

Psalm 51 – The Sinner’s Prayer

Knowing God, Pt. 4
February 5, 2017 - Spence Shelton

Announcement: Next Week – Missions Day. Also – Need you to go to the 9am.

Turn in your Bible to Psalm 51. While you are turning there:

In his book *Waiting: Finding Hope Where God Seems Silent* (InterVarsity, 1991), Ben Patterson tells a story about a hike he was on:¹

“In the summer of 1988, three friends and I climbed Mount Lyell, the highest peak in Yosemite National Park. Two of us were experienced mountaineers; two of us were not. I was not one of the experienced two. ... The climb to the top and back was to take the better part of a day due, in large part, to the difficulty of the glacier that one must cross to get to the top. ... As the hours passed, and we trudged up the glacier, the two mountaineers opened up a wide gap

between me and my less-experienced companion. Being competitive by nature, I began to look for short cuts I might be able to take to beat them to the top. I thought I saw one to the right of an outcropping of rock—so I went up, deaf to the protests of my companions...

“Thirty minutes later I was trapped in a cul-de-sac of rock atop the Lyell Glacier, looking down several hundred feet of a sheer slope of ice, pitched at a forty-five degree angle.... I was only ten feet from the safety of a rock. But one little slip and I wouldn’t stop sliding until I had landed in the valley floor about fifty miles away! ... I was stuck and I was scared” (pp. 100-101).

Patterson’s words in describing his situation paint a picture of how many people feel spiritually. You do what you have to do to get ahead, to impress people, to satisfy yourself in some way and when you step around that last ledge expecting to find the summit, you instead find yourself stuck. Ever been there? Spiritually have you ever felt stuck? You aren’t sure how you ended up where you are and there’s no real way out that you can see. But of course you won’t say anything because how embarrassing would that be so you might try and figure your own way out of it but that only makes things worse?

That’s exactly where King David was just before writing Psalm 51. He was stuck and finally realized he had no way to avoid responsibility for his sin and the destruction it caused. This is our last week in this series “Knowing God”

¹ I found this story cited in a sermon by George MacDonald titled “repentance.”

where we are talking about breaking free from the idea of God as just a bunch of facts and rules. We've posed the idea that we can actually know and relate to God. Walk with him and have a real relationship with him. And I've been really encouraged by your responses to the series. There is a hunger for God in our church and a movement of the spirit that is undeniable. But today we are talking about sin. Sin is the one thing that will keep you from Knowing God. And I want you to see Psalm 51 for what it is. A king stuck in his sin who finally got to the point he was desperate enough to turn to God for rescue. And today my hope and purpose is that you will turn to God for rescue as well.

See here's what happened to David:

"It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. . . . Then she returned to her house. And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant." 2 Samuel 11.2-5

Well not surprisingly when his one night stand shows up with a positive pregnancy test, David panics. Because he thought...his sin was a secret and nobody would ever know right? So what does he do? He starts looking for ways to

hide his sin. First, he calls Uriah off the front lines so he can have some rest. Thinking he'll spend some time with his wife. He even gets Uriah drunk, points him towards his house and says go! But Uriah refuses to turn on the Marvin Gay with his woman while his brothers are still out on the battlefield. Plan A - fail. David, still trying to weasel his way out of his sin: goes to plan B. He sends Uriah to the front of the battle lines and orders all the troops to back away from him so that Uriah is killed. David ordered Uriah's murder and used the enemy as his way of cover-up. Plan B seems like a success.

David thinks he's gotten away with it. He marries the widow Bathsheba and all seems well. But chapter 11 ends with "what he did displeased the Lord." Because of course the Lord had seen everything. Which by the way is something we always forget in our sin. That God sees us while we are in the very act of whatever sin, from yelling at our spouse to looking at porn to cheating at work...God sees you.

And so chapter 12 of 1 Samuel opens with, "The Lord sent Nathan to David." Nathan was a prophet and one who was commissioned to speak on God's behalf to the King. And through a clever parable Nathan reveals to David the wickedness of his sin. And then lays out the judgment coming to him for his sin. The son born to Bathsheba is going to die. Plan B has failed.

And David's only words in 2 Samuel 12 after being confronted about his sin are "I have sinned against the Lord." That's why we have the gift of Psalm 51. Because Psalm 51 records the full response of his soul to God when he finally is confronted with his sin. When he is finally stuck with nowhere else to run, no other ways to hide, and no more back up plans. His sin is out in the open and this is his response.

I'm going to read you this prayer. All 19 verses. Then I'm going to show you the process of repentance David went through.

[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.

This is King David on his knees before God crying out to him to save him. To restore the joy of his salvation to him. To re-create him. This is powerful and there is a reason this psalm is so cherished by the church. Because here we have the man who walked as closely to God as anyone ever

has...and he is broken. And in his brokenness he gives us this prayer.

I grew up in the kind of church setting that had its own vocabulary. Words and phrases that only made sense in the church. Like "Special Music" "Brunswick Stew" "VBS" "Hanging of the greens" "Committee on Committees" and stuff like that. Maybe some of you did too? Well one thing I heard a lot was the phrase "The Sinners Prayer." It was a prayer you prayed to become a Christian...after the special music. I cannot remember that prayer, but I was thinking about Psalm 51 this week and I can tell you Psalm 51 is the Sinner's prayer.

Here's why: It's the prayer of the person who wants desperately to draw close to God but knows his or her sin is preventing that from happening. That's why this prayer is so important. It shows you the steps of Repentance & how to be restored to God. Keller: Repentance is killing the habits of your heart that are killing you, without killing yourself.

So I'm going to take the rest of our time together to show you the steps of repentance through the Sinners Prayer in Psalm 51 (**The Sinners Prayer**) and hopefully God will reveal to you how you need to pray this prayer. The points are just a prayer you can pray. And we'll pray this prayer at the end of the message and you will be able to take it home and keep praying it if it helps you. Here we go.

1. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love

This is how David opens his prayer of repentance: by acknowledging God has the authority & power to give mercy...and get this...that he is inclined to give it! David knows he has sinned, and he knows that sin is against God. This is critical...when you come to God in repentance and in search of mercy, you must believe he has the inclination to give you that mercy. Notice David's phrase "according to your steadfast love?"

[1] Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy...

David is saying love of God *for him* is his only hope. David doesn't say...God look at all the good I've done cut me some slack here. No, From the very moment the prayer opens David's posture is that he has one shot to avoid justifiable capital punishment: the steadfast love of God for him. John 3.16 the one verse you may have heard before even if this is your first Sunday ever in church: For God so....LOVED...the world.

Listen. Right here. Cause some of ya'll have had a church experience where the word sin was followed by some hell fire and brimstone and you got burned by the church and maybe this is your first time back. And I'm talking about sin and you are like "THIS IS WHAT I HATE ABOUT CHURCH!" Look I KNOW! I GOT BURNED BY THAT KIND OF RELIGION OK. I KNOW. But listen to me:

The mission of God to save you from your sin is portrayed in scripture as a father who fiercely loves his children. His children have run away and he loves them so much he sacrifices deeply...he sacrifices his son...so that you and I would not perish but have eternal life. Life with him. He loves you that much. It is up to you on whether or not you want to believe it but my job today is to make sure you don't distort the message into some condemnation speech. The gospel is the greatest love story ever told. Repentance is remembering & returning to the never stopping never giving up always faithful love of God for sinners like you and me. Which leads me to part 2 of this prayer.

2. "I am a sinner"

Again. I know this isn't popular. I know. But here's the deal. God designed the world to function in a certain way and he designed you to flourish by walking in that design. And then he was kind enough to lay that design out in scripture for us. But here's the deal, each one of us has chosen to disobey him somewhere along the way in our lives. That's what sin is. It is choosing your way over God's way. And before you get mad at me listen I'm just telling you what the bible says. Don't shoot the messenger. Never helped anything. And it says I'm a sinner too. 1 John 1:8 - if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

This is THE HUGE step for David: to call his sin...sin. That's verse 3.

"[3] For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me."

In fact this particular set of sins has made him keenly aware of all of his sin. Of his very sin nature. That's why he says in verse 5

"[5] Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

He's not saying his parents had him before marriage or something like that. He's saying his parents were sinners. It's in his nature and so he is a sinner too. And guess what sinners do....THEY SIN! We are by nature rebellious to God. From the moment Adam & Eve ate the fruit sin has entered and stained the human race and we are born sinners.

Listen, I have to teach my kids everything. How to put on clothes, how to wipe their rear end, how to brush their teeth, how to use a fork, etc. But I never, ever had to teach them how to steal a stuffed animal from their little sister and then lie about it. They are just born good at it. They are creative about it. Take the stuffed animal and hang it from the fan & turn it on so that the little sister can scream while her favorite animal spins faster and faster just out of reach above her. I didn't teach them that! When they grow up, they'll be grown up sinners. We never outgrow sin; we just get better at disguising it! But we are all sinners.

And in this psalm David finally owns up to this. The great king David...was a sinner. You cannot come to God for

salvation unless you come to him as a sinner. If you are not willing to admit your sin, you are not in need of the mercy of God! Only sinners need mercy. For some of you my prayer all week long has been: God give them the humbleness to say, "I am a sinner." I see it now. Ya'll the biggest hurdle in accepting God's mercy is admitting you are a sinner.

So can I say this: Can we drop the masks? Can we stop pretending? This is so big in our culture...Way bigger here than anywhere I've experienced before. We've gotta look, talk, and act like we've got it all together. It's just not true! We don't have it all together. We are sinful. We disobey God. One of the biggest dangers with my job is you thinking I don't sin. I'm prideful, arrogant, I sacrifice family for work, I am a chronic people pleaser, and that's just this past week. Others closer know many more ways I sin. And every other staff member at Mercy...sinner. Community group leaders...sinner. That person that greeted you on the way in to church today? HUGE SINNER! Church is not for perfect people! And that's great news! Cause I don't care how nice your southern hospitality is today. You are a sinner! And that is good news because that means the church is for you! The church isn't for perfect people, It is an army of sinners who march together under the banner that their only hope is the mercy of God found in Jesus Christ! That's why we are called Mercy church. Because this city needs the gospel that says 1 peter 2.10 once we were not a people but now we are God's people. Why? Because once we had not received Mercy but now we have received

Mercy. The gospel is mercy. Don't put your mask on to come to church. Come to church because here you can take it off and say I'm a sinner...and all these people are too...and together we have hope! We are a bunch of misfits and there is ALWAYS room for one more. One more thing on this first part: how did David get here? To seeing he needed to repent?

When David says to Nathan "I have sinned against the Lord" that is a *confession*. I 100% believe sin has its greatest stronghold over you as long as you are the only one who knows about it. Sin is often referred to in the bible as darkness. And maybe you feel that darkness like a shroud over you. It's called a slave master and maybe you feel like its slave. Listen, where sin loses its power is when it is brought out into the light.

There is a story in the OT about Israel going up to battle and they lose the battle. And they learn the reason is because God wouldn't go up with them while there was sin in the camp. And there was one guy, a guy named Achan, who had broken God's law and stolen some stuff God specifically told Israel not to touch. And God...who was fighting on behalf of Israel...refused to go ahead of Israel while there was sin in their camp. Listen some of you are wondering why your spiritual life feels detached and sluggish. And you are wondering where God went. God didn't go anywhere. But you've got sin you've never repented of. You've never confessed it. You know it and God

knows it. What if God is waiting on you to repent and give that to him before he begins to use you for his glory?

And the “light” that breaks through the darkness of sin...it is the fellowship of another brother or sister in Christ. And if you say to that...NO WAY I’m telling someone else my sin. I’ll just deal with God. Well then you’ve confused who God is and who your brother or sister is. God is holy; you should be far more scared of what he thinks about you than what a fellow sinner thinks about you. That’s the enemy distorting reality. Here’s the way Bonhoeffer talks about confession:

“ When you confess your sin to another Christian...The expressed, acknowledged sin has lost all its power...The sinner is no longer alone with his evil for he has cast off his sin in confession and handed it over to God. It has been taken away from him. Now he stands in the fellowship of sinners who live by the grace of God in the cross of Jesus Christ. Now he can be a sinner and still enjoy the grace of God. He can confess his sins and in his very act find fellowship for the first time. The sin concealed separated him from the fellowship, made all his apparent fellowship a sham; the sin confessed has helped him to find true fellowship with the brethren in Jesus Christ.”²

It wasn’t until Nathan confronted David that David finally dropped to his knees and repented.

² Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. 113.

I heard one pastor say it this way “You can’t learn repentance like you learn golf on your own times and own terms.” So how do you know if you need to repent? Friends. Radical community willing to come to you in truth and love and call you away from your sin. Because without Nathan David was dead and without gospel-loving friends you are too. Listen I’ve had a couple Nathans in my life and I’ve never been as nice to them as David was to his Nathan. I didn’t respond instantly. I never changed immediately. It’s always been days, sometimes months or years later that I’ve had to go back and say thank you. But we need them.

We are going to give you a chance to talk with somebody today. Maybe a pastor or prayer team member...maybe not your best friend but it’s a start. Confession that “I have sinned” is where repentance begins.

3. “I deserve God’s judgment”

So much for this getting lighthearted huh? I know. Hang in there ok?

Listen I need to say this because David does and because many in our culture have a real problem reconciling this. Listen to verse 4.

[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.

David is saying God, I recognize you as a blameless judge. And you are completely justified in declaring me guilty for my sin. Because I have sinned...against you. Ya'll this is huge. Who did David sin against? Well definitely Bathsheba. He raped her. Definitely Uriah. He murdered her. Really he sinned against Israel because as their king he was supposed to model what it meant to walk in obedience to God and instead he did the opposite. But he says Against you only...I agree with many who've come before me that say David finally sees the weight of his sin. Has he sinned against all the rest of those people? Yes. But sin is always first against God. Because it is breaking his law. And, now that David sees the holiness of God he realizes the weight of his offense against God is so great it takes up all the space in his heart and mind. He must deal with God before he can go repent to others.

Listen this idea of God as a judge is one thing people have such great trouble reconciling. The think "Oh, the God of the OT he's a vengeful wrathful God. But my God is a God of love not Judgment." Which is silly and illogical. Because true love is offended by sin against the one it loves. So you can't have true love without judgment. Your god isn't god its just you and you will make a terrible god.

Listen to David! He knows he needs mercy from God because inherent in God's character is that he is just. He sets up laws to govern the world and when we break them we are owed punishment... and because God is faithful and just he must punish that sin. But... David also knows God

loves **people**! So David comes to God and says I know you are Just and I deserve my punishment but I also know you love me...so according to that love I throw myself at your mercy. And you need to see that right here church. When you approach God...you approach a God you've wronged... But who passionately loves you. Which makes you say all I can do is throw myself at your Mercy. Is God a judge? Yes. But the judge is your father. Can your father break the law? NO! But can he carry out your death sentence? NO! You see why he had to send Jesus? The justice and mercy of God meet together at the cross of Christ.

Ok I've spent 20 minutes trying to convince you that you are a sinner. That you have violated God's law. And I imagine that may offend you. Listen any version of Christianity that doesn't tell you that you are a sinner bound for death and hell is just not Christianity. It's easy believism and you need to run from it. Verse 6 says God delights in truth in the inner being. He doesn't want a religious show from you. He wants your heart. And once you admit you are a sinner who needs saving you are ready for the next part

4. "God save me"

Once you own that you are a sinner, you are ready for the grace of God. And listen this is for Christians and non-Christians alike. Hey lets go back to our guy Ben Patterson stuck over on that ledge.

"It took an hour for my experienced climbing friends to find me. Standing on the rock I wanted to reach, one of

them leaned out and used an ice axe to chip two little footsteps in the glacier. Then he gave me the following instructions: 'Ben, you must step out from where you are and put your foot where the first foothold is. ... Without a moment's hesitation swing your other foot across and land it in the next step. [Then] ... reach out and I will take your hand, and I will pull you to safety. ... But listen carefully: As you step across, don't lean into the mountain! If anything, lean out a bit. Otherwise, your feet could fly out from under you, and you will start sliding down.' "

Patterson says, "When I'm on the edge of a cliff, my instinct is to lie down and hug the mountain, to become one with it, not lean away from it! But that was what my good friend was telling me to do as I stood trembling on that glacier. I looked at him real hard. ... For a moment, based solely on what I believed to be true about the good will and good sense of my friend, I decided to say no to what I felt ... to lean out, step out, and traverse the ice to safety. It took less than two seconds to find out if my faith was well founded. It was

This is what true repentance feels like. I'm gonna confess my sin...I'm gonna leap. It's scary. It's realizing you can't stay where you are because it's not safe it just made you think it was safe. You'll die if you stay but to repent is to leap and say GOD catch me. God save me. This is David's prayer in vv 7-10

[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.

Purge me, wash me, blot out my iniquities, create a clean heart, renew a right spirit. God I'm jumping and unless you catch me I'm dead! Please God save me.

And look at me: This is the moment where this Psalm goes to another level for us. Because what we said week 1 is that we get to read all Psalms through the lens of the cross of Jesus. And when you lay a gospel lens over top of Psalm 51 you realize God answers your prayer in Christ.

Galatians 5.17 – If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.

Here's the gospel: When you could not save yourself from your sin...When you were owed death for your sin...God, because of his steadfast love, sent Jesus to take your punishment. Jesus died in your place. And he didn't just die for one sin. He died once for all sins Hebrews tells us. He didn't wait on us to clean ourselves up. No, while we were still sinners Christ died for us. So you can drop the mask. God doesn't need your self-righteousness. It's just an act anyway. He sees you broken in your sin and that broken person is who he died for.

Ephesians 1.7 – “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”

David prayed purge me, wash me, redeem me. And God answered that prayer for David and for you and I in Christ. In Christ your chains are broken! In Christ you are a new creation!

And Paul is going to say how you get in on this salvation... “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved.” Romans 10.9 –

So here’s the thing: repentance is simple. But its not just magic words you understand? Anybody can say they believe in Jesus. In fact the great problem of our culture is a bunch of people who say yeah I believe in Jesus. John Piper said it this way “We are surrounded by unconverted people who think they do believe in Jesus. Drunks on the street say they believe. Unmarried couples sleeping together say they believe. Elderly people who haven’t sought worship or fellowship for forty years say they believe. All kinds of lukewarm, world-loving church attenders say they believe. The world abounds with millions of unconverted people who say they believe in Jesus. It does no good to tell these people to believe in the Lord Jesus. The phrase is empty.”

To believe this gospel is to surrender your whole life to God. To repent is to leap off that mountain and say I accept what you’ve done for me in the cross and resurrection and from here on I’ll live for you! I’m yours! You are my treasure and anything else is worthless in comparison.

Some of you need to do this today. You don’t need God to renew a clean heart in you; you need him to make you a new creation. Some of you don’t need **re**-vival of the soul. You need...vival. Do NOT wait another day!

5. “Thank you God for saving me”

David asks God to restore the Joy of his salvation he asks him not to take his presence from him. See David’s first thought is I want my relationship with God restored. Look at verses 11-12.

. [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.

When you repent you turn and you make that leap and God catches you...the complete response of the one who has been saved is worship! Worship of the God who saves you. Listen I hope today for some of you your prayer sits here. Some of you who have been Christians for years have lost the joy of your salvation. And the whole point of this series is that God would answer this prayer. To restore the joy of your salvation. Have you forgotten your joy? Return to the gospel. You are a sinner who God has saved. You were destined for death and God rescued you. It cost him his son

and he did it willingly out of his great love for you. And He's promised his Spirit is WITH YOU.

6. "I will tell the world what God has done for me."

I love the direction this Psalm takes at the end. We talked a little about this last week. God saving you...that's a miracle. It is undeserved Mercy. And David shows us a natural reaction to such a miracle:

[13] Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. [14] Deliver me from blood guiltiness, 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.

The reaction of the one who was rescued from certain death is CELEBRATION! PRAISE!

I'll teach everybody about you...in fact I believe that you will use your work in my life to bring other sinners back to you. How powerful is that! This isn't David trying to cut a deal with God like "if you save me, then I'll work for you." No, it's David saying when they hear about this...I know they will want it too! In fact, verse 15...I'm not even gonna talk unless you open my lips.

Listen God calls every Christian to his mission to proclaim the gospel to lost souls. In fact Galatians 5...that verse that talked about God making you a new creation...just a couple verses later Paul is going to say you've been reconciled to God and are now ministers of reconciliation bringing others

back to God. But the drive for that...the reason you do it is because you can't keep it in! You've been rescued! You have to celebrate!

The very first way you do this is baptism. Baptism is where you publicly celebrate what Jesus has done for you. You identify your life with his. That's your first way of telling the world. I said this last week and stand by it. Some of you just needed a second invite. But we don't stop the celebration there. Everyday we walk in the hope of Christ we do so with an eye out for those who don't have the joy we have. Everyday. Knowing that the power to save belongs to Jesus, we simply share how he's saved us and let him do the rest. If you are a Christian, You have an incredible story of God's grace that is unlike anyone else's. That's by design. Because your story is going to connect with someone unlike anyone else could and that's how somebody is going to finally come to know Jesus.

Today is about repentance. Some of you need to repent of your sin. This whole time I've been talking God has been convicting you of it. And I know the prospect of repentance is scary. Because it means you'll have to deal with the fall out. And depending on what your sin is, all the tougher. I will never forget sitting in the car with a friend, a fellow pastor, who admitted to me while we were driving that he was about to leave his wife for another woman. And I was like man...you know Jesus right. You need to repent! And you have got to bring this into the light. And to bring this into the light is going to cost you your job, definitely some

friendships, and maybe your family. But if you don't confess it, repent and turn from it, it will kill you. So tomorrow is gonna suck. And so will the days after that. But somewhere in that you will sing Psalm 51. And that guy still does to this day.

This is an incredibly weighty message for me to give to you. But what else can I do? You want to know God? REPENT! Believe again this great gospel message! No one is too far-gone; no one is stuck too deep. Jesus died and then he rose again and that resurrection means he has the power over sin and death and now he can set you free from it. But you gotta turn. Turn to him! He's waiting.

There's an old hymn called "Rock of Ages" written by Augustus Toplady in 1775. The third verse says ** Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to the cross I cling; Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless look to Thee for grace; Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Savior, or I die.**

Here's how we are going to finish. The band is going to make their way back up and while they do I want you to deal with Jesus. So I'm going to put the sinners prayer up here as we've just laid it out. And I want you to spend some time praying it.

Then listen...I told you we'd give you a chance to respond today. To get this sin out in the light. Prayer team, myself Pastor John, Scott, we are down here. Old Fashioned Altar Call.