

CALL OUT

A STUDY OF THE PSALMS

BE YOUR BEST

2 Samuel 11 records one of the grievous and insidious acts of sin in all of Scripture. King David wasn't leading his army (where he was supposed to be). He had an affair with a married woman. She became pregnant. David tried to hide the pregnancy by recalling the husband from war. However, the husband (who wasn't an Israelite) acted more faithfully than God's anointed king. So, David sent him back to war carrying orders to have him killed in a way that looked accidental.

All of us are sinners, but adultery, murder, deceit, abuse of power—this is a whole other level. God used Nathan the Prophet to confront David in the next chapter, and the tower of lies crumbled. David's heart softened and he repented. Psalm 51 records that prayer of repentance.

Last Week, we saw the strength and tenderness of God as our Shepherd. This Week, we'll look deeper into that work as we study the most familiar psalm of repentance. As you study this Week, ask the Lord to open your heart regarding the depth and consequences of your own sin—against him first and anyone else involved. Specifically, ask the Lord for the courage to face what you have kept secret or unresolved. Ask for and receive God's healing, restoration, peace, and joy. No sin is too large for him to forgive nor too small for us to overlook. May God bring you *his* freedom!

PSALM 51 (SELECTED)

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴Against 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. ⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

¹⁶For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"There's nothing He ain't seen before. For all your sin, all your sorrow, and your sadness. There's a Saviour and He calls. Bring it all to the table." Too often we trivialize sin not understanding God has spared us the consequences. Other times, God allows us to feel the weight of sin.

Scan the QR code to hear Zach Williams's testimony of God letting him reap the consequences of sin and how it changed his eternity. Then, worship the God who forgives.



DISCUSSION

What is one thing God has taught you throughout our study so far?

ICEBREAKER

1. What does David ask for? On what basis? (1a-1c)

2. What does David say about his sin? (3-4a)

3. What does David say about sacrifices? (16-17)

OBSERVATION

4. Why does God consider one sacrifice more valuable than the other? (16-17)

5. What sin do you need to confront, confess, or forgive? What is your next step?

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Our strong desire is for people to repent when they've done wrong... especially to us. It's harder to recognize the wrong we do. Sometimes we have to ask God to show us. If you need help, or clarification on repentance, talk to your Coach today.

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STUDY NOTES

UNAPOLOGETIC

“My father passed away when I was 5. So, as a teenager, I looked to my coaches to fill that void. At 16, with newfound muscles after my Coach recommended a creatine and weightlifting regimen, I entered summer football camp believing nothing could stop me.

After an early play, Coach reprimanded me for improperly reacting to the offensive blocking. Then, Coach ran the same offensive play to make sure I got the message. Instinctively, I reacted exactly as before, not as he just told me. Coach charged me, grabbed my face mask, lifted it with his left hand exposing my face, and repeatedly hit my jaw, neck, and face with his right hand.

All the other coaches and players just watched. No one said a word to him. After his assault, Coach stormed off, red-faced and unapologetic. Another coach blew a whistle, calling for a rare water break. I walked off the field, pretending everything was fine, but it wasn't. After all my time and effort, my “father” had terribly abused his power, hitting me physically and crushing me emotionally. The pain that I felt inside far exceeded my facial abrasions.

For many years, I thought Coach would contact me and apologize. I'd see him at reunions and other functions. He always acted cordially and asked about my family. Yet, the “elephant in the room” prohibited anything more. I just “knew” that someday Coach would pull me aside and apologize for what he did. Then we would hug and move on with our lives. Sadly, that never happened...and never will. I recently read that, at 80 years old, Coach passed away.”

This story might hit a little close to home for some reading this. Our hearts ache at the fracturing of such an important relationship. Sin always has a relational cost with God and with others. For a believer in Christ, sin doesn't stop the relationship we have with God—nothing can (see Romans 8:31–39). In the same way, the Coach didn't stop being coach, the relationship still existed. However, fellowship required repentance.

GOD'S HEALING CLEANSSES OUR TRANSGRESSION

When David felt the weight of his sin, he cried out, **“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.”** David understood something that we all need to know, God's “steadfast love.” This is a special love for God's people. If you have placed

saving faith in Christ, it's the same kind of love God has for you. It's an irrevocable love that can never be undone, *no matter what.*

The most important key to repentance that we see throughout Psalm 51 is that we agree with God that our sin is wrong. We cannot truly repent while also in self-justification (see 2 Corinthians 7:10).

We do not sin because we are victims of circumstance or because we were forced into it. We sin because we love it—***in sin did my mother conceive me.*** We're addicted to it. Even though our sin may hurt other people, primarily it's an offense to God. David said, **“Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.”**

Once we agree with God that our sin is wrong, we must ask him to change us from the inside out. David said it this way, **“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”**

As we've said, sin can't break our relationship with God. If we have faith in Christ, we are children adopted into his family. Instead, repentance **restore[s] the joy of your salvation.** Does your relationship with God bring you joy? If not, maybe some soul searching is required.

CALL OUT TO GOD AS YOUR HEALER

David sums up everything this way, God does ***not delight in sacrifice. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*** God knows we aren't perfect. Instead, when we sin, he wants godly sorrow and repentance. God did everything necessary that we might have a relationship with him. When our sin disrupts the fellowship of that relationship, humble repentance restores it.

We have all had and will have occasions where we need to ask for and grant forgiveness. Both are hard but necessary for continued spiritual growth. We might not always receive the repentance of those who've hurt us, but we must remember that their primary offense is against God. This perspective helps us to grant them forgiveness even if they don't ask for it. You can't control them, but you can control yourself. Unforgiveness only hurts you. It will never hurt the other person.

Whether you need to ask for forgiveness or give forgiveness, only God can give you the strength. It requires humility beyond our capability. We must echo David's prayer, learn the truth he shares, and restore the fellowship with the God who wants nothing more than for us to know him.