*

God's righteousness is immovable as the great mountains.

Isaiah 54:10: *For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.*

God's *judgments* are his ways and his providence. In God's providence, we are often perplexed and cannot understand God's ways—*"thy judgments are a great deep."* But, brethren, it is not for us to descend into the deep to try to understand God's judgments. It is for us to trust that God is righteous. Knowing God is righteous we God will do what is right unto us though we do not understand his judgments. We can be certain that nothing can cause God's righteousness to waver toward us. It would be easier to move the Rocky Mountains than to move God from his righteousness.

So when Christ reveals our sin and brings us to see ourselves as more beast than man, he magnifies God's righteousness in Christ to preserve us so that we cry out, *"O LORD, thou preservest man and beast."* By God's righteousness established in Christ for his people, God preserves the whole world: man and beast. When Adam plunged us all into sin in the garden, the reason God preserved man and beast is because he had a people in Christ our Surety, who would make us righteous on the cross.

On the cross Christ declared the righteousness of God by declaring God just. Christ upheld God's holy law, his just justice, when God slew all his guilty people by slaying his own Son in our place. And Christ declared God the Justifier because God justified all his people in righteousness when he slew Christ and raised him again for our justification. So God continues to preserve us because God's righteousness demands that God bring all for whom Christ died to repentance and faith.

2 Peter 3: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance...14: Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace without spot, and blameless. 15: And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation;

At last, weeing what a God-hating, sin-loving, worthless sinners we are and seeing God's holy character and ways toward his sinful people, Christ magnifies God's lovingkindness toward us. Therefore, once again, we are granted repentance from our sinful flesh and brought to trust him—*"How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings."* All over again, each time our sin is revealed and our new man is renewed,

Jeremiah 31:3: The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Has Christ made you see that in your flesh dwells nothing but sin? Has Christ magnified God's mercy to you, his faithfulness, his righteousness and goodness? If so then you will trust him! *"Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings."*

All who trust him, God makes to be abundantly satisfied by providing all we need in this life and the life to come—*"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."*

In this work Christ does in our hearts we experience Christ making us *"satisfied with the fatness of God's house"* and *"making us drink of the river of God's pleasures."* So we are brought to say with the Psalmist,

Psalm 65: 4: *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.*

By this work of Christ turning us from our sin to our gracious Lord, we experience that Christ himself *"is the fountain of life."* He said,

John 4: 14: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

By this work of Christ speaking into our new man, revealing our sin unto us and revealing God in our hearts, we experience that in *"Christ our Light we shall we see light."* It is what Christ meant when he said,

John 8:12...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

COMMUNION WITH GOD IN PRAYER

Psalm 36: 10: O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart. 11: Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

Through this revelation of our sin and of God's goodness and grace to us in spite of our sin, Christ brings us back into communion with God. When we are overcome by our old man, the heavens become shut-up to us. But by this work, Christ brings us to God's throne of grace where, through Christ our Lord, we once again beg God to be gracious to our brethren and to us.

Having experienced Christ saving us by his lovingkindness and his righteousness, we know that his lovingkindness and his righteousness is the only way we and our brethren could have been saved from ourselves. So we pray for our brethren—*"O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart."*

Having experienced that our own sinful flesh is the proud and the wicked one, we pray for Christ to keep us from ourselves—*"Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me."* We need Christ to keep us, not only from the foot of pride and the hand of the wicked in others, but chiefly, from the pride and wickedness of our own sinful flesh.

ALL GLORY TO GOD IN CHRIST

Psalm 36: 9: For...in thy light shall we see light....12: There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

The end of this great preserving work of our triune God in Christ is that he brings us to give all glory to the Lord.

We know Christ has delivered his people from the body of this death when our old man was crucified with him on the cross? (Rom 6: 6) We know at the last day, Christ shall deliver us from the body of this death when he “*shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*” (Php 3: 21) But throughout our life, each time our old sinful man of flesh takes us captive, we are made to know that he, too, delivers us over and over from ourselves. So we thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord that he alone continues to deliver us.

Though we have a new man within us *which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, still, *in our flesh dwells no good thing*. By this work within us, Christ teaches us that if left to our own power, we would be brought into captivity by our sinful flesh and there we would remain. Paul said,

Romans 7: 22: For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

By the Spirit of Christ subduing our flesh and making us see light in his light, we are made to know that it is only in the light of Christ that are sinful flesh—that old worker of iniquity—is fallen. In the light of Christ he is cast down. As long as Christ makes us walk in his light, our sinful flesh shall not be able to rise. Therefore, we give all the glory where it is due. We praise God and his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 7: 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And we give God all the glory for preventing our flesh from doing even more of the sinful things that we would.

Galatians 5: 16: *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.* 17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Let's end by heed the exhortation of the apostle Paul when he said, “*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*” Brethren, let us be diligent to constantly walk in the Spirit by constantly attending the preaching of Christ crucified—when his saints assemble, when we are commuting to work, when we are cleaning the house and when we are cutting the grass. And let us walk in the Spirit by constantly studying his word and constantly asking him to keep us from ourselves. In other words, let us be always looking to Christ!

And when we once again we fail and our old man begins to reign and our faithful God and Lord Jesus Christ once again delivers us, let us thank him, giving him all the glory. Keep looking to Christ. For one day, he will deliver us for the last time, putting down this old worker of iniquity forever! What a day that will be when the warfare is over and we can praise God perfectly with no sin ever again!

Amen!