

Sermon 64: Godly Sorrow and Renewed Fellowship: Psalm 51

Text: Psalm 51:1-19 "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 mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be 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 parts: and in the hidden part 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 hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine 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 bloodguiltiness, 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 shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise..."

Introduction: The background for this Psalm

- **Psalm 51** is an expression of David's deep brokenness over his sin described in **2 Samuel 11**.
- **His treacherous actions are the greatest blot of his remarkable life: 2 Samuel 12:14** "By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme..."
- **There would be untold misery reaped out of his treacherous actions:**
 - His child would die.
 - His house would become deeply divided.
 - He would fail to address serious injustices in his own home.
 - The nation would go through a horrible war started by his own son.
 - He would be personally humiliated by the actions of his children.
 - Advisors would turn against him and seek to ruin him.
 - He would see his sinful patterns repeated in his children.
- **God was merciful to David despite his sin:**
 - He mercifully gave David a son by Bathsheba who would bring them both great joy.

- He would be a part of the lineage of Christ.
- He would build the temple, pen scripture, and be renowned for his wisdom.
- **God hated what David did, but He also graciously brought good out of it.**

Summary: Despite the lowest moment of his life, David turned to God in brokenness and penned one of the most powerful prayers of repentance in Scripture.

Proposition: We must turn to God and take comfort in the gospel when we have sinned.

Part 1: David's penitent cry heart:

- **Five deep burdens expressed in prayer:**
 - **He wanted to experience God's compassion: 51:1** "Have mercy upon me..."
 - **He wanted the stain of his sin to be removed:**
 - **51:1** "Blot out my transgressions.
 - **51:2** "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity...Cleanse me from my sin..."
 - **51:7** "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
 - **51:9** "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.
 - **51:14** "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness..."
 - **He wanted the joy of communion with God to be restored:**
 - **51:8** "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.
 - **51:12** "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit..."
 - **He wanted to be renewed in the inner man: 51:10** "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.
 - **He wanted God's presence and empowerment for service:**
 - **51:11** "Cast me not away from thy presence..."
 - **51:11** "Take not thy holy spirit from me..."
- **These burdens reveal how sin wreaks havoc and is only remedied in the gospel:**
 - It causes us to become the objects of God's just wrath against sin.
 - It leaves us stained and unclean.
 - It robs us of the intimate communion and joy we were created to enjoy with God.
 - It disorders our thinking and passions.

- It separates us from God and leaves us powerless to live as we were created to live.

Part 2: David's painful experience in sin:

- **His cry flowed from a painful experience with sin:**
- **He did not blame God or others for his experience:**
- **He owned it and sought God for the remedy it:**
 - **He experienced defilement: 51:2** "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin..."
 - **He experienced the misery of a defiled conscience: 51:3** "My sin is ever before me..."
 - **He experienced the presumption and arrogance of sin: 51:4** "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned..."
 - **He experienced how this brokenness entangled his nature from the womb: 51:5** "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me..."
 - **He experienced the loss of joy and a wearied body: 51:8** "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice..."
 - **He experienced a compromised ministry: 51:13** "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee..."
 - **He experienced a suppressed desire to worship God: 51:15** "Open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise..."
 - **He experienced worship hypocrisy: 51:19** "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness..."
- **These devastating effects of his sin could only be reversed by God, through the gospel.**

Part 3: David's renewed vision of God:

- **As a penitent sinner, he realized only God could meet his need:**
- **He took comfort in God's unchanging character:**
 - **His Covenant Faithfulness: 51:1** "According to thy lovingkindness..."
 - **His Rich Mercy: 51:1** "According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies..."
 - **His Sovereignty: 51:4** "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned..."
 - **His Omnipresence: 51:4** "Done this evil in thy sight..."
 - **His Righteousness: 51:4** "That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest..."
 - **His power to restore the broken: 51:10-11** "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence..."

- **God's unchanging character always points back to the gospel:**

Part 4: David's hope: 51:1 "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions..."

- **The Key to David's comfort of forgiveness:**
 - "According to thy lovingkindness..."
 - "According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions..."
- **David's desire for comfort turned to two realities:**
 - God is faithful to His covenant promises.
 - In His tender mercies, He will blot out David's transgressions.
- **Explanation:**
 - God promised to send a Redeemer, and as an Old Testament saint, David was looking forward to that redemption.
 - This promise and God's covenant faithfulness gave David comfort.
 - Though the promises had not yet been fulfilled, David knew God would do what He promised and that He could deal with David as if it were already accomplished, because God will never lie.
 - David knew that God would one day blot out his transgressions.
 - David's comfort was the cross to come and what it would accomplish.
- **Expanding this explanation:**
 - **We have forgiveness through Christ's shed blood: ἄφεσις:** Forgiving a debt through an acceptable payment made on one's behalf:
 - **Colossians 1:14** "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins..."
 - **Hebrews 9:22-28** "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission...now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself...So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many..."
 - **In the Old Testament they had forgiveness in a different sense: πάρεσις:** Passing over an offense until it can be dealt with later.
 - **Romans 3:25** "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God..."
- **The Key to our comfort of forgiveness: 1 John 1:1-9** "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we

say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness..."

Application:

- **Unbeliever:**

- Your sin stands between you and God.
- There is nothing you can give to God or do for God that can remedy your desperate situation.
- You need to turn to Christ and place your faith in His finished work.

- **Believer:**

- **Remember:**

- Our sin causes us to become the objects of God's just wrath against sin.
- It leaves us stained and unclean.
- It robs us of the intimate communion and joy we were created to enjoy with God.
- It disorders our thinking and passions.
- It separates us from God and leaves us powerless to live as we were created to live.
- The redemptive promises that David looked for are the same promises we look back to as they were fulfilled in Christ.

- **Reckon:**

- Consider these promises true in Him.
- The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.
- He is faithful to forgive
- He is just to forgive
- He has cleansed us from all unrighteousness.
- He has done these things that we can have fellowship with Him.
- He has written these things so we can have fullness of joy.

- **Rejoice:**

- You are forgiven.
- You are cleansed.
- You are received.
- His love never fails.
- You can enjoy His presence now and you will forever.