

Are you Feeling Unclean?

Sexual abuse has a way of creating a sense of uncleanness inside. A deep sense of dirt that is hard to shift. Such abuse touches that private, intimate part of us in such a way that even though any outward scars may heal; the inward ones do not seem to. No amount of physical cleansing will shift this sense of dirt.

The Bible tells of another type of uncleanness. But this is one people struggle less with because they deny it is even there. Before a truly holy God, we are 'dirty'; it is part of our fallen nature. The Old Testament records the way people tried to cleanse themselves of this dirt symbolically by various rituals. However, no amount of self cleansing could do what was necessary to allow us to stand before God, acceptably cleansed. Only the blood of Christ, perfect in every sense, could be an acceptable sacrifice. His sacrifice makes real the promise that through faith in him, we become *perfectly* clean before God. If you are a non believer reading this you might think that the reality of our own uncleanness before God merely increases the emotional burden you might now be carrying. However, here is the promise: God is able to perfectly cleanse you so that when you die you may stand before him confident, not in your own attempts to 'clean up', but in his 'cleaning up' of you by giving you Christ to lean on. He then becomes your Healer: a healer of that sense of dirt that is so deep that you can't remove it yourself. The world may provide you with systems of self help, of therapy and so on. Only God can cleanse you of the dirt that keeps you from Him. God can help you remove the dirt that another human has caused you to bear. Before Him, *whatever* has happened to you and *however* to feel, you

are clean, you have *inherent worth* and *true dignity*. Realising the uncleanness we are born with does not psychological disturb us: it sets us free as we find Him who can cleanse us in this and as we then lean on Him to help us find cleansing from the sense of dirt that abuse can leave.