

Psalms 51

Psalms 51:3,4 For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.

Psalms 51 was written by David after he was confronted by Nathan the prophet concerning his sin with Bathsheba. David was at the pinnacle of power and prestige when the event occurred but this sin soon shattered his world. Within the story there are some very sobering life lessons.

- David may have suffered from some form of depression. This may have been the occasion of his sin but it does not excuse it.
- There were other indications in David's life that he was drifting away from the walk that he had previously had with God. This sin did not come out of the blue.
- What David did was terrible enough, but the cover-up was even worse. There are just two basic reactions after sin, either to cover up the sin or else to confess the sin.
- With Uriah dead and Bathsheba now his wife, David thought that he was

safe, that it was over even though he was suffering from overwhelming guilt, but then, Nathan the prophet came calling. The thought that David could keep this hidden was vain from the beginning

- David's confessional Psalm was written after he was "caught." Genuine repentance is still possible even after you have been caught in your sin. You can still make things right with God and with those whom you have wronged.

The Psalm reveals the suffering that David brought upon himself through his sin. He felt dirty and he could not get clean. (v. 2) He could not get away from what he had done. It was always on his mind. (v. 3) What he had done had come between himself and God. Things were not the same. (v. 4) His brokenness went down into his bones. (v. 8) His sins had become many. (v. 9) He felt so distanced from God that it was like he had been thrown out. (v. 11) His guilt was a heavy burden that he could not get rid of. (v. 14)

Note that all of this was going on in David's heart and soul before Nathan confronted him. To remain in that condition was sheer misery and yet, David did nothing until he

was confronted. Nathan had a very touchy assignment. If David had known what was coming he probably would have dodged it but Nathan's work was grace. The only path to healing and recovery for David had to begin with facing what he had done.

David did not minimize his sin. "Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." "Against You, You only have I sinned and done this evil in Your sight." "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me."

David's confession created hope and led to all of the possibilities of a new life. David knew that God was not finished with him and that repentance and renewal was possible. He asked for cleansing. He asked for a restoration of his joy. He asked for a removal of the guilt. He sought a return to good standing with God. He wanted to be welcome in His presence. He was confident that when he came out on the other end of his crisis that he would be able to be a help to others. He had learned the way of a broken spirit and a contrite heart as a means of becoming welcome in God's presence. He was finally able to find the energy and optimism needed to reengage with life.