

# Cleanse Yourself

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves** from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2Corinthians 7:1)



Christians at Corinth were admonished to cleanse themselves. To cleanse implies that there must be something to be cleansed of. Paul, of course is speaking of spiritual cleansing and not taking a shower or washing hands. Remember, he is writing to those who are already Christians. Christians can become filthy when participating in evil deeds and when contemplating participation (**Ephesians 5:11**; **Matthew 5:27-30**). If the Corinthian Christians needed such an admonition, do we not also need it?

## Who needs cleansing?

All sinners need cleansing. This certainly includes those who are sometimes referred to as “alien” sinners. This does not mean they are from a different country or planet, but are sinners who have never come to the Lord to be cleansed by His blood. Saul of Tarsus is an example. He was a zealous Jew, but he had never come to know the forgiveness brought about by the blood of the Lord through obedience. He was then given instruction by Ananias: *“Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name”* (**Acts 22:16**). The very fact that the church is made of people who have been washed indicates this need to be cleansed from past sins if salvation is to be had. This is the very reason the Lord’s blood was shed. *“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless”* (**Ephesians 5:25-27**). These Corinthians had once been clean in this way (**1Corinthians 6:11**). Christians, who err, must be cleansed also or else be condemned. *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded”* (James 4:8). *“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us”* (**1John 1:8-10**).

## Why seek cleansing?

Certainly, people must be cleansed to be acceptable unto God. This is necessary to be His sons and daughters. *“Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. ‘AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,’ Says the Lord Almighty”* (**2Corinthians 6:17,18**). Men also need cleansing in order to escape the wrath of God. *“Therefore consider the*

*members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them” (Colossians 3:5-7).* Men need cleansing in order to reach heaven. In regard to God’s dwelling John wrote: *“nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27).*

## What contaminates?

It is sin that contaminates; that’s why Paul was in need of washing his sins away (**Acts 22:16**). The defilements of the world contaminate. We are reminded of this from our text. We are to cleanse ourselves *“from all defilement of flesh and spirit.”* That which makes unrighteousness contaminates. As we already noted from **1John 1:9**, we are in need of being cleansed *“from all unrighteousness.”* Certainly, the contaminators are many.

## How is one to be cleansed?

The blood of bulls and goats cannot do this (**Hebrews 10:4**). Neither will soap and water cleanse man in the way he needs it. It is not the washing of the contamination from the flesh (**1Peter 3:21**). The cleansing ingredient is the blood of Jesus. This is true for both alien sinner and erring Christian (**Matthew 26:28; 1John 1:7,9**). Yet, the blood of Jesus has been shed for all, and still the majority are not and will not be saved (**Matthew 7:13,14**). The saved are those who have washed their robes in the blood of Jesus by obeying the gospel (**Revelation 7:14**).

Several things are also said to cleanse in conjunction with the blood of Jesus and man’s obedience. The word cleanses (**John 15:3**). Faith cleanses or purifies (**Acts 15:9**). The erring are promised cleansing upon a confession of sins (**1John 1:9**). Of course, repentance must precede this (**Acts 8:22**).

A word needs to be said about cleanliness and godliness. It has been said that cleanliness is next to godliness. The Bible does not say this. However, it does show that cleanliness and godliness go hand in hand. *“Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (1Corinthians 6:11).* The conclusion of this is then given. *“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body” (1Corinthians 6:19,20).*

Are you clean? If not, why wait? Cleanse yourself from all defilement by responding to the Lord.