

12/17/23 Sermon Outline

TITLE:

Forever Clean: God's Grace in the Midst of Our Deepest Shame

- **Personal intro**

- Name
- Coming to Mercy Hill with my beautiful wife Beca since 2021 and became a member in 2022
- 22 years old
- Recent college grad but have dramatically changed my life course and became a carpenter for a company called Tuff Shed

- **Why I chose this passage**

- This has easily been one of the most life-changing passages in all of the Bible for me
- This passage totally changed the way I saw God. Even though I grew up in church, for the longest time, I viewed him as cold, distant, and someone I had to grind all day for to please. I believe God used this passage to flip that paradigm upside down. I believe he can do the same for you this morning.

- **Parental advisory**

- Today we are going to dive into Psalm chapter 51. As just a heads up, this psalm deals with weighty topics that I am aware may be too much for some younger listeners. If you are a parent and you feel like your kiddo may not be ready to encounter some of these topics quite yet, that's totally ok, you have my full permission to pull them out of the room or into the kid's ministry whenever you feel comfortable doing so.

- **Quick Context**

- Ps 51 is a written record in the Old Testament book of Psalms of a song from ancient Israel's greatest monarch, King David. The Bible consistently describes David as a "man after God's own heart"--someone who loved God and was willing to put his life on the line for him.

- David's life was quite victorious for a long time. He slayed giant warriors, conquered kingdoms, and crafted some of humanity's most cherished poetry. He led one of the most morally upright lives anyone at the time had seen—that was until, everything changed one sleepy afternoon...
- David wrote this song when he was more rock bottom than a Chihuahua on the fourth of July. According to a historical account in the book of Second Samuel, David cheated on his wife for another woman named Bathsheba and got her pregnant. To cover up what he had done, he used his authority as a king to have Bathsheba's husband (Uriah) killed.
- After essentially executing Uriah (who happened to be one of David's most faithful men). David quickly married Bathsheba in a plot to make it look like she conceived the baby after the death of her husband. David covered up the whole plot until the prophet Nathan confronted him and David's eyes, like the eyes of Adam in the Garden of Eden were opened to what he had done. Let's open up to Ps 51 to see what was going through David's mind.
- **Read the passage [feel free to use the table of contents]**
 - **Ps 51**
 - **To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.**
 - **1** Have mercy on me, O God,
 - according to your steadfast love;
 - according to your abundant mercy
 - blot out my transgressions.
 -
 - **2** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
 - and cleanse me from my sin!
 -
 - **3** For I know my transgressions,
 - and my sin is ever before me.
 -

- 4 Against 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.
-
- 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
- and in sin did my mother conceive me.
-
- 6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
- and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
-
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
- wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
-
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
- let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
-
- 9 Hide your face from my sins,
- and blot out all my iniquities.
-
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
- and renew a right spirit within me.
-
- 11 Cast me not away from your presence,
- and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
-
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
- and uphold me with a willing spirit.
-
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
- and sinners will return to you.
-
- 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
- O God of my salvation,
- and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.
-
- 15 O Lord, open my lips,

- and my mouth will declare your praise.
-
- **16** For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
- you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
-
- **17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
- a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
-
- **18** Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
- build up the walls of Jerusalem;
-
- **19** then will you delight in right sacrifices,
- in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
- then bulls will be offered on your altar.

- **Pray**

- **Hook**

- This man was not the first one to struggle with a troubled conscience. 2500 years after David, another man found himself absolutely wrecked after staring into his own failures. In the 1500s there lived a German man who, like David, was looked at as a relatively decent dude in the sight of those around him. This man was born into a poor family but worked his way through school to receive an education in law and philosophy. He was a pretty religious dude, he had an intense desire know God but found his studies insufficient to fulfill that desire. He was also an angry man—having a reputation for outbursts in public and private.
- One day, as he returned home from a visit to his parents during a rainstorm, a bolt of lightning pounded the ground next to him, knocking him off his feet. He heard the sky boom with thunder and he blacked out. Taking this to be the judgment of God, he vowed to become a priest if he survived.
- Fearing that he would eventually end up in hell or purgatory if he didn't change his ways, he became a monk in an Augustinian Monastery. While at the monastery, this man denied himself and engaged in repetitive confession—to such a degree that his fellow

monks told him to stop confessing his sin until he did something “bad” like adultery or murder.

- Even though this man was held in high regard, academically and religiously, he still could not find freedom from his seared conscience. While intensely studying the Bible he was confronted with the reality that he was more sinful than he ever thought. He studied and sang hymns about the holiness of God every day and saw his own evil deeds and could not understand how a holy God could ever want anything to do with him.

●

- This man’s name was Martin Luther. He spoke the following words about this period in his life, “I lost touch with Christ the Savior and Comforter, and made of him the jailer and hangman of my poor soul.”
 - I want to ask you, does that describe your life at this very moment?

● **Main idea of the text**

- What do you do when you’ve made an absolute train wreck of your life? How do you cleanse a heart that refuses to be clean? How do you heal a hopelessly numb conscience? In other words, how do we get right with a holy God when we know that we’ve deeply wronged him?

○ **Answer:**

- We must get honest with God about our worst sins, knowing that when we repent, Jesus is ready and eager to wash us clean and restore us back to him again.
- In other words...It’s not too late to lay our shame at Christ’s feet because even our most scandalous sins are not too big for the grace of God

- **What we’re gonna do:**

- Dive into the text, reflect on it, and talk about how it applies to our lives. I will also weave my own testimony as well.

- **Exegesis (what the text meant when it was originally written)**
 - **V1-2: David appealed to God's character**
 - 1 Have **mercy** on me, O God,
 - according to your **steadfast love**;
 - according to your abundant mercy
 - **blot** out my transgressions.

 - 2 Wash me **thoroughly** from my iniquity,
 - and cleanse me from my sin!
 - **V1:**
 - David knew that God's mercy and character were deeply intertwined with each other
 - Steadfast love—> Heseed (steadfast love/undeserved adoration)
 - Blot—> Machah (wipe away/erase)
 - God blots out transgressions—not us
 - Abundant mercy—> God is not stingy with his mercy
 - **V2:**
 - Sin is almost likened to dirt or filth that needs to be cleaned
 - Thorough—> Hebrew (multiply to wash me)
 - David wanted a “thorough” washing, not a surface-level one

- **V 3-4: David got real with God**
 - 3 For I know my transgressions,
 - and my sin is ever before me.

 - 4 Against 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.

 - **V3:**

- Who here has ever tried to hold a beach ball underwater? [*Show of hands*] How long did it last? What happened? [*It eventually came to the surface*] I can guarantee you that no inflated beach ball put underwater by a kid more than 5 minutes ago is still underwater to this day.
 - “It may be a secret sin on earth, but it is open scandal in heaven” (Lewis Sperry Chafer)
 - David hid his sin for *at least* 9 months before he was exposed
 - Imagine holding onto a secret of that size for that long
 - In Ps 32:3-5, David talks about his bones literally “wasting away” because he “kept silent”--very likely referring to the events leading up to Ps 51
 - David got to the point when he was done covering up his sin (have you gotten to that point yet?)
- **V4:**
- What does “you only” mean? I thought David sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah too?
 - We plead for mercy from the one who we are accountable to
 - Uriah and Bathsheba were valuable in God’s eyes so any sins David committed against them were ultimately committed against God
 - David submitted to the reality that what he did was evil in God’s eyes--no getting defensive, no sugar coating, just being real
 - What does justified in your words and blameless in your judgment mean?
 - God was not exposing David for no reason. The whole ordeal was not God being unfair. He disciplined David because he actually did something wrong. David acknowledged that.
- **V 5-6: David realized he could not escape his sinful nature**
- 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
 - and in sin did my mother conceive me.

- **6** Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
- and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

- - **V5:**
 - What does “brought forth in iniquity” mean?
 - David was thrust into a sinful nature that he could not escape on the day of his conception
 - **V6:**
 - What is “truth in the inward being?”
 - A deep inward change that results in genuine integrity (Jesus causes this)
 - What is “wisdom in the secret heart”?
 - God gives us hearts that want that which is good, true, and beautiful

- **V 7-9: David pleads with God to clean him**
 - **7** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
 - wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

 - **8** Let me hear joy and gladness;
 - let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

 - **9** Hide your face from my sins,
 - and blot out all my iniquities.
 - **V7:**
 - Sin makes us dirty, grace makes us clean
 - When God forgives us, he makes our conscience and our hearts white as snow
 - Did anyone here grow up in a place where it actually got cold enough to snow in the winter? [show of hands]
 - Have you ever wondered why snow is white even though snowflakes are clear?
 - Snow—> gets its pure white color by reflecting the rays of the sun

- Our hearts, like snow, become pure because the love of God reflects off our hearts in a pure and radiant beam of light
 - Hyssop—> Original readers of this psalm would have known hyssop as the medicinal herb used in purifying rituals
 - See exodus 12:22
- **V8:**
 - How can you “hear” joy and gladness?
 - A forgiven man or woman can’t help but rejoice—woman at the well (John 4:4-42)
 - In God’s economy, you can have broken bones and still rejoice
- **V9:**
 - What does it mean for God to “hide” his face from our sins?
 - He forgets them/they are not relevant anymore
 - We are the righteousness of Christ
- **V 10-11: David pleads with God to transform his heart**
 - **10** Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
 - **11** Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- **V10:**
 - Create—>same Hebrew word used in Genesis 1:1 which described God creating the world out of nothing
 - Right spirit—> steadfast, able to resist evil
 - I have prayed this over my life almost every day for the last 8 years
 - God not only washes us clean but *supplies* us with the ability to resist evil on a daily basis—> we don’t have to produce this
- **V11:**
 - David does not want distance from God

- Being in God's presence is the only thing that will sustain us in the long run

- **V 12-13: What happens in the aftermath of forgiveness**
 - 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
 - and uphold me with a willing spirit.

 - 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
 - and sinners will return to you.

 - **V12:**
 - If we are already saved, backsliding can't steal salvation from us but it can steal the *joy* of salvation
 - God *wants* us to experience the joy of knowing him
 - **V13:**
 - David (the same guy who murdered and committed adultery) can teach sinners of God's grace?!
 - God redeems us to be a beacon of hope to our fellow sinners
 - If God can save David, he can save *anyone*
 - Because of David's testimony, thousands, if not millions have returned to God

- **V 14-17: What God wants**
 - 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
 - O God of my salvation,
 - and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

 - 15 O Lord, open my lips,
 - and my mouth will declare your praise.

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

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

- **V 14-15:**
 - God opens David's mouth to praise
 - God's actions in a sinner's heart lead to radical worship
 - **V16:**
 - God does not just want a material offering, he wants YOU!!
 - **V17:**
 - God is looking for a "broken spirit" as a sacrifice
 - What does "contrite" mean?
 - Repentant
 - God will not despise this kind of person
 - **V 18-19: Personal and National redemption**
 - **18** Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
 - build up the walls of Jerusalem;
 - **19** then will you delight in right sacrifices,
 - in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
 - then bulls will be offered on your altar.
 - - **V18-19:**
 - David is asking God to restore what sin took from his nation because of his sin
 - All of our sins have a ripple effect—even the sins we think are "harmless"--they affect future generations
- **Theological reflection (how the text relates to the Gospel)**
 - **Through this passage, we can infer that...**
 1. David's fall into sin is a universal problem (big or "little" sins)
 2. Sin makes us guilty before a holy God because all sin is against him at the end of the day
 3. We all deserve the justice/wrath of God for our sins
 4. Religious ritual, superstition, or "trying harder" can never cover sin
 5. We need forgiveness

6. For forgiveness to happen, God himself needs to cover our guilt
7. David knew that once God forgave him, he would be brought back into relational nearness with him again and his sins would be forever washed away

- **[PAUSE]**

- **Little did King David know, it was through the line of Bathsheba that the Messiah would be born...it was through this messiah that every longing of David's crushed heart would be answered**

- **How Jesus fulfills every longing of not only David's heart but yours and mine too:**

1. Jesus was the only man to be born as a human and yet not be infected by the curse of sin (1 Peter 2:22)
2. We all sin against Jesus every time we do evil and yet he was the one who bled for our forgiveness (Romans 5:8)
3. Jesus did what religion or our best efforts could never do—he paid for our sins with his own body as a living sacrifice (1 Peter 2:24)
 - a. Jesus, as he was hanging on a cross, drank sour wine with a hyssop branch attached—thus purifying *us* (John 19:29)
 - b. Jesus is the one who blots out our sins (Acts 3:18, 1 John 1:9)
 - c. **THE SON OF DAVID PAID FOR DAVID'S SIN!!!!**
4. Jesus left our shame in the grave—when he rose from the dead (which is a historical fact—look it up), he forever defeated our sins and gave us a new record, a clean perfect one (Romans 6:8, 8:1)
 - a. Jesus makes our scarlet sins as white as snow (1 John 1:7)
5. Because Jesus resurrected, we walk in the newness of life (Rom 6:4)

- **Contextualization (how does it apply to us)**

- “Santa Claus Gospel”
 - “Naughty” kids get coal, “Nice” kids get presents
 - In the Gospel, we are all naughty kids who deserve coal, and yet God, being a loving father, has given us a gift worth more than gold
- Finish Luther's story (the very thing that made him hate God made him turn to love God)
- **Share my testimony out of porn addiction**
 - Grew up in a Christian household
 - Lived a self-righteous double life for a long time
 - Was exposed to pornography at a young age
 - Felt no remorse for a long time
 - Got saved and started to feel convicted of what I was doing
 - Wanted to get free from addiction but was unable to—I was chained/ashamed
 - Turned to legalism to wipe my slate (constant confession, repetitive superstitious prayers, making grand promises to God, punishing myself for failing, etc.) but could not find any freedom
 - It was when I finally rediscovered the Gospel, I found freedom and hope (Christ took ALL my shame—HE was my righteousness)
 - This liberated me to share my struggles with a close Christian friend, who I found out also struggled with the same thing
 - After four years of struggle, God finally freed me from pornography addiction
 - I have been free for over four years—glory to God
 - Mention wedding story briefly
- **Application (what do we do as a result of the text)**
 - Finally get honest with God
 - Repent and believe the Gospel again
 - Join an accountability group
 - Flee from sexual temptation
- **Invitation (another chance to repent and believe)**

- **For nominal “believers” willingly concealing sexual sin:**
 - Repent before it’s too late

 - **For believers struggling with sexual sin:**
 - Look to the empty tomb—the old you is dead, the new you is risen with Christ, You are one with Christ, You are confirmed as a child of God and nothing can pluck you from his hand—When you make a mistake that does not mean that you are a mistake. Jesus loves you despite all the times you have sinned against him. God left the 99 to come find you. The father will never run away no matter how broken you are.
 - Ask God to search your heart and show you where you are coddling sin.
 - Bring your sin into the light by telling another believer about what you are struggling with.

 - **For believers not struggling with sexual sin/who have conquered it**
 - Openly share your testimony with people who are struggling in this area
 - Many people don’t share their struggles in this area because they think they are alone—you can change that
 - Your vulnerability will lead to honesty in other people

 - **For non-believers who don’t care:**
 - Open your eyes
 - Repent and believe

 - **For non-believers who feel convicted:**
 - God is calling you by name
 - Place your hope in Jesus to cleanse you from your sins. He promises to make your heart white as snow and adopt you as his own. He will give you an inheritance that cannot be stripped away
- **Pray**