

TRUE SALVATION

Psalm 51

INTRODUCTION

Beautiful words we sang this morning, all of which are a reflection of the gospel. The song “At Your Name” talks about our rescue, which describes what takes place when God reaches down and rescues us from perdition, from the path we are on. In the first stanza of the song “Praise to the Lord the Almighty”, it says “*For He is my health and salvation*” which brings out the heart of what it means to gather together as a church, to call ourselves Christians. “*All ye who hear*” is a reminder that Jesus is talking about those who have spiritual ears to understand and obey all He has commanded of us. “*Praise to the Lord who hath fearfully, wonderfully made thee*” describes how we are born again as God gives us a new heart.

Salvation, from beginning to end, belongs to God. Today, we will hear the testimonies of several Christians who have been saved by faith, by the grace of God, and in obedience will be baptized.

Let’s begin our time this morning by opening our Bibles to
2 Sam 11 - David and Bathsheba

vv. 1-3 **Temptation** Lust - progression to...
vv. 4-5 Great Sin #1 Adultery

vv. 6-13 **Coverup** –deceit
• the snare of sin grows – the web thickens - progression to...
v. 13 – Uriah is more righteous drunk than David is sober

The heart hardens, draws other (Joab) in as accomplice

vv. 14-17 (v.15) Great Sin #2 - Murder
vv. 18-25 **Indifference** – v. 25 – callous
vv. 26-27 Divine commentary – v. 27

Reading further :
2 Sam 12

Nathan rebukes David

- David had at least 9 months to stew in his sin and cover it up
- brewing, festering, boiling under the surface

vv. 1-4 - Nathan tells David a parable of rich man taking the only lamb of a poor man to prepare for a wayfarer who was visiting him - when he had many of his own that he could have prepared for the traveler

vv. 5-6 - David's anger burned greatly against the rich man

- David's sin is far worse than the man in the parable

v. 7 - Nathan tells David - "You are the man!"

v. 9 - "Why have you despised the Word of the Lord?"

→The heart of all sin

→Repent!

That is the backdrop to Psalm 51 - a tremendous demonstration of true salvation, of true repentance of David.

READ PSALM 51

Psalm 51 is one of the few psalms that precisely specify their historical background.

→ *"To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba."*

Proposition: 4 Qualities of True Salvation

I. Is Occupied with Sin's Guilt; Not Sin's Consequences

II. Is Focused Upward; Not Inward

III. Seeks Pardon; Not Pity

IV. Prays for Cleansing; Not Coverup

1st Quality.... True Salvation is:

I. Occupied with Sin's Guilt; Not Sin's Consequences

Point – guilt before God rather than the concern of consequences

- more grief over standing before God guilty than what consequences may or may not come.
- “your sin will find you out”
- “what you have said in secret will be shouted from the rooftops”

Proof – 51:3 – “For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.”

emphatic “I” – “I myself”

- David is wracked with grief over his sin ever before him:
 - The **burden** ... The **weight** ... The **guilt**
 - ...far more than the consequences
- Remember the consequences??? The son Bathsheba is bearing will die.
- Parents, what’s the worst punishment you can imagine?

2 Sam 12:14 – “because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die”

- Yet David is more preoccupied with the guilt of his sin than this horrific consequence of his sin.
- expressing his heart as a true believer

Four different Hebrew words used to describe sin:

⇒ “**transgression**” (51:1, 3)

- crossing the line, deviation from the path of righteousness
- willfully criminal infractions

⇒ “**sin**” (3) and “**sinned**” (4) – *chatah* – missed the mark

51:9 – “Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities”

⇒ “**iniquities**” – *aton*

- bend, twist, distort, warp – “to make crooked, to pervert”

51:14a – “Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation”

⇒ “**blood guiltiness**” – *dam*

- a violent shedding of blood (for example, during a murder)
- like a grape bursting open and splattering its juice all over
- literally true in the case for David - valiant noble Uriah spilling his blood in the dust and dirt of the battlefield

David - the man after God's own heart is occupied with his guilt not his punishment.

Contrast this to Cain

Illustration – Gen 4:13 – “my punishment is too great to bear”

True salvation, biblical salvation, first and foremost, comes from the **heart**.

Unbeliever – concerned with the sting of judgment

Believer – concerned with the stain before the Judge

2nd Quality ... True Salvation is:

II. Focused Upward; Not Inward

Point – it is God-centered, not man-centered

- Recognizes that ultimately, according to Scripture, sin is against God.
- Focus is on God, not self.

True salvation doesn't bite at the deceptive lure of psychology and other self-esteem gospels that comes out in our Western culture in this day and age.

Illustration: In math, any finite number over infinity equals zero. In the same way, there are finite offenses that we commit against each other, but the infinite offense that the infinitely majestic God takes from our sin pales in comparison.

Proof – **51:4** – “**Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak and blameless when You judge.**”

Seriously?? What about Bathsheba and Uriah???

David:

- 1) **coveted** another man's wife
- 2) committed **adultery**
- 3) covered it up with **murder**

This is pretty serious stuff.

In his righteousness, which comes from God, David's concern is of God - his focus is God

David doesn't give any details about the sins. He doesn't talk about lust, adultery, murder, lying or deception. That is not because David is afraid of biblical language, it is not because he is trying to sugar coat things, he is not trying to squirm away from responsibilities. It is because he is going right to the source - as a believer, his flesh.

51:12 - "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation"

As a Christian, when you sin, what you are demonstrating at that moment is that you love your sin more than Christ. You sin because you think in your mind, at that moment, that the fleeting pleasure of sin will be greater than the joy of God's salvation.

51:6 - "Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being"

- understanding what God requires, His standard of perfect holiness

51:9a - "Hide Your face from my sins"

- You are too holy to look upon

Illustration - an example of someone who didn't do what David did - who did what was right

- Joseph and Potiphar's Wife
- Gen 39:9 - "How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?"

Application - your life has an audience of One

Application - Why isn't he crying out for sexual restraint? Why isn't he praying for men to hold him accountable? Why isn't he praying for protected eyes and sex-free thoughts? The reason is that he knows that his sins are symptoms, not the disease.

True Repentance Is:

- 1) Occupied with Sin's Guilt; Not Sin's Consequences
- 2) Focused Upward; Not Inward

...
3rd Quality ... True Salvation:

III. Seeks Pardon; Not Pity

Point - When David's attention comes to himself, he seeks pardon, not pity. He doesn't explain his sin or play the blame-shift game.

Remember Adam and Eve:

Adam blames God - "the woman whom You gave to be with me" - and Eve blames the serpent

Not David here. He doesn't say:

- "I'm king. I can do what I want."
- "that's how I was raised"
- "the devil made me do it"
- "It's a disease"
- "I'm addicted"
- "I can't help myself"
- "It's my wife's fault" etc. etc.

No Self-pity. No Excuses. He understands what He needs is not pity, but the pardon of God.

Proof

v. 1 – "**blot out all my transgressions**"

v. 9 – "**blot out all my iniquities**"

Illustration – "wiping clean like a dish" - remove everything.

In the same way, David is asking God, by His grace, to remove even the remembrance of his sin before His omniscient, all-knowing God.

51:11-12 – "**Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit.**"

I, and I alone, am responsible for my sin, period.

Illustration – A mother once approached **Napoleon** seeking a pardon for her son. The emperor replied the young man had committed a certain offense twice and justice demanded death.

"But I don't ask for justice," the mother explained. "I plead for mercy."

"But your son does not deserve mercy," Napoleon replied.

"Sir," the woman cried, "it would not be mercy if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask for."

"Well, then," the emperor said, "I will have mercy." And he spared the woman's son.

Application – True salvation does not seek pity, rather asks God to remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west.

4th Quality ... True Salvation:

IV. Prays for Cleansing; Not Coverup

Point – An unsaved man tries to cover his sins. That is what Adam and Eve did in the Garden of Eden. They tried to cover the nakedness of sin with fig leaves.

→ You can't ever cover your sin.

→ "Your sin will find you out."

Proof – **51:2** – **"Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity; and cleanse me from my sin."**

"wash me" – emphasizes the process of cleansing – trample me, stamp me down, scrub and rub me, do whatever needs to be done!

"cleanse me" – emphasizes the state of being clean - wash me clean so that in the end I will be whiter than snow because of the work that only God can do to cover the stain of sin.

51:7 – **"Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."**

"purify" - same Hebrew root word that is translated as the word sin or sins throughout the chapter

- but the way it is used here, it is this sin that has missed the mark

"hyssop" – bush used to apply blood in a purification ceremony.

- David is saying that only you, God, can put me back on target - in a position where he can be used by God, to glorify God and to minister to others

This is an internal cleansing

51:10 – **"Create in me a clean heart, O God"**

"whiter than snow" (9)

- the new heart and clean conscience God gives those whose knees are bowed to Christ as Lord

Application– When we act as David acted, nothing magical or mystical about this, God blesses us with a clean conscience.

1 John 1:7, 9 – “if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

True Salvation:

- 1) Is Occupied with Sin’s Guilt; Not Sin’s Consequences
- 2) Is Focused Upward; Not Inward
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Four blessings that come from true salvation:

1. True salvation results in **Effective Evangelism!**

51:13 – “*Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.*”

David is thinking that the outcome of asking God for forgiveness isn’t about himself, but that God would use him to point people to salvation of God.

2. True salvation results in **Powerful Praise!**

51:14-15 – “*Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise.*”

David is talking about the powerful praise that comes from a clean conscience, a new heart. This is where it gets into the inner part.

3. True salvation results in **Humble Repentance!**

51:16-17 – “For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.”

Jonathan Edwards wrote this in his book “Religious Affections”:

“All gracious affection (feelings emotions) that are a sweet aroma to Christ.....are brokenhearted affections. A truly Christian love, either to God or men, is a humble brokenhearted love. The desires of the saints, however earnest, are humble desires; their hope is a humble hope; and their joy, even when it is unspeakable, and full of glory, is a humble brokenhearted joy.”

4. True salvation results in **True Worship!**

51:18-19 - “By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.”

True salvation:

- always results in restoration of **service**
⇒ *David served*

True salvation:

- does not always result in restoration of **status - official position**
⇒ *David did not build the Temple; the sword never departed from his house*

CONCLUSION:

David doesn't get saved in between **2 Sam 12** and **Psalm 51**.

Psalm 51 is a post-salvation event.

In the same way, baptism doesn't save you. Baptism is a post-salvation event. Baptism is the act of a saved person in obedience to God.

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