

David: Finding the Treasures of God

The Priceless Treasure of Forgiveness

PSALM 51

Psalm 51 is a treasure display, much like the Florida museum of treasure hunter Mel Fisher, where case after case displays priceless gold and gems from shipwrecks on the sea bottom, so David has laid out for all to see the priceless treasures he received when God forgave him.

To know God is the greatest treasure in all of life.

The treasure of knowing God comes to us through His Word.

Are you finding the treasures of God? He has left them out in plain sight in His Book the Bible.

Please open with me to one of the most treasure laden chapters in the Bible—Psalm 51.

HOPE FOR THE STAINED

These 19 verses have been the source of hope to many troubled by sin, comforting more repentant hearts than nearly any other chapter of the Bible.

History records some amazing events; times when people have walked over treasures of immense value—usually without even knowing it.

That is often what happens when we get so used to a place that we can walk almost without noticing anything around us.

That familiarity with our physical surroundings can also happen to us spiritually. We can almost think that we have exhausted a passage of God's Word and when we come to it we only see what we saw before and so we just pass on by.

That can also happen when we open week after week to the same chapter of the Bible here as we gather at church. As we return week after week to Psalm 51, it can become common, familiar and almost a place where we notice nothing new. The only solution is to ask the Lord to open our eyes and heart every time we enter His Word. The Lord can make every entrance into His Word yield great treasures.

That reminds me of a bit of American History that has always fascinated me.

Gold was found at the head of Six-Mile Canyon in the territory of Nevada in 1859 by two miners named Pat McLaughlin and Peter O'Reilly. A fellow miner, Henry Comstock, stumbled upon their find and claimed it was on his property. The gullible McLaughlin and O'Reilly believed him and assured Comstock a place in history when the giant lode was named.

Soon multitudes of treasure seeking miners, lured by gold fever, began following the vein of gold up the canyon. They spent each day slogging their way up and down that narrow Six Mile Canyon chipping the outcropping of gold encased in quartz. Though they labored feverishly it was slow going for two reasons—the quartz was so hard to break, and the only way to their mining claims was that unusual canyon filled with strange, heavy, almost glue like mud, it's entire length.

Day after day miners complained that the biggest problem in this grubstake paradise was the sticky blue-gray mud that clung to their boots, their wagons, their picks and shovels. But they slogged on day after day and week after week. It seemed like their feet were covered with lead and the tools would become too heavy to lift the longer they worked.

Finally one miner, new on the scene, saw the mud differently.

He immediately scraped the mud off his boot at the assayer's office and asked for an analysis of why it was so heavy.

When the mud was assayed, it proved to be silver ore worth over \$2,000 a ton in 1859 dollars! That was a dollar per shovel full then or at 2006 silver prices it was equal to-- \$100 for every shovel scooped up and hauled away. No wonder some of the legendary California fortunes like the Crocker Bank of California and the William Randolph Hearst empire both began here.

The rest is history. They had all been walking through the Comstock Lode. Beneath their feet in the sticky blue-gray mud that day in 1859 laid \$400,000,000.00 worth of silver.

The common mud that thousands of miners had walked on for months was the greatest lode of silver ever discovered in all of history. Far more valuable than the gold they had feverishly chipped from the hard quartz veins in the mountain sides, was the silver laden mud.

All they had to do was stop and scoop it up!

STOP AND SCOOP UP THE TREASURE

Don't walk through Psalm 51 or any other portion of God's Word again without scraping what you find off in the Presence of the Lord—ask him to tell you how much it is worth. Then start a life long habit of scooping up the treasures of His Word. It will be a spiritual fortune.

As we examine these lessons from David, they are very difficult but so necessary. For any and all of us today ring Paul's words across the centuries as a reminder to stay in the diligent study of God's Word. Turn there with me next—

2 Timothy 3: 16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Every shovelful of the Scriptures that we prayerfully dig through in our devotional quiet time can yield something powerful from God's Word for each of us. As Paul said, all Scripture was designed by God and given by God to do something in our lives. Note the six phrases Paul uses:

- "...profitable for doctrine", (That is God teaching us what is RIGHT). This Greek word **disdaskalia** refers to the content or message of God's Word not the particular method or means of communicating it.
- "...for reproof", (That is God teaching us what is WRONG). This Greek word **elegmos** refers to using God's Word to point out errors in conduct or belief.
- "...for correction", (That is God teaching us how to get RIGHT). This Greek word **epanorthosis** refers to using God's Word for restoring someone back on their feet after stumbling or falling; it is the edification and building up ministry of God's Word.
- "...for instruction in righteousness": (That is God teaching us how to stay RIGHT). This Greek word **paideia** refers to using God's Word for positive training and discipling us in righteousness.
- "...that the man of God may be complete", (That is God teaching us He is ENOUGH). This Greek word **artios** refers to the reality that God's Word makes us complete and capable to be proficient for anything God call us to do.
- "...thoroughly equipped for every good work." (That is God teaching us how to SERVE). This Greek word **exartidzo** could be paraphrased, "enabled to meet all demands of righteousness." When we are mended by God's Word (that is what equipped mean) we are then able to build up and help strengthen the lives of those around us.

So, as we turn back again to Psalm 51, we are entering a portion of Scripture that is

- profitable for doctrine (God teaching us what is right about David's response to his sin),
- for reproof (God pointing out what was wrong in David's life that led to his sin),
- for correction (God explaining to us how to get right with Him using David as an example),
- for instruction in righteousness (God directing us how to stay right with Him again using David as a real living and breathing example);
- That each believer may be complete (God reminding us that He is more than enough for all we will need through life as we see His dealings with David the most recorded life in the Bible),
- Thoroughly equipped for every good work (God teaching us how we can serve Him

like we saw in David's life before he failed, after he failed, and for the rest of our lives).

Our return to Psalm 51 is part of a careful look at the three final eras of David's life. The twenty or so years after David's sin with Bathsheba (when he was about age 50) divide into three distinct lessons that are captured for our learning by God's Word. May I underline once more in your mind where we are, and where we are headed?

Over Psalm 51 as well as Psalm 32 and 38 you should write these words in your hearts and minds—"***Unguarded Moments Lead to Sin***". We must never isolate the Psalms that flow from a period of David's life (like Psalm 32, 38, and 51) from the inspired record of that period. Let me trace the three periods of David's final days and the inspired record of God's perspective on the events that surround those Psalms.

- **Unguarded Moments lead to SIN—Uriah and Bathsheba.** The saddest chapter, the darkest and the event we all wince at—is his sin with Bathsheba. God gives us a Divine record of those moments and days in 2nd Samuel 11-12. Out of this time period Psalms flow explaining the effects of what I call "***David's Unguarded Moments that led to SIN***". These are Psalm 32; 38; 51. That is what we are concluding in this study today.
- **Inevitable Consequences lead to PAIN—Absalom and Shimei.** Eleven chapters record the many years of painful consequences because of David's sin from 2nd Samuel 12-21, and 24. This inspired record of that period that I call "***David's Inevitable Consequences that led to Pain***" explains the Psalms that flow from David's PAIN. These are Psalms are 3; 31; 55; 63.
- **Humble Obedience leads to JOY—Solomon, and the Temple.** And last, the final days of David's life. When we see that despite the failures of Bathsheba incident—David truly was after God's own heart. We see him end well, using his final days for God's glory. Four chapters capture these years in 2nd Samuel 22-23 and 1 Kings 1-2. The Psalms that flow from this final era I call "***David's Humble Obedience that leads to JOY***" are Psalms 18; 71.

First, a quick reminder of the four main ideas of Psalm 51. David says, I--

- **#1 David said, I...Saw that all Sin is Against God.** (Psalm 51:1-4)
- **#2 David said, I ...Took the blame for my sin and repented.** (Psalm 51:5-9)
- **#3 ...Asked for help, because only God can cleanse and restore.** (Psalm 51:10-13)
- **#4 ...Sought God for a fresh start.** (Psalm 51:14-19)

We have already studied the first seven verses. This morning we will begin with verse 8, as we watch ***David taking the blame for his sin and repenting.***

When David repented he needed joyfulness v. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken may rejoice.

As sinners we lose our joy. He says I have lost my song, I don't hear Your joyful song anymore.

When David repented he longed for fellowship with God v. 9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

In Eden we saw Adam and Eve hiding from God. Sin separates and blinds us to God's Presence. So David wants instead from the sin that blinds and separates to be taken away. He wants God more than any sin.

Thirdly, David explains, I ...Asked for help, because only God can cleanse and restore. (Psalm 51:10-13)

David knew that only God could give him a new beginning. v. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

This word create speaks of what only God can do by his gracious power.

We must never think that God's forgiving grace, wonderful as it is, either permits or encourages us to go on sinning... "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?" asked Paul. He answered, "By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" (Rom. 6:1-2).

Remember the ending of the story of Jesus and the woman trapped in adultery in John 8? Christ's concluding words are so important, and so overlooked. They are another treasure of God's Word.

[Having forgiven her, Jesus] added in John 8:11, "Go now and leave your life of sin."

God's grace always demands a change; always following forgiveness will be Christ's words--if we are saved, we must stop sinning.

At the same time, we can be grateful that Jesus spoke as he did. For we notice that he did not say, "Leave your life of sin, and I will not condemn you." If he had said that, what hope for us could there be? Our problem is precisely that we do sin.

There could be no forgiveness if forgiveness was based upon our ceasing to sin. Instead of that, Jesus actually spoke in the reverse order. First, he granted forgiveness freely, without any conceivable link to our performance.

Forgiveness is granted only on the merit of his atoning death. But then, having forgiven us freely, Jesus tells us with equal force to stop sinning.¹

¹ James Boice quoted by John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The Vanishing Conscience - Drawing the Line in a No-Fault, Guilt-Free World*, (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing) 1997, electronic edition, n.p..

Two of my favorite verses in God's Word explain the wonderful power of new beginnings as Christ's blood is applied to our hearts.

- Hebrews 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
- Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

David knew that only God could restore his walk in the Spirit v. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

The days that had stretched into the weeks and months of that spiritual wasteland David had just experienced were so bad he wanted to never revisit that time again. He was so aware that the sweet influence of the Holy Spirit came upon him that filled his heart with joy, with songs, with peace that made him a blessing had been pulled back. So David says

1. I want You to renew my heart by washing it. (v. 10)
2. I want You to restore my walk by giving me Your Spirit back. (v. 11)
3. I want You to bring back the fruit of the Spirit in my life. (v.12)

David knew that only God could renew the fruit of the Spirit v. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. (sustain me with a willing spirit)

Remember the fruit of the Spirit is love, and JOY. It's not something we get by moving to a nicer home and neighborhood—that is so temporary. It's not something we get by buying something we really want—that is so brief. It's not something we get by accomplishing some deed of greatness—that is so fragile. It's an internal fruit born by the Spirit of God that grows deeper and deeper inside of us.

David says bring back the fruitfulness of Your Spirit in my life. I am going to focus on Your work, I want You to wash my heart. I want You to restore my walking in the power of Your Spirit. I want You to renew his fruit growing in me. Verse 13 he concludes this section focusing on God's work—he says I want You, God to help me have further ministry.

David knew that only God could prepare him for further ministry v. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.

When I let You, God do all this, when I let You wash my heart, when I let You restore my walk in the Spirit, when I let You renew His bringing forth His fruit in my life, You prepare me for further ministry.

You know sometimes when we hit the bottom, when we are into sin, we just think it's all over- nothing, I can't do anything, I'm useless. Look at what he says in Wow, David says I am going to come back, I'm going to serve You.

Now he didn't go back when he was still in sin. There was quite a long period of time. God had worked through the process and it utterly cleansed him and filled him back with joy.

Fourthly, David explains, I ...Sought God for a fresh start. (Psalm 51:14-19)

David sought God by calling sin what it is. v. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.

We must repent of sin. Turn from it, change your mind about it, want to get rid of it, get uncomfortable about it. A lot of people, they are willing to say I have made a mistake. They are willing to say I didn't do that as well as I should have. Instead of saying I sinned. We don't like to humbly confess when we've sinned. Why? Because to say I've sinned, we have to agree with God. And all that's within us, our flesh and our pride rebels against humble repentance. We don't want to say that we have sinned. We want to say we made a mistake, that we are weak—but not that we have sinned.

David called his sin what it really was. Look at v. 14, "Deliver me from blood guiltiness". Wait a minute. Did David literally kill Uriah? No, an Ammonite archer shot arrows and did it for him. But it was really David who killed Uriah; David sent him there, David ordered Joab to send Uriah to the front lines and get him killed.

When David truly turns to God, he repents by calling his sin what it really was. So unabashedly David prays, "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, I killed Uriah--O God, thou God of my salvation: [and] my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. I'll call sin what it is—in my life that was sin. God, forgive me of that, cleanse me of that, renew me."

David wanted to talk to God. v. 15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

Remember we saw in Psalm 32 that those months of hiding his sin had dried up David both physically and spiritually.

When we are attached to our sin, we are strangely silent towards God. That's what Psalm 32 is all about. David had dried up spiritually—he just closed his mouth, he wasn't talking to God in fact he wasn't talking to anybody. He was just empty inside. When he lost his song, he wasn't interested in talking to God.

But when we call sin what it is, when we repent, we have to start talking to God.

We have to just open our lips and say like David said, 'God open my mouth back up--don't let me hang around down here in the low lands. Let my mouth declare Your praise'.

When we are down, if all we will do is just start praising God for who He is and what He has done, and what He means to us, God will restore our joy.

David wanted to Get Real (Experience true contrition not mere externalism). v. 16-17 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise.

You see, it would have been easy to have taken a lamb and take it to the Tabernacle and had them kill it in his place. It would have been easy to have brought a guilt offering, or a sin offering. God says I don't want you to merely externally do something. I want you, on the inside, to have a broken spirit. What does James 4:9 say?

Be afflicted, mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning, your joy to heaviness.

What did Paul say in 2 Corinthians 7:8-10?

2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Let me explain the difference. Godly sorrow is when we say to the Lord like David did:

- God I have sinned against You.
- God I have broken Your righteous standard.
- God against You I have _____ and you name the sin.

Do you know what the sorrow of the world is?

- Oh no, I've lost my health.
- Oh no, I've lost my job.
- Oh no, I have a sexually transmitted disease.
- Oh no, I'm pregnant. Or whatever.
- It is just sorrow over what happens to us and that's not Godly sorrow. That's not sorrow that brings repentance.

It reminds me of what Howard Hendricks said once while I was in seminary. He said when the man goes in to the convenience store (or nowadays online) and sees the pornographic material and stands there and looks at it; and begins the fires burning within him; when he comes out he thinks—'God I'm sorry I looked at the magazine'.

Howie always said, "That's not confession that is only an admission".

Confession is saying, "I offended You my Holy God; I lusted and wanted to lust; I started a fire as the writer of Proverbs says, inside that will burn me up. God I ask You

to cleanse that and take away that wicked desire." That's confession. Admission doesn't count.

If you are facing lust you need to consider the final result of it. What can we do right now to get us started back to God's path or keep us on that path? Let me give you three choices we need to make:

1. **Make yourself look at the final result or ultimate form (mature plant) of the momentary choices of (or seeds you are planting) today.**
 - If your parents knew what you have been hiding from them, would it crush them and grieve their hearts?
 - If your husband or wife knew about the area you have surrendered to lust, would it rob your relationship of joy and trust?
 - If you keep on in this path what will it do to your body, your family, your reputation and your heavenly reward?
 - Is it really worth as much as it will eventually cost you?
2. **Choose to cultivate new and godly choices—remember every time we descend into lust our flesh is strengthened.** It's takes control of more of our life. And I'll tell you the tragic result of a life of lust and sin is the life of those that can't stop sinning because lust controls them and God says that He has given them over to the desires of their heart. that will become habits of holiness for old and ungodly patterns. Cut cable or online service for a few months and join an accountability group or Bible study; take a fast from TV watching (even sports) and start a Scripture memory plan like our "108 verses".
3. **Remember it will only be harder to stop tomorrow.** Every wrong choice we make sets in motion a wave of consequence and growing bondage throughout our mind and body. Every obedient choice we make set in motion a wave of liberating blessing and spiritual strength.

David says here I'm not going to admit, I am going to confess. I am going to experience true contrition, not mere externalism. I am not just going to offer some little lamb. I am going to be broken hearted inside.

David wanted to Chase After God (Begin zealous worship anew and afresh) v. 18-19 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

What he is saying is- God now that I am back with you, I am going to zealously follow Your program. I am going to zealously praise You in Zion. I am going to zealously bring my offerings to You--but not as a token, but now from a true heart.