

David's Restoration

Preparatory

By Prof. Ronald Cammenga

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: 2 Samuel 11, Psalm 32:3-5
Preached on: Sunday, July 22, 2018

Byron Center Protestant Reformed Church

1945 84th Street SW
Byron Center, MI 49315

Website: www.byronprc.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/byroncenterprc

Turn with me in the Holy Scriptures to the 11th chapter of 2 Samuel. 2 Samuel 11. The text tonight as a part of our preparatory worship service is based on Psalm 32:3-5, the historical background of Psalm 32 as well as Psalm 51, the versification of which we've just sung is the sin of David in murdering Uriah and committing adultery with Bathsheba, and that is the account that we have in 2 Samuel 11.

We read 2 Samuel 11 at verse 1,

1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle [that is the springtime of the year], that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. 2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. 3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? 4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. 5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child. 6 And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. 7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. 8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. 9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. 10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? 11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as

thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. 12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. 13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house. 14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. 16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. 17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also. 18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; 19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king, 20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? 21 Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. 22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for. 23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate. 24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. 25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him. 26 And when the wife of Uriah [notice that, not Bathsheba but the wife of Uriah] heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. 27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

There ends our reading of the word of God tonight. May the Lord add his blessing to our reading of the Holy Scripture.

The text tonight is Psalm 32:3-5.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. 4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my

transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.
Selah.

In the first two verses of Psalm 32, the verses that immediately precede our text for tonight, David rejoices in God's forgiveness of his sins.

1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2
Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in
whose spirit there is no guile.

He rejoices there in the blessings of salvation, particularly the blessing of the forgiveness of his sins by God. That is not merely one blessing of salvation among all the other blessings of salvation, but upon the blessing of the forgiveness of sins depends all the other blessings of salvation. Apart from the enjoyment of that blessing, there is no enjoyment of any of the other blessings of salvation. A man must, first of all, possess this blessing, the blessing of the forgiveness of his sins by God, and then at the same time, he experiences the enjoyment of all the other blessings of salvation. Because the blessing of the forgiveness of sins is the fundamental blessing of salvation, to lose the assurance of the forgiveness of your sins is to lose the assurance of salvation altogether. It is impossible for a man to lose the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins but continue to enjoy all of the other blessings of salvation. That's impossible, spiritually impossible. For a man to forfeit the enjoyment of the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins is for that man to forfeit the enjoyment of all the blessings of salvation and that was David's experience as he describes that experience in Psalm 32.

David lost the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins and losing the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, he lost altogether the assurance of his salvation. He was not at all assured of the love or favor of God. He lost altogether the assurance that God was his God and that he was God's Son. He lost the assurance of God's favor and smiling countenance upon him. Now God's hand was heavy upon him. That was his experience. His experience was that he was without joy and utterly miserable. David's misery was due to his sins.

In verses 3 through 5, the verses that make up our text at this preparatory worship service, David tells us that there was a time in his life when he did not enjoy the assurance of his salvation, when he did not possess the blessings of salvation and the great joy of salvation that is described in the opening verses of Psalm 32. That was a time in David's life when he went on impenitent in his sins; a time in his life when he stubbornly refused to confess his sins before God and David tells us in the text that it was in the way of the confession of his sins before God that God restored to him the assurance and the joy of his salvation. In the way of the confession of his sin, God gave to David the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins and in giving to David, repentant sinner that he was, the assurance that his sins were forgiven, God restored to David the joy of his salvation.

The text brings out the important and the necessary connection between the confession of sin in our lives and the enjoyment of salvation, the assurance and joy of salvation. The

comfort of the Gospel is that it declares to the believer the forgiveness of his sins for Jesus' sake. That comfort and testimony of the Gospel is visibly represented in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper of which you will partake next Sunday morning. The enjoyment of that blessedness of salvation is only in the way of repentance over and confession of our sins. Apart from confession and repentance, the child of God cannot and will not enjoy the blessing of God's favor, the blessing of the assurance of his salvation. God will not let him experience that assurance and that joy and that was exactly the experience of David as he recounts that experience in our text, Psalm 32:3-5. At the same time, our text teaches us the great Gospel truth that God never allows his child to go on impenitent in his sins so that he dies impenitent in his sins. The text teaches us that God, by the power of his preserving grace, always brings his child back again. Though he fall, he is not utterly cast down but by the hand of God, the heavy hand of God, the hand of God in chastisement, God always brings his straying son or daughter back again to the right way. He restores his child as he restored David.

That is what I call your attention to tonight, David's restoration. Let's notice, first of all, his great sin; let's notice secondly, his heartfelt confession; and finally, his gracious forgiveness. David's restoration: his great sin, his heartfelt confession, his gracious forgiveness.

David fell into sin. David's sins were great. His sin was grievous. His sin was great, first of all, because of the nature of the sins of which he was guilty. David had fallen not into one but into two sins. He had fallen into sin against the sixth commandment by murdering Uriah, and he fell into sin against the seventh commandment by committing adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. His sins were great. Each of his sins were sins that ordinarily in the Old Testament required stoning. David could have been stoned to death for either one of the two sins that he committed.

His sins concerned the second table of God's law. The sins against the sixth and seventh commandment belong to the second table of the law. That table, those commandments, that have to do with our relationship to our neighbor; that his sins were sins against his neighbor, his neighbors aggravated the guilt of his sins. He did not sin only against God but he sinned also against his neighbors. By his sins, he offended, he injured his neighbors Bathsheba and Uriah.

Besides, David's transgression of the sixth and seventh commandments of God's law were especially grievous because of the very nature of the sins against those two commandments. His sins involved the very persons of his neighbors Bathsheba and Uriah. It wasn't merely that he had stolen away some of the goods, some of the things that belonged to his neighbor which goods he could restore; he hadn't merely refused to honor or to obey the neighbor who had been placed in authority over him, nor had he merely spoken an evil word against his neighbor; he hadn't only in his heart coveted what belonged to his neighbor, but he sinned against the very persons of his neighbor, sins that touched them themselves, sins he committed that in the very nature of the case could not be undone. He couldn't restore Bathsheba's moral purity. He couldn't give Uriah his life back.

In the very nature of those sins against the sixth and seventh commandments, David's sins were grievous sins and then besides that, the form of his sins against the sixth and the seventh commandments were the most grievous transgressions of those two commandments. He didn't simply willfully injure or harm his neighbor, he killed them. He did not merely commit fornication, let us say as a young person violating his own moral purity, but he committed adultery. A married man took to himself a married woman, he had an affair with the wife of someone else. By the way in which he broke the sixth and the seventh commandments, the most heinous transgressions of those two commandments, it is plain that his sins were grievous sins.

In the second place, what adds to the grievous character of David's sins are not merely the nature of the sins themselves but what adds to the grievousness of his sins was that they were sins committed publicly. David didn't commit his sins in a corner privately, sins perhaps that he himself only knew and his God, or sins that only he and Bathsheba knew besides God. His sins weren't secret sins known only to himself or a very few, but his sins were public sins before all his servants, before all the members of his household. He had her fetched. He brought her into the palace, into his bedroom in front of his whole household. He went in unto Bathsheba and committed adultery with Bathsheba. By his sins, the prophet Nathan later pointed out to David that he was guilty of blaspheming the name of God and bringing reproach upon the name of God before even Israel's enemies because his sins were public in nature. It would become even more public because Bathsheba became pregnant. His sins were grievous sins. By their very nature, public sins are more grievous than private personal sins. We bring reproach not simply upon ourselves but upon the whole church and upon the name of Christ that we bear. That makes David's sins grievous sins.

In the third place, the greatness of David's sins was that he committed these sins as a regenerated saved child of God. That aggravated David's sins. The ungodly commit many grievous sins. We're appalled by their idolatry, their denial of and blasphemy against God, their immorality, their violence, but the greatness of the sins of the ungodly, as much as we abhor those sins, can't be compared to the greatness of the sins of those who profess to be children of God, disciples of Christ Jesus. That's what David was.

Now very often we don't take that view, we take the opposite view. "Since I'm saved, a little sin isn't so serious. I'm saved, after all. I've nothing to worry about." But the word of God teaches differently. For a child of God to sin, for one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, one who is the temple of the Holy Spirit is like the dog returning to lick up its vomit or the washed pig to wallow again in the mud. It is contempt to do despite, the Bible says, to the Spirit of grace to crucify the Son of God afresh. It is to sin against grace. That was the nature of David's sins that aggravated his sins.

Then in the fourth place, what made David's sins so great was the position in Israel that he had, had been given by God at the time that he committed these sins. We're talking about David, the king. We're talking about the one who stands as God's representative, who has leadership responsibilities among the people of God. In that capacity, he sinned.

He had been entrusted by God with kingship, mind you, the king over God's chosen people. In that capacity as king, he sinned and that aggravated his sin. Put it in New Testament language, David's sin was the sin of an office-bearer in the church, today a minister or an elder or a deacon. The sin of a child, the sin of a teenager can't compare to the sin of their parents or to the sin, the public sin of a Christian schoolteacher or of an office-bearer in God's church. That's a warning to those of us who have been put into office by God. It's a warning to us as fathers and mothers in Israel, the high calling that we have because of the calling that God has given to us and the position in which he has placed us. David showed contempt for that high calling and the fact that as king of Israel he was guilty of these sins, made his sins the great sins that they were.

But in the end, none of these things that I've mentioned really explains the greatness of David's sins. None of them is in the end the explanation for the greatness of his sins. David's great sin was that he refused to repent of his sins. His great sin was that he would not confess his sins. His great sin was that he went on impenitent in his sins. That was the case, David was impenitent for quite a long time. David was impenitent. He lived in his sin. For nearly a year from the time he lay with Bathsheba until some time after the son that they conceived was born, nearly a year David went on impenitent in his sin, stubbornly refusing to confess his sin.

He speaks of that in the text. That's verse 3 which begins, "When I kept silence," when I kept silence. When I kept silence means when I kept silence before God. He didn't quit talking and probably he did not quit praying either during all those months. Outwardly and formally he still prayed but his prayers never got above the ceiling of the room in which he was because he refused to confess his sins. He kept silent about his sins. He kept silent before God about his sins. He refused to confess his sins to God.

That's also implied in what we read at the beginning of verse 5 which is the contrast to that keeping silence, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD." In his silence, David had refused to acknowledge his sins. In his silence, he was covering up his sins, hiding his sins. In his silence towards God, he said within himself, "I will not confess my sins. I am the king. I will do as I very well please." That was the attitude that David took.

His sin was his impenitence in his sin. It wasn't that David did not know that what he had done was sin. He knew very well, oh yes. It wasn't that he was completely unaware of the fact that he had sinned. Of course not. He knew his sin. God's word is very clear about these matters. He didn't have to plead that God's word is ambiguous about whether or not what he had done is really adultery. Of course not. What he did was adultery plain and simple. He knew it very well. He knew very well that what he had done was murder Uriah. Although he had not thrust the spear or shot the arrow through him that killed him because in his heart he wanted Uriah dead and because of the orders that he gave to Joab, David was responsible for Uriah's death as much as if he had put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger. But David refused, stubbornly refused to confess his sins. Like our sin so often, he refused to bow before God and in humility acknowledge his sin. Instead stubbornly and willfully he persisted in his sin.

There's a danger that God's people fall into sin, every one of us, of course. We have within us a sinful, fallen, Adam nature that lusts to sin. We're surrounded by the temptations of a wicked world, a wicked world that is increasing in its wickedness, and by the assaults of the devil and of the false church. Oh yes, there is a danger that God's people fall into sin but there is the greater danger that we go on impenitently in our sins. The danger that we refuse, stubbornly refuse to confess our sin and to break with sin in our life, the danger that even though our spouse rebukes us for the sin in which we're walking, our parents or our Christian schoolteachers admonish us on account of a particular sin, the office-bearers in God's church visit us and bring us the admonitions of the word of God, that we brush those admonitions aside and stubbornly refuse to confess our sins.

The word of God says that we are to love our neighbor but we harbor in our hearts hatred for the neighbor, perhaps the neighbor sitting right next to us or right in front of us in church tonight. We despise them in our hearts and perhaps because of some evil or some evil that we suspect they have committed against us. We despise them in our hearts and we desire revenge against them. The word of God says that we are not to set our heart upon the things of this world. Over and over again we hear the admonitions in the preaching of the Gospel not to set our hope upon the corruptible things of this world but what do we do? We make money our god and the accumulation of possessions the great goal of our earthly life in this world.

The word of God says that as a husband, I must love my wife, that I must nourish and cherish her as Christ does the church, but I allow my love to grow cold towards my wife. I'm harsh in my dealings with her, maybe even abusive of her. Or maybe even I have an affair and justify it, an affair with another woman. The word of God says that I must love my husband. I must love him and honor the authority that God has given to him over me for Christ's sake. I must honor his headship as the church honors the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I refuse to honor him, to submit to him and I rebel against him and make life miserable for him in the home.

The word of God says that I must live peaceably in the congregation, that I must seek the unity of the church, that I must put the other before myself, but I behave myself in the church schismatically. I endeavor to divide the church. I backbite and I slander and bring reproach upon the good name of my neighbor.

The word of God says to the young people of the church who make friends with those who are one with you in the faith, you do not unequally yoke yourself together with unbelievers. You do not make friends of them. You do not date them. You certainly do not marry them. But you run with the world, you refuse to hear the admonitions of God's word and of your parents and of the pastor, and running with the world, you even date and marry an unbeliever contrary to the revealed will of God. Don't say, "This couldn't happen to me. It will never happen to me. I could never do such a thing." Don't say that because if you do, you don't know who you are. You do not know the evil of the nature that is within you.

This is the greatest sin that we could possibly commit, not any particular sin but that we go on in any sin. This is the sin that makes us unworthy partakers of the Lord's Supper. The form that we read, the first part of that form lists a number of sins and then adds, "Whoever continueth in such sins shall abstain from this meat and drink." The sin there of continuing in sin, the sin of impenitence, that's the one sin, the only sin that bars from the Lord's Supper. No other sin. Sin must not keep us away from the Lord's Table, that's the reason for the Table, that's why we must come to the Table next Sunday morning. We're sinners. As sinners, we're in need of this means of grace in our lives, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. For sinners to keep away from the Table is as foolish and ludicrous as somebody who is sick not going to the doctor. We need the Lord's Table and we need the grace of God that he works by his Spirit through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. No, the idea of the form when it lists all of those sins is not that any one of these sins in themselves must keep us from the Lord's Table, not that but continuing in any one of these sins, going on impenitently in any one of these sins, and the form makes that clear when it says at the end, "All these, while they continue, continue in such sins, shall abstain from this meat lest their judgment of condemnation be made the heavier."

That was David's sin, continuing in sin. Though David was impenitent, God broke David's heart. God brought him to his knees in repentance and confession of his sin. Heartfelt confession. What must be emphasized is that God brought David to the confession of his sin. God broke David's stubborn heart and his rebellious will. God worked in him so that he turned from his sins and cried out to God for the forgiveness of his sins. God was the one who made David utterly miserable so long as he went on living in his sin.

You see, the very worst thing that God can do to a man or a woman is to allow them to go on in their sin. We don't always think that, do we? We think that the judgment of God ought to come like a bolt of lightning out of the heavens and strike this blasphemous, God-dishonoring person dead in their tracks. We see a man going on in his sin and we're inclined to think he's getting away with his sin. He's not getting away with his sin. God doesn't let anyone get away with their sin. We see a man who divorces his wife in order to marry another woman, a woman with whom perhaps he has been having an affair for a long time, and we suppose that all is well with him despite his sin against the seventh commandment. Or we see the man who makes very clear that he despises God and despises the word of God and outwardly he prospers, everything in life seems to go his way, he becomes fabulously rich and seems to be enjoying every earthly pleasure possible. No. No! Young people, don't you be fooled. They are not getting away with their sin for, you see, the very worst judgment of God upon the sinner is that he allows that sinner to go on in his sin, increasing his guilt before God and making himself worthy of much more severe judgment in the life that is to come.

That, in fact, is the very worst judgment of all, that God gives a man over or a woman over to their sin, but God did not allow David to go on impenitent in his sin. He brought David to repentance and to the confession of his sin. David speaks of that in verse 4, "For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of

summer." God's hand was heavy upon David. That doesn't just mean that David's conscience accused him, it means that God smote David's conscience. God made David miserable. David could experience no peace at all so long as he went on in his sin. This is God's way with his impenitent son or daughter, God gives no rest so long as they go on in their sin. God makes us miserable, utterly miserable until he brings us to repentance.

This misery isn't simply the consequences of our sins, there are always consequences to our sins, inevitably consequences to our sins, what you sow you'll reap, for David too, but at this point in his life there were apparently no negative consequences to David's sin. He had gotten away with it. Not so. God would judge David's family. The baby born to Bathsheba and David would die. The sword would never depart from David's house. But it wasn't merely the consequences of his sin, bitter as those consequences would be that made David miserable, it was his sin itself, the sin itself, the guilt of his sin before God. David's misery was the loss of the assurance of God's favor and God's blessing, God's friendship and fellowship. He refused to confess his sins and the judgment of God was that he took away from David the sense and the assurance of his salvation and that is what made David so utterly miserable.

This is exactly the teaching of the Canons of Dort in Head 5, Article 5. You can read that later again, by such enormous sins that highly offend God, incur a deadly guilt, grieve the Holy Spirit, interrupt the exercise of faith, very grievously wounded consciences and sometimes lose the sense of God's favor for a time until on their returning into the right way of serious repentance, the light of God's fatherly countenance again shines upon them. By causing his hand to rest heavily upon David, God brought him to repentance. David confessed his sin. What before he had refused to do, now he did.

I can't dwell on that, his confession. We're late but it's especially in the opening two verses of the passage that you see all of those words that are used for David's sins. David acknowledges his sin. He confesses his sin. He confesses it unto thee, verse 5, the first part. Not just against Bathsheba and Uriah, but his sin as sin against God and that's what's emphasized in all those words for "sin" that are used in the text. They're used in verses 1 and 2. In a sermon on the first two verses would go into depth on those words, but just this about every one of the words for "sin" that's used in our text, they all emphasize in one way or another that our sins are sin against God. We incur guilt before God when we sin.

The first word for "sin" is the common one in the Old Testament. It means "to miss the mark." The figure is of an archer who shoots his arrow not at the mark attempting to give his best shot, but perhaps he misses the bull's eye but it's the archer who turns in the opposite direction, shoots the arrow not at the target but away from the target, will not aim at God and the glory of God but he aims it instead at self, and that the glory of self.

The second word in the text for "sin" is "transgression, acknowledge mine iniquity and I confess my transgression." Transgression is the breaking of the law. That's what the word means. Transgression, to break the law. Whose law? It's God's law and, once again, the word used for "sin" here emphasizes sin in its God-ward aspect.

And the third word is "iniquity." The word "iniquity" is really guilt and that especially underscores what sin is, it's guilt before God.

Now clearly David confesses his sin as sin against God. The sincerity of David's confession comes out in the text. It's heartfelt. It's not merely formal and hypocritical. He doesn't just go through the words, and forgive my sins for Jesus' sake, amen. No, he very deliberately acknowledges his sin unto God. It's a matter of sincere and heartfelt repentance. The word for "confess" means "to point the finger at." That's what he did, he pointed the finger at his sins very specifically and he pointed the finger at himself.

That's true confession and in that way, God forgave David. In the way of David's confession, God forgave David's sin. That finally. Oh, that brings out the importance of repentance and confession of sin. It was only when David repented of his sins and when he confessed his sins that God forgave the iniquity of his sins. It was only when instead of going on stubbornly in his sins, he acknowledged his sins before God in sorrow of heart, that God assured David that his sins were blotted out. Confession of sin is the God-ordained way to the enjoyment of the forgiveness of sin.

At the same time, the promise of God comes out in the text. Don't you see that? This is the promise of God in the text: whoever repents of their sins and confesses their sins before God, God forgives. He forgave David and he forgives us also. There's comfort for sin-stricken sinners. No one shall ever be refused forgiveness who repents of his sins and confesses his sins before God. If God forgave a David, he will also forgive you and he will also forgive me. Confess your sins. Whatever those sins may be, confess your sins. Repent of your sins and be assured of the forgiveness of your sins by God.

The important thing to remember and to see is the relationship between David's confession and God's forgiveness. David's confession was not the basis, ground or reason upon which God forgave David's sin. Absolutely not. He repented of his sins but his repentance did not merit God's forgiveness. He confessed his sins but that confession of sin did not earn and obligate God to forgive David's sin, but graciously not at all because of anything in David but because of God's grace in Jesus Christ, God forgave David's sin. He pleaded Jesus Christ. He brought his sacrifice to the temple, we read in 2 Samuel 12. At the end of that sorrowful chapter where we have the historical account of his sorrow over his sin and his confession of sin, he brought his sacrifice to the temple and there worshiped God. On the basis, then, of the cross of Jesus Christ and the shed blood of Jesus Christ, David received the forgiveness of his sins.

That lived in his consciousness. Sinners are saved, sinners go to heaven, but the sinners who are saved and the sinners who go to heaven are repentant sinners. Sinners who are sorry for their sins, they are the sinners who in sorrow for sin cast themselves upon God in Jesus Christ. Are you sorry for your sins? Are you truly sorry before God for your sins? Do you seek the forgiveness of your sins in Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Then be assured, be assured that your sins are forgiven.

Such sinners, repentant sinners, enjoy the favor and experience the blessing of God. God didn't cast David away, he didn't say to him, "No, you've crossed the line this time. You've gone too far. No sirree. No forgiveness for you." He didn't say that. Graciously, freely, completely he forgave David's sin. The man, the woman, the young person, the child, that confesses his sin, God will certainly receive in mercy. That's our form. They will have the assurance of the forgiveness of their sins, enjoying the assurance of the forgiveness of their sins. They will possess the assurance of their salvation. Amen.

Father in heaven, bless thy word and use this word to comfort sin-stricken sinners to give us the assurance that our sins are forgiven. Use the sacrament next Sunday morning to strengthen that assurance even more, pardoning graciously our sins for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Let's close our worship service tonight singing 312. Let's sing the first three stanzas, 1, 2 and 3 of 312.

"I love the Lord Who heard my cry
And granted my request;
In Him Who hears and answers prayer
My trust through life shall rest.

With deadly sorrows compassed round,
My heart was full of grief;
Then to the Lord I made my prayer
That He would send relief.

The Lord is just and merciful,
And gracious to the meek;
He saved me when I cried to Him,
Though I was poor and weak."

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide with you forever. Amen.