

Preaching 06/23/2019

Psalm 51 – A Broken and Contrite Heart

So thankful for the opportunity to prepare to preach God's Word and to share what God has shown me through Psalm 51.

This has not been a one- or two-week study. Psalm 51 is special to me and has been for a long time.

It is special to have people who are very dear to me here today. Many here know me very well and others I hope to know you more in the years to come. Those who know me know I am an emotional guy. I tend to live life with the book more open rather than closed. I love to relate to people and share in what is going on with their lives and give back with my own life. No matter the subject I can generally relate and most of the time it is in the area of something dumb I have done. Most are funny and get funnier with each recollection. The caption "What was I thinking?" could be placed under any number of my fail videos. In fact, when we all get to Heaven, if you have the opportunity to watch the 10 day mini series of Chris Callahan fails, try to get front row seats.

Just too wet your whistles... **Tell Bocce Ball story**

If only life's fails were limited to the America's Funniest Home Videos variety. But they're not. No, we all have a different video loop we would rather not have anyone know about. The one where our actions are only part of the story and the heart behind the action is ugly. The things we do or think about that have nothing to do with God and everything to do with our sinful desires. These are the ones we want to justify, lie to cover up, pretend never happened, minimize their impact and keep to ourselves. And if they come out, we do all we can to explain it away and move on. Damage control. I can fix this!

You see, Psalm 51 is a testimony. David wrote it with God's hand on the pen with him. It is a gift to all who choose to own their sin and throw themselves to the Mercy of the Lord.

Psalm 51 is David's testimony about sin's impact, the payment of sin, and how it leads him to give God praise.

Here is our anchor today.

**Because the ultimate consequence of sin is separation from the Lord, a right sacrifice must be made to restore the relationship.**

To get us where we need to go today we will

1<sup>st</sup> We will Look at David's path up through the multitude of sins he committed

2<sup>nd</sup> Brokenness and how important it is.

And In the end see how God is the hero and how we need the King of all Kings

We don't have to be much of a Biblical Scholar to see that in Psalm 51 David is sharing the agony of his sin. He knows he needs God's help and wants to be clean. But how did we get to this point?

The rise of King David is remarkable and the favor of God in his life fills many pages in the Bible. He is a great old testament hero!

Listen to this list, no particular order.

Favor of God in David's life!

- In 1 Samuel 16 we learn how David was chosen to be king by God Himself. Not by looks or stature but by the heart. Not like Saul was. We are told the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. Not a bad start!
- At the end of that same chapter we learn how David played the lyre for Saul when Saul suffered with evil Spirits and Saul would be comforted and the evil spirits would leave him

- In Chapter 17 we see how David stood up to the Philistines and a giant named Goliath, a man of war from his youth and David said “I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts, and this day the Lord will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you down and cut off your head!” And with faith many of us cannot comprehend he does just that.
- God blessed David with the friendship of Jonathan and the Bible tells us “the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David. What a friendship blessed by the Lord.
- Time after time David was protected from Saul during the time when Saul was chasing David to kill him.
- David was given victory after victory after victory over his enemies by the Lord and David knew it was the Lord delivering his enemies to him.
- And in 2 Samuel 7 David is given a promise from God that from David’s bloodline God will establish his throne forever.

A life of God’s favor and a closeness with God. A relationship where David could be angry with God, took great peace in God, was obedient to God, and God would speak to him through Nathan.

He was at the top! Years and years of success. Powerful. Many luxuries. Many wives. More wives and concubines. People kneeling before him. He gives a command and it is done. He is starting to age. Is it time to relax? He has shown Mercy to so many enemies.

Maybe I deserve... (pause)

Then we read in 2 Samuel 11:1

“In the spring of the year, when kings go out to battle David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.”

Imagine a great King and general like David deciding I’m going to just stop doing what I have always done. So what is he going to do?

Clean the garage? Mow the lawn? (pause)

No. (pause)

When we read the rest of 2 Samuel 11 and through most of 12 we find out exactly what he did.

He lusted and coveted a woman he did not know who was bathing on a rooftop. He found out her name was Bathsheba and she was married. Didn't matter to David. He sent for her, slept with her and she became pregnant. Well realizing this is bad he called her husband Uriah home from his post to sleep with her so he would be off the hook. Problem solved!! Nobody has to know. Well Uriah was too loyal of a soldier to leave the ark and his men to selfishly go sleep with his wife, so David tried again the next day by getting him drunk first. That didn't work either. Well who knows if it was panic or anger that kicked into motion this next plan which was to have Uriah killed in battle. Well that worked and so David "nobly" took in Bathsheba to be another wife and then she had the baby.

In 2 Samuel 11:27 we are told this thing David had done displeased the Lord. Displeased!!?? So God reveals all this to Nathan, Nathan confronts David through a story where a rich man took a poor man's precious little lamb, killed it for a meal rather than using one of his own livestock. David is outraged by the story, Nathan tells him you are that man and all the consequences that go along with what he did and David is crushed and all he can say in the moment is "I have sinned against the Lord"

It is incredible to think that David with the Lord's favor continuously with him fell into such sin. **But isn't that the nature of sin. It is always there. Our selfish desires, the desires of the flesh, the temptation to put aside what God wants to pursue these sinful passions. To block out all we know to be right and choose to taste the fruit. In our abundance decide it isn't enough and covet more, no matter the cost! To panic and try to cover one sin with another!! We want to sweep it under the rug and forget about it.**

Oh aren't we experts in the ways of sin. (pause)

David came to understand this condition intimately. **Sprinting in the delusion of sin only to have a merciful brick wall placed into his path to slam into and open his eyes to the truth of all he had done.**

In Psalm 51, God uses David in a state of humility and clarity to show his people what sin truly is, its impact and His mercy.

So what can we learn about sin from David's testimony in Psalm 51?

1) **We are sinners from birth.** Look at vs (Vs 5) "Behold I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." We see here how as David sees his sin in the scope of his life. As we reviewed earlier, David's life is filled with and defined by God's favor. David knows this at his core. He has seen God working in his life and through his life. Like previously mentioned, before his multitude of sins centered around Bathsheba, God speaks to David through Nathan and lays out an incredible covenant promising peace and that from David's offspring a kingdom established forever! But David still pursued sin. Imagine David after snapping out of this downward spiral and trying to piece all this together. The equation doesn't work! God does all this for me and through me and I still spit in his face with my selfish lust, arrogance, lies and murder. How can this be! Surely David knew the sin capable in all people. He knew that we are all sinners. I mean in Genesis 6:5 it says "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." This should be no surprise. Yet when we read vs 5 it seems like this is a revelation to David.

**It was!** (pause)

Suddenly something David "knew" became personal. And when it became personal it was raw and stunning.

What about you? Is the knowledge of being born a sinner personal (pause), an intimate knowledge that “I am a sinner” I had to be since birth. I try to stop sinning but it doesn’t stop. What is wrong with me? How can I be so blessed and so sinful? Is this real to you, **if so praise God!** This is reality when left to ourselves. It feels so gross. YES! It is gross.

And this is where David takes us next.

Much of Psalm 51 is David’s attempt to put into words all that was flooding through him. The consequences of his sins were deep and widespread. Let’s look at this in your Bibles.

A) Vs 3 says (read vs 3) Here we see how David is **consumed** by what he has done. He has likely played the scenario over and over in his head. Thinking about all the ways he could have avoided what he did. How many steps along the way he could have ended it. **Can you hear David thinking...**

**What if I would have been off with my men fighting the battles the Lord placed before us?**

**What if I would have immediately turned away when I saw Bathsheba and pursued something righteous instead?**

**What if I would have stopped long enough to see the fear and hurt in Bathsheba’s eyes when she understood why I had called for her and stopped right there?!!**

**What if...what if...what if?**

B) We see **despair** from David in Vs 11 (read vs 11) He sees how his sin separates him from God. The closeness he has always had with the Lord severed by what he has done. Oh what a horrible, scary place to be.

C) Look in vs 9 (read vs 9) David knows a Holy God cannot even look at a sinner such as he.

D) He knows he is “**dirty**” and needs to be clean (Read vs 2 and 7)

E) Then is vs 14a (Read vs 14a) He is weighed down with **guilt.**

F) In 14b and 15 David shares the dilemma. How can he testify about all the amazing attributes of the Lord while stuck in the shadow of his sins?

How do you sum all that up? Vs 8 and 16 I think do the best job of that.  
(READ VS 8 and 16)

Broken and crushed. Do you see it?

I have heard Ty use the phrase “spiritually bankrupt”. Others call it “completely lost”. It’s the spot where there is no more fighting to protect your reputation, no more making excuses, telling another lie is pointless. You can’t stand it anymore and realized you really are that sinner you have always heard about. You have just fallen over the edge of Niagra Falls and realize you deserve the fate awaiting you at the bottom.

I ask you again, Have you been there? Are you there right now, knowing the specific sins you can’t seem to own and expose? Have you done your own math equation and realize it doesn’t add up, where you are stunned by the fact that your really are a wicked sinner at the core, from birth! Owning your sin is a scary place to go, but there is freedom on the other side. Be courageous and in all humility be able to say, “I have sinned against the Lord” Here’s the good news. The Lord doesn’t leave us there.

For our God is the God of restoration! And Oh man do we need it.

In vs 7 and 10 David shares with us how God and God alone can make him clean. God can take this dirty, evil sin coming from mess and make it pristine!

Now David is living in a time of sacrifices and rituals. Blood must be shed to pay for sin. In vs 16 David says “For you will not delight in sacrifice or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.” Well this is a problem! It seems like David is prepared to sacrifice as many of the unblemished livestock as the Lord would want. Kind of like, “Just tell me Lord and I’ll do it!” I mean isn’t this how it works? If not sacrifices then what to you want!?

David knew.

This one didn’t have to come from Nathan. The Lord opened David’s eyes to the heart behind the sacrifice. Look at vs 17 with me. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

If you are not familiar with the word contrite it means crushed. And David is crushed.

There it is. It's the step in restoring a relationship with the Lord that David had been missing.

How long had David's pride been swelling. Was he on a slow fade that finally picked up steam?

Mercifully God directly confronted David on his sin and led him to this place of brokenness where his eyes could be opened to the heart behind the sacrificial system in place at that time. It was David's painful journey that brought him to this "**Ah ha**" moment. The shedding of blood was the action and an expression of obedience. The brokenness over his sin was the one on one in this moment relationship with God. It was the sacrifice of his pride. **This is where David became small and God became big.**

Listen to this... (pause)

In this brokenness David was not the mighty king, he was not the fierce leader of armies, he was not the steward of great wealth, he was not the man his people sang about. No! **When David allowed himself to be broken he was a helpless child lost in the dark in the presence of a God who is bigger and more Holy than David ever realized. It was when David chose brokenness over pride, that's where the meaningful sacrifice began.**

Again I ask, how about you? Do you see your sin for what it is, no more excuses, it's between you and God as vs 4 lays out. Brokenness hurts! It strips you down to where you can finally see what God's mercy truly is. It's the only true lifeline.

Now David's story continued after this series of sins. There were consequences for his sin but God spared his life and made good on his covenant with David. Although the child conceived in sin died as God said would happen, Bathsheba and David were given a second son they named Solomon. You should start reading 1 Kings if you want to see all God did in the life of Solomon!

As powerful and impactful as Psalm 51 can be as it relates to our own sin it is only a step in the right direction. You see David was still living under the law. Even though God revealed the necessity of brokenness, sacrifices were still required again and again and again.

It took another 800 years before the true King of all Kings came from the line of David. This king was named Jesus and the world would never be the same.

David lays out all the ingredients for coming to Jesus but he didn't have Jesus. Through David, God teaches his people about the true impact of sin and the true meaning of sacrifice and God's Mercy. But there was no Jesus.

He had the Ingredients for restoration with God but it wasn't permanent.

- Come to realize I am a sinner from birth
- Understand God fully sees my sin
- Sin only against God and him alone
- Only God can make me clean from the inside out
- Forgiveness only comes from God's mercy
- Need for restoration that comes from God alone
- Brokenness
- Humility
- I can't earn forgiveness
- God's forgiveness comes with restoration
- I can't earn God's favor
- My sacrifices mean little without a contrite heart

But we need more than the ingredients to get to salvation. There is only one who can use these ingredients and create the perfect end result. Only one who can take pond scum, rusty nails, dirt and hairballs and turn it into my wife's chocolate chip cookies. We need the one who can turn our mess into a masterpiece.

Think about how ripe David was for Jesus. Longing to be clean, to be made whiter than snow. He knew salvation can only come from God's Mercy. But all

he could do was continue to be crushed each time he sinned and sacrifice with a broken heart. Over and over.

Think if David could have known that “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

How about this, David was lost in his sin and separation from God and then if he heard Jesus say “ I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” John 14:6

What if David could have read the book of Hebrews and learned of the new covenant. How Jesus freed God’s people from what Hebrews 10:11 describes as the priest standing daily at his service offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins.” And replaced it with what Paul wrote to the Ephesians “For it is by Grace you have been saved through faith and this is not of your own doing, it is the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast” I think David would have been first in line!

David would have been ready. The more he would learn about Jesus, he would see the answer to the unsolvable equation would have been Jesus.

And if David said I want Jesus and the gift of salvation, but how? It would be the same answer for us today. If you are here today and have never accepted the free gift Jesus offers. The gift of forgiveness and a relationship with a Holy God. We know the how from the book of Romans.

If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame'" ([Romans 10:9-11](#)).

David knew he didn't have anything to offer God but his broken and contrite heart.

So what do you have to offer? What does God need from you?

The answer is there is nothing God needs from you. He's God! What could God possibly need from you? The hard part is believing it. In our world you earn things, you deserve a reward for your good deeds, we can do anything we put our minds to. You think if I can just do enough good things, be kind to enough people, share what I have, try to be a good person, be better than those really bad people. I haven't done anything as bad as what David did. And then hope it was enough. Friend, that's not the way it works. That would be a hole you could never dig out of and God never intended for you to try. For one sin or a million sins are unacceptable. In Romans 3:23 we learn that all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God. And in Romans 6:23 we learn that the wages of even one sin is death. If you want to go by what you have earned, death is your wage. But Jesus, God's own son who is the one promised by God in his covenant with David offers life. You see Jesus himself became the final sacrifice for all sin. His perfect life, without sin, was sacrificed. Jesus freely gave his perfect life as a sacrifice and now offers the gift of a relationship with God that was not possible before. He bore your sins, died and didn't stay dead! No he rose from the grave and defeated death and the separation from God caused by sin. You can't earn your way to the Father, the only way is through the gift Jesus gave us. His life for your sins. If you are tired and broken and the sin in your life is too much. If you realize the things of this world will never really satisfy your soul. If the same old you keeps leading to the same old emptiness.

Jesus says come.

I have all you need. All you need is all the faith you have right now. Choose Jesus.

Let me repeat Romans 10: 9-11 again.

If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.'

This is the only way to be whiter than snow.

For my brothers and sisters in Christ. Whether you have known Jesus for one day or for 80 years, Psalm 51 makes it clear that sin in your life should not be pushed to the side. It will lead to more sin and it pulls you away from God. How can you abide in the Lord while harboring sins you are unwilling to face? The Holy Spirit is your Nathan. Listen to what has been laid on your heart today. There is restoration on the other side of confession. There is hope on the other side of what you have convinced yourself is hopeless. Be small and humble so you can see how big God is! As David says in Vs 14 and 15, My tongue will sing of your righteousness, Oh Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise.

Let's pray.

Lord you are working in the hearts of your people. Holy Spirit show us again what we know is already there. Lord I pray the excuses, the lies and half truths will be done. No matter the consequences, nothing is worth the wedge of sin between us and you. There are no earthly consequences you cannot guide us through. As we choose brokenness we hold firm to example after example in your Word where sinners are restored. We are so thankful for Jesus. May your Word echo in our hearts as we live to bring Glory to your name!

Amen.