

Psalms

“Repent, Rejoice, Restored”

Psalm 51

As you turn your Bibles to Psalm 51, let me ask you a question. If you were able to go back in time, and pick any 2 or 3 Old Testament characters, who would you pick to spend a week with?

If I had to pick two my top two one would be Moses. I would love to spend a week with Moses. I'd love to spend time with anybody in the Old Testament, but in particular I'd love to spend time with Moses. But, my number two, you probably guessed it, would be David. Love, David. I love that he's this manly man. He's a warrior. But he's also got this, fiercely passionate side. I mean, he's got emotions. He's passionate for the Lord. And that's something that I need. I need the passion to be drawn out in me. I, tend to be more of a black and white person and not very emotional. So, I love the Psalms, because the Psalms kind of pull that emotional side out of me, and I need that. And I love reading David because he's so honest and he just wears his heart on his sleeve. And so, I would love to spend time with David. Well, if you could go back in time and spend time with David, a whole week, a whole day, whole month, whatever it be, sure, you'd be excited and you would probably have some pretty high expectations.

You would think this is a spiritual giant. The Lord is going to be on David's lips the whole time I'm with him. He is not going to be able to contain his praise and adoration for the Lord. After all, the Lord told David early on when David was still a shepherd. He says of David, this is a man after God's own heart. That's why I would love to spend time with him.

What does that man look like? A man after God's own heart. But if you were to land in a certain period of time in David's life, after he had committed adultery, Bathsheba, after he had murdered her, right? Even months later, you would see a pretty different man. You'd probably be pretty surprised, of who you would encounter during that season of his life. He didn't sing God's praises. He didn't have to contain his excitement for the Lord because it just wasn't there. He was apathetic. He wasn't telling people about the faithfulness of God. He wasn't even singing praises in the congregation. This man who wrote so passionately in the Psalms was in a season where he had walked away from the Lord and the intimacy and the zeal that we know of David just wasn't there.

So tonight we're going to look at Psalms 51, which is a beautiful Psalms of repentance. but it also gives us a sense of David's misery because of his sin and his misery because of his

unrepentant heart for this season of life that he was in after he had committed to son. And you get a sense of his misery. We're going to read the psalm here in a few minutes, but you get a sense of his misery throughout the Psalms. At some point he says, let me hear joy and gladness. That's what he's praying. And so what he's saying is, God, I haven't had joy and gladness. Let me hear it. He's saying. I've been in a season of sadness. He says, let the bones that you have broken rejoice. David was in a season of grief. He says, cast me not away from your presence. David was in a season of loneliness. He hid. There was a wedge between he and the Lord and his relationship with the Lord. He says, restore unto me the joy of my salvation. David was in a season of hopelessness, and he says, uphold me with a willing spirit. David was in a season of weakness. David was in a rough spot. He was distant from God. Instead of repenting, he had covered up his sin. And, he was in a really, bad spot. So Psalms 51 serves as a warning of unrepentant sin. But it also serves as a psalm of hope, because David comes with true repentance. And through that true repentance, we see true restoration and we see true rejoicing. And so as we look at Psalm 51, that's what I want to look at tonight.

There's three things I want to look at David's repentance.

1. I want to look at David's restoration.
2. And then I want us to look at David's rejoicing.
3. And then I want us to look at two pitfalls.

As Christians, I think that we often miss what it means to truly repent. That can be a pitfall. We miss what it really means. And so we kind of repent or we half repent and then the second pitfall is that living in shame and guilt, even after there's true repentance, that's a pitfall that we can fall into. So, let me read Psalms 51 if you'll look, in God's word with me, I'm going to read the whole thing, and then we'll go through it, a little bit by a little bit.

51 Have mercy on me,^[a] O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

- ⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right^[b] spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.
- ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
- ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- ¹⁸ Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;
- ¹⁹ then will you delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

David has been confronted by Nathan and he repented right there on the spot. And now he's coming to the Lord, with this repentant heart. And so as we look at repentance, true repentance really starts with a deep realization of what sin is, a deep realization of sin, of what sinners.

And you see that David uses four words for sin here in the opening verses. One of them is sin, but he uses four words. He uses the word transgression, iniquity, sin, and evil. So if you look back into verse one, he says, blot out my transgressions, blot out my transgressions. That word transgression means, it means rebellion or willful trespassing.

That's what that means. And then he says in verse three, in verse two, wash me thoroughly for my iniquities, iniquities are cruelly or crooked, dealing or twisted. This. And then in verse three he says, my sin, it's ever before me. Sin is when we miss the mark of God's perfection and holiness. It's falling short of what God asks us to do.

And then, then he says, I've done evil in your sight. In verse four, evil simply means wickedness. So why would David, take these four words to describe his son? It's because he has a deep understanding of what his son is, and he's trying to communicate that to the Lord. I think most of you can relate to this.

If you've if you've had kids think back to when they were really little. If you have kids and they're little, then you'll get it. if you don't have kids, you were once a kid and you probably remember your parents doing this. there were many times where. Allison, I would bring our kids to the family car and, open the door and go, what have you all done?

I mean, this, like, how does this happen in a day? We just washed the car yesterday. How does this happen? There's French fries in between the seats. There's. There's sour Patch Kids which don't come out of carpet. By the way, smooshed in carpet. there's goldfish crumbs everywhere. There's dirty socks. There's a cup, a moldy cup under the under the seat.

And then you look at them and go, this car is filthy. It's a pigsty. It's in disarray. It's disgusting. It's embarrassing. It would be condemned by the health department if they were to look at it. And what are you trying to do? You're trying to show your kids the gravity of the mess that they've created.

So they get it, so they go, yeah, I'm pretty messy. Well, that's what David is doing here. He's he is he is acknowledging I'm pretty messy. I am I have sinned, I've transgressed, I've committed iniquities, I'm evil. Not so. The Lord realizes the seriousness of David. Sunday, the Lord realizes the seriousness of David said, This is David realizing the seriousness of his son to the Lord and saying, God, I get it.

I've been running from you now I confess, and I get it. He realizes the depths of his sin. That's really the first step in repentance. And then, it's important that we confess our sin, confess our guilt. And this is what David does here in the Psalm. There's no more hiding. There's no more denying. There's no more covering it up.

Look back at verses one through four. I'm just going to read this and notice the words my and I. David is owning his son. He says, *have mercy on me. Oh God, according to your steadfast love, according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, my transgressions, and my son is ever before you, against you. You only have I turned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.*

What David is saying is, I'm not going to blame it on anyone else. I'm done covering it up. we either cover up or we fess up right? And David is here to confess his son.

He's not blaming it on you. But it's not Bathsheba's fault. It's not God's fault because God. David, God gave David a sexual appetite. No, David is owning his son. He's saying, this is my son. This is my son. True repentance doesn't shift the blame on anything else. Now, there may be other people that tempt you. There may be situations that you go, if I wasn't in that situation, I probably wouldn't have fallen.

But we make those decisions. First of all, to be put in those situations. We make those decisions not to run from temptation, but to try to resist it. And so we need to own our sin when we fall. And this is what we see David doing. And then true repentance. So true repentance is realizing, the depths of our sin.

It's confessing it, it's owning it. But then it's also, also involves godly sorrow, remorse over our sin, having sorrow over our sin. Just remember, just because you've admitted your sin, just because you've confessed your sin, that doesn't mean that you've actually repented. and this is that first trap that I talked about. I think a lot of times we as Christians get this wrong.

We don't fully repent because maybe we're in a accountability group and we meet with those guys or those brothers or sisters in Christ, and we confess our sin. We realize we shouldn't have done it, but we really don't. We really don't have sorrow over our sin or even we pray and we say, Lord, I'm, I'm sorry. I admit that I'm a sinner, but there's not this godly sorrow.

II Corinthians 7:10 gives us a great picture of this, says, Paul says, *for godly grief produces a repentance that leads to life, to salvation, whereas worldly grief produces death*. See, there is such thing as worldly grief, and there's such thing as godly grief.

And David had godly grief. If you meet with people that are non-Christians that have, and you start talking about things that they've done wrong most of the time they feel pretty bad about it. Most of the time there's remorse. There's some kind of grief there. somebody stole or they've cheated or they've even murdered. And most people feel pretty bad about it.

You think about, you think about Judas, who turned Jesus in, and, and he felt so bad about it that he took his own life, but he didn't have godly remorse. Godly remorse is not simply a guilty or bad feeling. Godly remorse is when we are so convicted of our sin because of who we've sinned against. And this is what David is saying.

David is saying, I realize, yes, that I've sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah, that ultimately I've sinned against you. God, the God that has loved me and given everything to me. That's who I've sinned against. That's what godly remorse is now, it took a while for David. It took God breaking him. It took God, allowing him to sit in the misery of his son.

It took someone calling him out before he realized I haven't really repented of the sin. Verse 17, if you'll look at Psalm 51, this is this is a beautiful picture of godly sorrow in David's life. He acknowledges what God desires. He says the sacrifice of God, or a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

That's what David had. He had a broken spirit, and that's what God wants of us. And when we repent, it's not just simply confession. It's saying, Lord, I've messed up. True repentance is not just realizing the depths of our sin, but it does involve that true repentance isn't just confessing our sin, but it does reveal that true repentance is when we come to the Lord with a deep sense of our guilt and honest confession of it, a broken heart over it, and a willingness to turn from it and turn to the Lord.

That's what true repentance is, and that's what we see in David. Well, if this Psalm was just about David's repentance, just about his sorrow over his son, it would actually be a pretty sad song Psalm. But it's not just that, because David's true repentance led him to have true restoration. The second thing I want to look at, and it's important to know that as we look at restoration, there really are two categories of repentance.

There's repentance and the life. That's what happens when we become a Christian. We put our faith in Christ. We are asking God to forgive us of all of our sins, to forgive us of a life that is live for us and not for Christ. And so we come to Christ and he forgives us of all of our sins past, present, future.

But the second category of repentance is that of believers. As believers, we still fall. We still struggle with sin. We, we, we transgress against God. David was a believer and he had fallen. He had sin. And so the second category, for the believer, the sin doesn't separate us from God eternally, but sin does put a wedge between us and the Lord, between our intimacy with the Lord.

That's what happens when we have sin and when we don't repent of it, then we grow distant from the Lord. And that's what you see happen with David. And we know, we've all been in relationships where some things have been severed. those of you have married who are married. I know you've probably not had any fights with your spouse.

Allison, have had, very few fights. but now we've, lots of arguments in our years, lots of, going head to head, especially early years. And when we're just figuring each other out, but even now, I'll do something and realize I've really hurt her. And you can just feel the wedge in between our relationship.

And until I come to my wife and say, I'm sorry I've done this, will you forgive me? There's not restoration. That's where David is. And that's why God calls us to repent, calls us to repent so we can be restored in our relationship with him. David is running to the Lord.

So let's look back at the text. And you see in these first few, few verses, this is really important because David repents in the light of God's character and in full trust in the promises of God. And so we can trust God to fulfill his promises, because we can trust in God's character. And that's what you see happen here. David starts out in verse one. He says, looking at God's character, he says, have mercy on me. Oh, God, according to your steadfast love, according to your abundant mercy, see the character of God is that he is merciful and that his love is steadfast.

That's a that's an allegiant love. That's not a love that's dependent on what we do. It's a love that pushes through our sin. It's a committed love. And so David is saying, God, I see your character, your character is one of mercy, abundant mercy. Your character is one of steadfast love. And because of your character, I can believe and I can hold on to your promise to forgive me of my sins.

And so you see, David, now proclaim God's promises back to God of forgiveness. And he asks God and he says in verse one, would you blot out my transgressions? He uses these words, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my son. But that is a that blot out my transgressions. That's an interesting word. And, and I'll give you a story.

When I was in high school, I didn't grow up at Briarwood. but we had similar to what we have here. We have the choir, and then we have, those people that do the bells. I'm sure there's a there's a word for it, a musical word for it. and we have youth that actually do it here. It's pretty amazing. I love when our youth get up there and do that, but when I was growing up, that was not cool to do at all. Nobody younger, noone under 70 did the bells. Okay. And so the sweet elderly lady ladies in our church would put out a sign up list for people that wanted to do the bells, and my friends thought it'd be really funny to sign my name up. And so they I didn't know it. They signed my name up, and I got about 30 calls from the sweetest ladies in our church saying, we're so excited you're going to do the bells. And, I hated to break it to them, but I did it nicely. And I said, hey, my friend signed me up. I didn't actually, I made an excuse and said I actually have a hurt wrist. I can't do the bells or something. well, they didn't get the people they needed, and so they came back around a couple weeks later, put another sign up list, and, and my friend signed me up again. But I caught it this time, and I got a pen out, saw my name, and I crossed it out, up and down, left this way and completely blotted out my name so that it could not be seen again.

Well, that's what David is asking God to do. It's a promise of God that we ask him to forgive us our sins. He blots them out that they are gone. They are completely gone. Psalms one and 312 says, as far as the East is from the west so far does he remove our transgressions from us. We are restored, our sin is removed. And then in verse two he says, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my son. wash me thoroughly from my iniquity.

so, whenever I get a new shirt every single time, honest, I get a stain on it. Not just the first day I wear it. After that I can wear it for a year and I won't get another stain on it. But the first day I wear it, I always get a stain. And I give it to Allison and she puts oxiclean on it and washes it. And if it comes out and it's still there, she washes it again and she washes again. She washes it thoroughly.

And that's what David is asking of God. Would you wash me thoroughly?

And if there's still the stain of sin on me, would you wash me again and wash me again and wash me again? That's the picture that we have here. Isaiah 1:18 says, *come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall become like new.* David is clinging on to the promise that when he ask for forgiveness, when he repents, David is restored and he's made clean.

And then in verse ten, David says this *create in me a clean heart of God, and renew a right spirit in me.* David has a new heart, but his but sin has polluted it. And now, now God creates a newness of heart for him. David is restored and he's made new. See, repentance takes us from a state of brokenness to restoration takes us from a state of misery to rejoicing.

And that's what we're going to see now as David has repented, he's been restored. And now you see great rejoicing throughout the Psalm. Throughout the Psalm. and it's not just rejoicing corporately when people are around. It's not just praising God with his lips when he comes to church, it's praising God. It's rejoicing. Even in his private intimacy with the Lord. He's been renewed. He's been revived by this restored relationship. The sense of forgiveness that he has in the Lord.

So look with me just in a couple verses, verse eight, David says, let me hear joy and gladness. Let the bones that you have broken rejoice. David was sad. He had lost all joy. But now he has joy and gladness, and he's rejoicing. Verse 11, cast me not away from your presence. Take not your Holy Spirit from me. David is telling the Lord. When I was when I was, in my unrepentant state, I felt like you weren't even present. Now we know that's not true. God is always present, but we can definitely feel like God is not present.

We can when we when that wedge comes between us, it feels like God is a million miles away. although God was right there, David felt like he wasn't. That's why he says, cast me, not away from your presence. I want to be in the very presence of God. And he's rejoicing because as he's restored, that's what's going to happen.

That's what's going to happen. So as we go through these statements, these statements almost seem like a request. And in a sense they are, but they're more like statements made in expectation of what God is going to do through David's repentance. It's David expecting that

God will do what he promises. You promise to forgive me, and you promise to restore, and you promise to bring joy back into my heart.

Verse 13, this is interesting. David says, look at verse 12 with me, or go back to verse 11, cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation. David has lost the joy of salvation, maybe even the assurance that he was even a believer of one of God's children.

And, and God is restoring the joy of the salvation. And then verse 13, he says, restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then David says, then when you do this, then I will teach transgressors your way. Say. In David's unrepentant state, he wasn't even telling people about the Lord. I mean, this is, this is the man that has written so many Psalms proclaiming the goodness of God in his life, and he is now gone months and months where he has not told transgressors the way of the Lord.

And now he's saying, now I will tell others about you. David probably wouldn't have signed up for an E class when he was in this state. And then verse 14 and 15 he says, deliver me from blood. Guiltiness Oh God, oh God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. Oh Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

See in his, when he had when he was in sin, he had no desire to even sing the praises of God. Maybe if he would have come in here, he may have given lip service, but he wasn't doing it from his heart. And now a restored David can't contain singing God's praises. Spurgeon says this A great sinner pardoned makes a great singer a great sinner.

Pardon makes a great singer. When we realize the depths of our sin and the depths of God's grace to forgive us of our sin, and we're restored, and we can rejoice that we are in the family of God. We are pardoned from our sins, and nothing can hold us back from telling people about the Lord and singing his praise.

So true repentance restores us and leads us to rejoicing in our God, who is full of mercy and full of steadfast love. Well, I said that there was two traps. One we went over. But in closing, this brings me to number two. One that's really easy to fall into, one that many in here probably, maybe are struggling with right now.

And that is that God's people often don't receive and rest in God's forgiveness, even if we've fully repented of our sin. Oftentimes we find ourselves in the shadow of sin, of our of guilt and shame, of our sin. We've told the Lord. We've realized our sin. We have there's remorse. There's, true repentance. But we find ourselves not believing that God has actually forgiven us, that that that we let that sin just play itself over in our minds.

It's interesting that David in verse three says, for I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Think about that with David, living with Bathsheba. Just her presence alone would just remind him of his sin. But when he came to the Lord in repentance, he was then to remember that the sin is not ever before him that's been paid for.

Or we can find ourselves. Maybe there's a sin that we've committed a long time ago, or maybe it was a week ago, and we think God can't really forgive that sin, and that sin is ever before us. Like a song on repeat. And brothers and sisters, what we need to remember, we need to know from this Psalm is that when we come to the Lord in true repentance, he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

There is no sin greater than the grace of God. And don't let Satan lie to you and deceive you to tell you that that sin as a child, as a child of God, that that sin has separated you from God, that that sin is too big. Don't let Satan tell you, although you might be forgiven, you still should live in the shame and guilt of that sin, because that is not true.

God has blotted out your sin. He has washed you thoroughly. He's made you clean and you can go from here praising him and telling people about him and having a restored relationship with him.

Well, how fitting is it that we get to celebrate the Lord's Supper tonight, where we are reminded that Jesus died for our sins? His body was broken for our sins, and his blood was shed so that we can stay in a state of being restored with the Lord. And we can rejoice in his forgiveness and grace. And this is cause for rejoicing.

Let me pray and just thank the Lord for our time. Lord, we do thank you for this time. Thank you for David. Thank you that you have given us, people in the Bible, real people who, who have sinned, who struggle, Lord, not to make us feel better, but to give us an example of what we do when we find ourselves struggling with sin, that we are to look to you, we look at Christ, and we remember your abundant mercy and your steadfast love. Father, we're thankful that there was one person that did not sin, and that's Jesus. And we are thankful that Jesus took our sin on the cross, and we get his perfect record so that we can be so we can stand as righteous before you. Father, would you, bless this time as we enter into a time of communion? We pray these things in Christ's name.

Amen.