

- ***READ Psalm 51/PRAYER*** It had to be nothing less than the lowest moment of David's life, and we know it well. All that could be going through his mind was "I have sinned..." And he had. He had done the unthinkable. The "man after God's own heart" had transgressed his Lord in the more heinous of ways. Not only had he taken a woman not his wife, but he had her husband killed. Then he was oblivious to what he had done being blinded by his own arrogance. However, the Lord has a way of getting His point across and He did so through His prophet Nathan. Not only was his house cursed with continual turmoil, but a baby lost his life, as well. David was crushed in his soul... "now what?" must have been the next constant thought going through his mind.
- Certainly David had greatly erred in judgment and action. He had made mistakes that could not be undone, so where could he go from this place? While we will hopefully never find ourselves in this exact situation...we all have found ourselves asking ourselves this question following a mistake that we have made. For the disciple of Jesus, sin ought to cut us to our very hearts. It ought to pain us that we have transgressed our God and let him down. It might be that we feel lost not knowing how to get back on track, but I am confident that David's Psalm can lead us out of the pits of despair and hopelessness and put us back on the track to serving God in faithfulness.

I. Declare God as King.

- A. Notice that David begins this Psalm by giving much glory and praise to God (**v.1**). I believe he is doing this because he needs a reminder to himself and others that his loyalties must be to God and God alone...even though he is in this place because he chose to do as he wanted to do. David knew he had no right to Bathsheba. He knew that Uriah was innocent and not deserving of death. But he did these things anyways. he had declared himself as King and that needed to change.
- B. As people of God, we have made a commitment to serve God and Jesus as our Lord, but our sin is a sign that we have decided that we would rather follow self and our will instead of submitting to the will of the God of heaven. This might not seem as that big of a deal, but it is important that we respond to our mistakes by voicing to God that we recognize we are in this situation because we have elevated ourselves to lord of our lives. There is great power in verbally announcing and declaring that we are disciples of Jesus and servants of God.
- C. So what is the first thing that we need to do once we recognize that we have sinned and we are in need of a reset and a change back to the way of God? Let me suggest that it begins with acknowledging why we are in this situation and declare that we have placed our allegiance back to where it ought to be.

II. Plead for His mercy.

- A. The very first request that David makes to God is for Him to be gracious towards him even though he has sinned. Requesting grace and mercy from God is asking God to not give what is deserved which was great punishment for sin, and then to give what is not deserved in forgiveness. David was in no way in a place where he deserved anything but punishment for his transgressions.
- B. Yet, we still see him responding to his sin by begging for God to extend His mercy and grace upon him. He does so by acknowledging that God is able to do such a thing. **"According to the greatness of your compassion blot our my transgressions."** (**v.1**) Washing and cleansing (**v.2**) were the desires of David from God in order for his sins to be done away with.
- C. But notice that David didn't try to hide from his sin. Instead, he was upfront and acknowledged his sin and what he had done. He acknowledges that he had sinned against God and that God was righteous and justified in any judgement that He might make. (**vv.3,4**)
- D. **vv.5-9** then show the depths of David's despair (**v.5**) in his sin and how much he believes that God could truly cleanse him and restore him to a good place. It wasn't just that David wanted to be washed with water, but he asked that God cleanse and wash him with hyssop which was there version of purified water. He knew that God was capable of doing such and he was putting his full faith in God.
- E. Even though he had been in the pits of despair, David knew that God could make him to hear joy and gladness and he knew that God could deal the parts of him that had been broken. (**v.8**) He plead for mercy because he knew God was able.

III. Recommit to His will.

- A. David knew that he could be forgiven, but he also knew that he had to do what was right or God would hide himself again because of his sins. **(v.9)** So what did David have to do? He had to make a recommitment to do God's will in all things. Notice what he says in **v.10**. *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me."* Renewal was on the mind of David. He, for many years, had been a strong servant of God and that was the place he needed to get back to.
- B. His hope was to find himself again in the presence of God **(v.11)**, and he knew he could find that place through God restoring him to salvation and sustaining his spirit to do the will of God. **(v.12)** David wanted to get back to the place where even transgressors could be taught through his life. **(v.13)**
- C. Take a second to remember where David had been. His sin had taken him to a terrible place. There was no way that a person could've been influenced by God by what he had done in his sin, but he was convinced that he could get back to this place through a recommitment to God's will. We can easily get to a place in our mind where it seems as if we can't escape sin, but David shows us that we can if we will lean upon God, His faithfulness, blamelessness, and righteousness. We must make a recommitment to God's will or we risk the danger of making the same mistakes that got us to this terrible place of guilt and sorrow because of our sin.

IV. Push forward in gratitude & righteousness.

- A. So what does this recommitment to God mean for us going forward? It means that we push forward in God's will recognizing and being grateful for His grace and living in righteousness. David states that God's deliverance will cause him to sing of His righteousness towards himself and others. **(v.14)** David would push forward knowing of the goodness of God and declaring that goodness to those others around him.
- B. In fact, isn't this Psalm a declaration of David's gratitude and righteousness. I am convinced that David through the Holy Spirit knew that this Psalm would serve as an encouragement to so many others who might find themselves in the same situation he found himself in. He knew that other people would need to know where to go from this place of despair, and that place to go was to push forward for God in gratitude and His righteousness.
- C. "O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise." **(v.15)** David's desire was to go forward praising God and having Him constantly on his mind. He knew that this was God's desire. It wasn't that God just wanted people to do things that might make them seem remorseful for their actions, but He wants people to be contrite from their very hearts. **(vv.16,17)**
- D. A people of contrite heart will be a people who will be more resolved to go forward doing what they ought to do. They will be a people who recognize the importance of holy and righteous living and then in those sacrifices will God be well pleased. God first wants our hearts, and then He will be pleased when we offer our lives up to Him. **(vv.18,19)**

When we have sinned and recognize our dire situation, we have a choice to make. We can either wallow in our sin and its consequences or we can make a decision to seek our God and follow the plan set forth by David in this Psalm. This is one of those lessons that we hope we won't have to put into practice, but if we do find ourselves in the same place as David having committed sin, that my hope is that we will think of this Psalm and be resolved to follow the godly example of David and move on from it so that we might be pleasing to God and not defined by a mistake made in our past. May God be praised as we seek Him and His will in everything we do in our lives.