

Made Blameless

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[0 : 00] Turn your Bibles to 2 Samuel chapter 22 beginning in verse 21.

! I'll read and then we'll come back through.! He says,

He says,

And he's the king at this point. But this sounds kind of bizarre, isn't it? At first, those first four verses, because David seems to be talking a lot about how great he is.

And we know that as Christians, right, we're to be humble. And that it's the Lord who makes us righteous. And it's not we ourselves who are able, we can't earn, we can't work for our salvation.

[3 : 56] But David kind of makes it sound like he has done just that. And it's bizarre to us because we know David. Because we know what David has done.

And we know that there's no way that this could be true of him. That he's not a righteous man because we know of his past dealings with Bathsheba and then Uriah and having him murdered. He's done some other things that were sinful and wrong, which God punished him for. But it seems like David is saying that God had rewarded him based upon how clean and righteous of a man that he was.

As if it was God that owed him some kind of rescue. And so the question is, was he claiming that unlike the rest of us, he was not a sinner?

Because that's, again, what it kind of sounds like he's saying. If someone came into our church today and started talking like that, we would have some questions for them.

[4 : 55] Wouldn't we? You know, you understand that you can't save yourself. That your righteousness isn't based upon your good deeds, your good works. But that it's what Jesus has done for you.

So if somebody came into our church today and like, hey, I'm a really righteous person. And we would all kind of look at them strangely, wouldn't we? As if, you know, who is this crazy person? And we need to help them immediately. So there's something odd with these first few verses. Often when reading scripture, we come across passages like this that scratches our head.

Because, again, we know David. We know that while he's sinful, a sinful man, that he's God's king. He's a man after God's own heart. But how could he talk to himself, talk about himself in this way? And so when we come to passages of scripture like this where it scratches our head a little bit, or we scratch our heads a little bit, the answer is not to, well, I don't know.

[5 : 56] I guess it makes sense. I don't know how. But to dig deeper. I believe that it's those types of scriptures where God is calling us, encouraging us to dig deeper for greater understanding. So let's do that.

We believe and affirm that the Bible, again, was written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Bible is inerrant, that it has authority, that it is infallible.

And certainly the author realizes that we've already read the accounts of David's life before these words here. And that we're not a bunch of dummies who can't put two and two together, as if we all of a sudden are going to hear David talk about all these great things about himself and think, oh yeah, I guess that must be true.

No, we've read prior and we see who this guy is and some of the things that he has done. Nobody who reads these words in their context could possibly just take them at face value.

We have to ask, how is it possible for an adulterer and for a murderer to speak, such as David spoke of himself in verses 21 through 25? And this is the question that scripture has forced upon us.

[7 : 01] We also can't come to this text and come away thinking that David did not really mean what he was saying either, as if he was, you know, I don't know, he was having one of those days

where he felt really good about himself.

And so he was just feeling good about who he was. He was complimenting himself. We can't just come to that and think that that's simply what's going on either.

So we've got to dig a little bit deeper. Remember, despite the terrible things that David had done, at least he did not wickedly depart from God, as he said in verse 22.

When he sinned, he repented. But that is not what David said. And so there are two keys to understanding how this murderer, how this adulterer could speak so eloquently of his righteousness and the cleanness of his hands.

Hands that we obviously know have blood all over him, based upon David's life and some of the things that he had done. The first key is simple to understand, but difficult for us to take as seriously as we must.

[8 : 06] After David's adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, the prophet Nathan told him, if you remember, the Lord has put away your sins. We now, the readers of this book, may still remember David's sins and be able to pin those on him.

Remarkably, the Lord does not. Concerning these very acts, David prayed, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. He said, purge me with hesap and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. And that's from Psalm 51, verses 2 and 7. The point is not that David was righteous because he prayed in this way. He was clean because God had washed him and God had cleansed him from his sin.

It is what God did, not what David did, that made him whiter than snow. So he no longer had blood on his hands as a result of that. But here's the question, do you struggle with that?

Or you find it hard to imagine that God could just wipe the slate clean just like that? That he could just say that your sins are forgiven and you still think, but it can't be that simple.

[9 : 25] Do you ever struggle with that? I know that I do. Micah 7, 19 says that he will again have compassion on us. He will treat our iniquities underfoot.

You will cast all your sins into the depths of the sea. And so here, you know, Micah talks about God taking our sins and throwing them to the deepest part of the ocean.

And Adrian Rogers, I remember, I believe it was him who preached the message on this and said that God's taking your sin to the deepest part of the sea and he's put up a sign that says no fishing. Have you heard that before?

And that's true. You know, that's what God does for us. He separates us from our sins. And he removes them from us. And that's what we call grace, right?

It's hard for us to imagine. God, how could you forgive me of so much? And how could you just forget like that? But we've got to understand that that's what the Bible says, that God removes those from us.

[10 : 22] I want us to understand what we're talking about when we're talking about righteousness. So a resource that I use often and is a great one that I recommend and encourage you to use as well is a website called www.gotquestions.org.

Got questions.org. That's a website done by a lot of former seminary students, current pastors, and you have a search bar and you can type in whatever question about the Bible that you have and you get a series of articles written by some guys who really know what they're talking about.

And so I did that. I put in what is righteousness. And so I want to read that answer to you. It's a little bit lengthy, but I think that it's helpful as we continue on in this study. The answer is this.

Dictionaries define righteousness as behavior that is morally justifiable or right. Such behavior is characterized by accepted standards of morality, justice, virtue, or uprightness.

The Bible's standard of human righteousness is God's own perfection in every attribute, every attitude, every behavior, and every word. Thus, God's law, as given in the Bible, both describe his own character and constitute the plumb line by which he measures human righteousness.

[11 : 44] The Greek New Testament word for righteousness primarily describes conduct in relation to others, especially with regards to the rights of others in business, in legal matters, and beginning with relationship to God.

It is contrasted with wickedness, the conduct of the one who, out of gross self-centeredness, neither reveres God nor respects man. The Bible describes the righteous person as just or right, holding to God and trusting in him.

The bad news is that true and perfect righteousness is not possible for man to attain on his own. The standard is simply too high. The good news is that true righteousness is possible for mankind, but only through the cleansing of sin by Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We have no ability to achieve righteousness in and of ourselves, but Christians possess the righteousness of Christ because, as 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. This is an amazing truth. On the cross, Jesus exchanged our sin for his perfect righteousness so that we can one day stand before God and he will see not our sin, but the holy righteousness of the Lord Jesus.

[13:05] This means that we are made righteous in the sight of God. That is, we are accepted as righteous and treated as righteous by God on account of what the Lord Jesus has done.

He was made sin, we are made righteousness. On the cross, Jesus was treated as if he were a sinner, though he was perfectly holy and pure, and we are treated as if we were righteous, though we are defiled and depraved.

On account of what the Lord Jesus has endured on our behalf, we are treated as if we had entirely fulfilled the law of God and had never become exposed to its penalty.

We have received this precious gift of righteousness from the God of all mercy and grace. To him be the glory. And so we see that righteousness is not something that we can attain on our own. In fact, it's impossible because we're sinful, but because of Jesus and what he's done, living righteousness for us, we have that substitutionary atonement. You've heard that, I'm sure, that big theological term.

[14:08] Our sins were placed on the Lord. His righteousness was placed on us. How could it be? It's amazing. It's all because of God's grace. Okay, so that's the first key to understand, that when we're talking about righteousness, we're not talking about a righteousness of our own creating or our own making or our own doing, but it's a righteousness that comes from God in what the Lord has accomplished for us.

The second key is that God forgave David's sin because of God's commitment to David, not because of David's commitment to God. David did many good things, for sure.

The words in verses 21 through 25, they do describe much of what we have seen in David's life. His sinful actions do not entirely undermine the fruit of God's grace in his life.

David can describe his life without reference to his failures, not because he is a self-righteous person, but because he is deeply aware of what God had done for him. What Nathan told him, he believed God had done when Nathan said, the Lord has put away your sin.

And so David simply believed that that was true. What confuses us is that David sees his life in the way that God sees his life. That's where the confusion is.

[15:26] Verses 21 through 25 are then asserting that the Lord dealt with David as a forgiven, cleansed man. God forgives our sins, but not often will he forgive the consequences of those sins.

As David had experienced, David believed what God had said about him. And so that's how he's writing like that, because he believes that what God said about him was true. And so if you're a Christian, you know what God says the same thing about you.

And the question is, do you believe it or not? And if you don't believe it, really, you know, you're missing out, because your unbelief doesn't nullify what God has already declared and said about you.

That that is who you are in God's eyes. And so I think, like David, we need to see ourselves in the way that God sees us. And here's the problem, because I think a lot of people think that God views them in an unfavorable way.

Christians think that God views them in an unfavorable way, especially in the church. And we want to be humble, and humbleness is certainly good.

[16:35] Jesus was very humble, and we want to live our lives like him. But sometimes we can be too quick to point out our weaknesses and our faults, and dwell too heavily upon them.

Especially when it comes to us needing people to lead in the church or volunteer in the church. And a lot of people automatically think, well, I can't do that because of this, that, and the other thing.

And too often we fail to realize that, yeah, we have weaknesses and we have faults, but you know what? We also have strengths. We also have gifts. And sometimes we can dwell too much on our weakness and our faults and allow that to keep us from using our strengths in the church.

If you think, as a Christian, that God looks at you with contempt or even hatred, yeah, God disciplines us like we talked about this morning, but God loves you.

God does not hate you. And when you mess up and you make a mistake, as a Christian, you know, the Lord is there to pick you up. I heard an illustration once that really helped to get this point, sink this point home with me.

[17 : 44] As you think about a kid playing in their Sunday clothes before church starts on Sunday morning, they go outside and the kid comes in and he's filthy. He's got all of his Sunday, his best Sunday clothes, they're all dirty and his mom, you know, has been busy getting herself ready and everybody else ready and dad is in the same boat and they see their son and he's covered in filth.

And so what's the mom's response going to be? Yeah, she's going to be understandably upset for his disobedience, but that mom, because she loves her child, she's not going to bring him to church and embarrass him by having him come in with dirty, filthy clothes on.

She's going to change him there and she's going to bring him forward. So I think we've got to see it in that way too. Yeah, as people, we make messes. We are sinful. We create storms, like we're talking about this morning, of our own making.

And God disciplines us because he loves us, not because he hates us, not to discourage us, not to embarrass us, because he truly, very much cares about you. In fact, he delights in who you are.

Can you imagine that? That God actually really likes you. He really wants to hear from you when you pray. That he really, really wants to be a part of your life. You are somebody that he loves and that he cherishes, so much so that he would give his son to die in your place.

[19 : 10] That is a God who loves us. And so we've got to understand that. Yeah, we let him down and we should be seeking to live our lives like Christ and sinless.

But when we do mess up, the good news is we have a God who's there to cleanse us from our unrighteousness. It's Satan who wants to bring those things back up and throw them into our face and make us feel like, you know, how could God doesn't love you?

Look at how nasty and dirty and filthy you are. We've got to understand that God does love us. And David understood that. And he saw himself the way that God saw him. And we need to do that as well.

Verses 26 and 27 then focus more on God's righteousness. Again, it says, And here these lines are the core of David's song.

This is about God's righteousness. On the surface, it seems that all David is saying is that God rewards good people and that God punishes bad people. However, we are forced again to dig a little bit more deeply into what David is actually saying.

[20 : 24] So if you recall, God had mercy on David when David had shown no mercy on Uriah. God dealt purely with David when he was anything but pure himself.

There is more to God's righteousness than it first may appear. There may be a hint in the phrase in verse 27 about the purified, The people with whom God shows himself merciful and blameless and deals purely are those who have been purified and are therefore blameless and merciful.

And then in verses 28 and 21, it says what God has done for his king and for his people. It says, You save a humble people, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down.

For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness. For by you I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God, his way is perfect.

The word of the Lord proves true. He is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. So what's he saying here? He's saying basically that it's God who illumines us. How does he do that?

[21 : 28] Well, through his word, through all those spiritual disciplines, God has a way of illuminating us because we have his Holy Spirit living inside of us, and so we see the world differently, especially with all that's going on right now, as we kind of talked about again this morning, with the eclipse and the hurricanes and the earthquakes and, you know, crazy people testing nuclear weapons.

And right now, if you weren't a Christian, I couldn't imagine living in the world that we're living in now. I'd be terrified of what might happen or what could happen.

But because of God's word, because he illumines us through his spirit, we have the Bible, and we're able to say, hey, you know what? We understand that the world is one day going to come to an end. I don't know if you've heard about the September 23rd prophecy, but it's just like all the others.

People keep, as much as the Bible says, you know, the only one who knows the day and the hour, the only one who knows is God himself. You know, there's still people trying to think that they can crack the Bible and figure out some code and some date and some time and exact place and location, but it's all a bunch of hogwash, as you say in Oklahoma, right?

Bunch of hogwash. And so the thing is, too, when I have conversations or have had conversations with people who are concerned about that, case in point, September 23rd, I don't believe at all that that is going to be the date, but you know what?

[22 : 55] I wouldn't mind it if it was, you know, tomorrow, before September 23rd. We, as a people of God, are anticipating the return of the Lord, and we understand, because we have God's revelation in his word, that, yeah, this place is going to blow.

And the good news is that we are with the Lord, and so we'll be just fine, and we encourage others to do that as well. So God illumines us. God gives us courage, and we've kind of talked about that, too.

How does he do that? Well, again, because we have the completed work. We have a God who is for us, and if God is for us, who can be against us? It doesn't matter, because nobody can prevail against God.

God gives us the ability to do things that seem impossible. God's word proves true, David is saying. And you've probably seen that in your life as well, even in the times of disobedience, where you didn't believe that it was true.

You see that God's word is true, and that God protects us, and offers us refuge. And then in verses 32 through 46, David talks about a God who gives strength to his king.

[24 : 02] The song has one more big idea to bring to us, and it's that it is God who had delivered David so many times from the dangers that he had faced, and he did so with a purpose in mind, and he intended for David to be a great king.

There David says, For who is God but the Lord, and who is a rock except our God? This God is my strong refuge and has made my way blameless. He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights.

He trains my hands for war so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your gentleness made me great. You gave a wide place for my steps under my feet, and my feet did not slip.

So David here is repeating a lot of what he said because it's worth repeating. All that God had been for him, all that God had done for him. But did you notice there in verse 33, he says there that God has made me blameless.

So it sounds as though, right, when we were talking about what did David mean in those first four verses when he's talking about himself, he seems to talk about a lot about his own righteousness. So it seems like our digging was right.

[25 : 23] We understood properly what David meant in those verses because we see now here that David completely understands where his righteousness comes from. He says that it was God who made my way blameless.

It is the Lord, he acknowledges, not himself who made him blameless. Now David adds that God had made him also a great warrior, and we saw that that's definitely true in this man's life.

David was not somebody that you would want to have to stand off against. He was a man of great courage. Not only had he been rescued from his enemies who threatened to destroy him, but the tables had been turned, and he was the one who was victorious.

And so in verses 38 through 43, he talks about a victorious king. He says, I pursued my enemies and destroyed them and did not turn back until they were consumed.

Going down, they looked, but there was none to save. They cried out to the Lord, but he did not answer them. I beat them fine as the dust of the earth. Now that's beating somebody really, really good. Okay?

[26 : 23] Kind of like how the Chiefs beat the Patriots in week one. And I told some of you Cowboy fans, it's not too late to jump on the Chiefs bandwagon. He said, I crushed them and I stamped them down like the mire of the streets.

And so the king had become really the agent of God's anger against the violent enemies who threatened the destruction of God's people, but they would not prevail because they were unable to overthrow the Lord's king, who was David.

And again, notice in verse 42, the great difference between David and his enemies is that when David called, the Lord heard, the Lord acted, and the Lord saved.

When these enemies do the same, there is no one to save them. Even when they cry to the Lord, there is no answer. And why is that? Because they're on the wrong side of things.

And then in verses 44 through 46, David talks about a great king. And so the main body of David's song ends with a description of the outcome of all this, that God's king will be one before whom every knee will bow.

[27 : 37] Let's look at that again. He said, you delivered me from strife with my people. You kept me as the head of the nations, people whom I had not known and known served me. Foreigners came crying to me as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.

Foreigners lost heart and came trembling out of their fortress. So David, at the height of his power, we've got to understand, even though he was a powerful king, at the height of David's power, he only ruled over a very small empire in the Middle East.

Was he getting just a little bit carried away with himself? That's kind of what we think about because yeah, he had this great kingdom but comparatively speaking to some of the empires of ancient times and how vast and how wide and how expansive they were.

Maybe we think, well, David's getting a little bit carried away with his estimation of things because he says in verse 44 that he's the head of the nations and so we think, who are you kidding, right?

Yeah, you're powerful, yeah, you've got yourself a kingdom and an empire there but comparatively speaking, it seems like you're getting a little too full of yourself again.

So again, we've got to dig a little bit deeper to understand what does he mean? Well, he understood again what God had promised was true. The promises were not fully realized yet in David's own life but as the promise said, David knew that there would be a son of David in whom it would one day be realized.

[29 : 12] He understood that and so this song makes sense fully when we realize who he's talking about and we know who he is talking about and ultimately that person is Jesus Christ.

He is the son of David who is everything that David himself failed to be. Like David, he was threatened with destruction and ultimately that culminated in the cross.

Like David, he called upon God his father in his distress and the father rescued him from his strong enemy by raising him from the dead. He is the perfectly righteous, blameless, pure one.

He is the Lord to whom all authority in heaven on earth has been given. The news of his kingdom is going into the nations of the world and we know that he will overthrow all ultimately who have chosen to make themselves enemies of his kingdom.

And then in verses 47 or 51 David writes about a God worth having. a God worth having. David's song concludes on the note in which he began focusing on the closing lines on the hope of David's kingdom the promise of the living God who is his rock.

[30 : 26] He says and this is a great verse that many have committed to memory and encourage you to do as well. The Lord lives and blessed be my rock and exalted by my God the rock of my salvation the God who gave me vengeance and brought down people under me who brought me out from my enemies you exalted me above those who rose against me you delivered me from men of violence and for this I will praise you O Lord among the nations and sing praises to your name great salvation he brings to his king and shows steadfast love to his anointed to David and his offspring forever.

When he talks about his king and his anointed he's talking about Messiah he's talking about Christ and he's pointing us this points us back to the last two lines of Hannah's prayer if you remember Hannah said the Lord will give strength to his king and exalt the horn which means the power of his anointed and that was in 1 Samuel 2.10 the story told in the books of Samuel testifies that the Lord has done just that and this testimony is summed up in David's song the hope of David's kingdom is the Lord's promise concerning his offspring and ultimately Jesus is that offspring that David refers to in the last line of his song and so here we understand and we should agree completely and wholeheartedly with David that God is in fact indeed a great God and that God has given us a great king in his son

Jesus Christ and so as you go this week my encouragement to you is to see yourself the way that God sees you and how are you going to know more about how God sees you how are you going to know more about what God says to you it's obvious know his word be in the Bible know what God has said about you through that that God sees you as a follower of Christ as somebody who he

loves who he cherishes and who he delights in and when you see yourself the way that God sees you you know what it does feel a lot better about yourself and it will make you be a better instrument of his use in this life music