

# When I've Failed Miserably

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please turn your Bible to Psalm 51. If you don't have a Bible, there are Bibles under the chair in front of you.

! If you're using a church Bible, it's on page 474, Psalm 51. This morning we're continuing a sermon series titled When Life Happens.

It's a five-part sermon series in the Psalms. And so far we have considered When I'm Afraid, Psalm 27.

When I'm Depressed, Psalms 42 and 43. And then last week's sermon was When I've Been Wronged. Brother Lyndon preached a wonderful message from Psalm 109.

And this morning's sermon is When I've Failed Miserably. And we'll be considering Psalm 51. And then next Sunday, Lord willing, we will conclude the series with the final sermon from Psalm 77, When I'm in Trouble.

[ 1 : 13 ] If you've missed any of these sermons, they are on the church's website under the sermons tab. One of the important lessons of life that I think we all need to learn is that behind the cosmetics that we have as people, at the end of the day, people are people.

And what I mean by that is behind the cosmetic of race and sex and nationality and social and economic status, people are fundamentally the same.

And one of the important ways that we are fundamentally the same is we are all sinners. And that is perhaps the most defining commonality that we have as people.

We are fallen and broken people. And because we are sinners, sometimes we sin in grievous and weighty ways.

And this is the case with King David. If you are halfway familiar with the Bible, you probably know the story about King David.

[ 2 : 40 ] You know that he committed adultery with Bathsheba. And when he found that she was pregnant, he tried to frame her husband as the one who was the father of the child.

And when that didn't work, he murdered him. And the way he murdered him was he commanded the command of Israel's army to take Uriah and place him at the fiercest point of the battle and then withdraw from him so that the enemy would kill him.

And Joab obeyed David and did just that. Uriah was killed in battle. And after Bathsheba had finished mourning for him, David took her and she became David's wife and she gave birth to David's child that was conceived during their adulterous relationship.

And so at this point, when the child was born, quite a bit of time had elapsed, probably about a year or so had elapsed. And it seemed like David was home free. It seemed like he had gotten away with the sins that he had committed.

But there was one problem. And the problem was that God was not pleased with what David had done. And so God sent the prophet Nathan to David to confront him.

[ 4 : 11 ] And Nathan took a somewhat unusual approach when he went to David. He began by telling David a story. It was a story about two men, one rich and one poor.

And the rich man had an abundance of flocks and herds. And the poor man just had one little female lamb. But a little female lamb that he loved and treasured.

And he brought her up and she grew up with him and his children. And he would take the little food that he had and he would feed this little lamb some of the food.

He even allowed this lamb to drink from his own cup and he would carry this little lamb in his arms.

The lamb would lay in his arms. And one day the rich man had a guest to come to his house and he didn't want to take any of his multitude of herds and flock.

He didn't want to take one of the animals from his herds and flocks to feed this man. So he took, being powerful, he took this poor man's little lamb, slaughtered it, and fed it to his house guest. [ 5 : 27 ] And when David heard that story from Nathan, he was furious. And he said, the man who did that deserves to die. And he should pay back four times what he took from the man because he had no pity on the man.

And Nathan courageously said to David, you are the man. And I said courageously because people were killed for doing what Nathan did, telling the truth to a king that just wasn't convenient. But David was that man. David had many wives and yet, being the rich and powerful king of Israel who felt he could do whatever he wanted, he took Uriah's only wife and killed Uriah in the process. And Nathan proceeded to rebuke David and he prophesied to David the bitter harvest that was going to come to him because of his sinful conduct. And at the end of Nathan's rebuke, David uttered six words.

I have sinned against the Lord. And David was right. David broke the tenth commandment when he lusted after and coveted Uriah's wife, Bathsheba.

[ 7 : 10 ] He broke the seventh commandment when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. And he broke the sixth commandment when he murdered Uriah.

And you can read the entire account of this in 2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12. I think by any measurement, by any measurement, in this matter of Bathsheba and Uriah, David, Israel's beloved king, failed miserably.

He failed miserably. But the words that we find in 2 Samuel in chapter 12 where David says, I have sinned against the Lord.

That wasn't the extent of his response. The rest of David's response we will consider this morning in Psalm 51.

Please follow along as I read. I'm reading from the English Standard Version. And I begin with the superscription to the choir master a psalm of David where Nathan the prophet went to him after he had gone into Bathsheba.

[ 8 : 43 ] have mercy on me, O God. According to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 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.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness.

Let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

[ 10 : 08 ] Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

for you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You will not be pleased with the burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, and a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Do good to Zion in your good pleasure. Build up the walls of Jerusalem. then will you delight in right sacrifices and burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings.

[ 11 : 30 ] Then bowls will be offered on your altar. Let's pray together. Lord, thank you for your word this morning.

Thank you, Lord, that what began as a prayer of confession for David has become a psalm of worship for your people.

And I pray, Lord, that you would use these words for our corporate good this morning. Lord, I especially pray that you would speak to the hearts of those who may be in despair and in discouragement over their sin, those who may be beaten down by the weight of their sin.

And Lord, may we hear the truth of this passage that you have preserved over the ages. We pray that you would be glorified in the preaching of your word.

We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. I doubt any of us have sinned or will sin to the extent that David did.

[12:50] But Psalm 51 is still instructive for us whenever we sin and to whatever degree we sin. But it is especially instructive when we sin in serious ways.

And yes, we who belong to Christ, we do sometimes sin in serious and grievous ways. One of the saddest sights I've seen as a pastor over the years is a person who believes that his or her sins are far too great and far too serious for God to forgive them.

And so rather than run to God, they run from God. Rather than turn to God, they turn from God. And many times the turning from God sends them deeper in sin.

It is one of the saddest sights to see because it is not true. The deception and the lie that must come over a mind to believe that my sin is so great, my sin is so serious that God could never forgive me.

And so we walk away from the Lord. That, brothers and sisters, is one of the saddest sights, one of the most heartbreaking sights that I've seen as a pastor. But this story of David's mountainous sins and his prayer of repentance helps us to see that in our sin, rather than running from God, we should run to God.

[14:34] God. And here's the reason, here's the reason that we should be running to God rather than from God. Because God is a God of steadfast love and abundant mercy.

He will forgive us and he will cleanse us. No matter what the sin, no matter the extent of it, because God is a God of steadfast love and abundant mercy, he will forgive us and he will cleanse us.

That, brothers and sisters, is the message of Psalm 51. In our sin, even our worst sin, we can run to him and not run from him.

And the reason we need to run to him is because only he can provide us what we need and that is forgiveness and cleansing from our sin.

When we consider these words of David, and this is a prayer, prayer, it's not a sermon that David gives us here. It's not a teaching that David gives us here. It is a prayer that David pours out before the Lord in his brokenness and in his contrition.

[16:11] But when we consider this prayer that David prays, it can be summarized into two specific requests that he makes. And he makes these requests repeatedly, but when we synthesize the prayer, David is asking two things of the Lord.

And they are for God's forgiveness and for God's cleansing. And the same is true for us when we sin. When we sin, we need God's forgiveness and we need God's cleansing.

And so in our remaining time this morning, I want us to consider these two needs in light of Psalm 51. So first, when we sin, we need God's forgiveness.

forgiveness. That's the first petition that David lifts up to the Lord. Look at how he prays it in verse 1. He prays, have mercy on me, O God.

According to your steadfast love, according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. He prays the same prayer in verse 9.

[17:20] Using different words, he says, hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. David's prayer brings us face to face with the reality and the fact that when we sin, our sin creates a legal record against us.

Our sin is not in a vacuum. Our sin is not just a little stumbling that we do, a little mistake that we make. No. When we sin, there is a legal record against us.

And it's a legal record that must be dealt with. And so David's first petition to God is, God, according to your steadfast love and abundant mercy, would you blot out that legal record of my sin?

Blot out my transgressions, blot out my iniquity. And the picture that's in view is kind of like something written on a sheet of paper and somebody is taking ink and just putting the ink over it.

Recently, I had to send a document to someone and there was a part of it that I didn't want, that didn't need to be sent, so I just used the pen and I just marked over it, marked over it, marked over it until you couldn't see it anymore.

[18:45] It was blotted out. David is saying, God, this legal record of my sin, would you blot it out? And notice that in verses 3 and 4, David helps us to see why he's praying to God to blot out his record of sin.

Notice what he says in verses 3 and 4. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. 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.

The reason David prays to God to blot out his transgressions is that ultimately he committed them against God. Does it mean to say he didn't sin against Bathsheba and against Uriah?

No, it's not saying that. He did sin against them, but in the ultimate scheme of things, his sins were against God. He broke commandments that God gave.

They weren't Uriah's commandments, they weren't Bathsheba's commandments, they were God's commandments, and David broke them. And that's the only point that David is making.

[ 20 : 03 ] He's not minimizing his sin towards Uriah and Bathsheba, but he's recognizing, God, I broke your laws, have sinned against you, have done what is evil in your sight.

And see, one of the ways that we should think about this is, you know that when crimes are committed against us, those crimes are really ultimately not against us, but against the state.

We can't prosecute crimes on our own behalf. And so that's why when you go to court, the state takes them out of court, and the state has a case against the accused person.

Because the accused person broke laws of the country, broke laws of the state. And it's the same with God, they are his laws. People are affected. And we sin against them, but in a different way.

Ultimately, the infraction is against God. And so David's focus was right, his focus was on God, the one whom he sinned against.

[ 21 : 17 ] God must forgive our sins. And thank God for that. Could you imagine a world where sins were really personal and when we sin against people, that they had to forgive us?

How many of you know that if that were true, a lot of us this morning would be in here unforgiven?

And how many of you know if that were true, a lot of people who have sinned against us wouldn't be forgiven?

Ultimately, our sins are against a holy God who has laid down rules for his creatures in terms of how they are to live.

And thank God that God is the one who we come to and from whom we seek forgiveness because he is not like us.

He is unlike us. And David describes him in verse one as the God who is steadfast in love and abundant in mercy.

[ 22 : 29 ] steadfast love is dependable love. It's not fickle love that's dependent on performance or lack of performance. The term steadfast love is difficult for us to comprehend because we tend not to love in the way that God loves.

The King James uses the word loving kindness instead. The ESV uses steadfast love. One of the most helpful definitions I've seen of what this love is being referred to, this steadfast love, this loving kindness, is that it is God's compulsion to love without limit those without merit.

It's to love without limit those without merit. God. God is a God who loves those who do not deserve love.

And the fact is none of us deserves the love of God. Because we've all sinned and we've all fall short of the glory of God. And we deserve nothing but judgment and wrath from God, not mercy and grace.

But steadfast love is God's own free initiative to love not based on our merit and in spite of our demerits. And abundant mercy speaks to mercy that cannot be measured.

[ 24 : 07 ] The same word, when you look at it in the Old Testament as it is used, it speaks about multitudes. So we're talking about the stars, we're talking about things that you just cannot wrap your mind around.

This mercy, this abundant mercy is mercy that cannot be measured. And it means that God's mercy exceeds our greatest sin by far.

There is no comparison, there is no sin of ours, no matter how great, no matter how serious, no matter how weighty, that comes close to straining the abundance of God's mercy.

I'm sure we've all been in a situation where maybe we're going to purchase something, and we had a certain amount of resources, then we heard the price, and we knew, boy, that's coming close, that's, can I do this, can I not do this?

God's mercy is not like that. There is no sin that challenges the extent of his mercy. Our sins are drowned in his mercy, because he is a God of abundant mercy.

[ 25 : 16 ] And that's good news for sinners like us. God's mercy. That's good news because we know that our worst sin, our greatest sin, no matter how weighty, cannot even begin to scratch the surface of God's abundant mercy.

And again, it's not because our sins are not serious, they are. It's because God's mercy is abundant. Now, how does David know this?

How does David know to go to God and say, God, in accordance with your steadfast love and your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions?

How does he know that? Let's think someone coming to you and saying to you, you know, hey, according to your bank account, I need you to lend me this or give me that.

Well, the way that David knew that God is this God of steadfast love, this God who gives love without limit to those who have no merit, this God who has mercy that cannot be scratched, mercy that cannot be challenged, mercy that is abundant, the only reason that David knows this is because God revealed it.

[ 26 : 49 ] God revealed it. He revealed it in his word. He revealed it some 400 years earlier to Moses in Exodus 34 in verses 6 and 7 when Moses said, God, would you show me your glory?

God, I want to see your glory. Show me your glory. And this is what God revealed of himself to Moses. We read in verses 6 and 7 of Exodus 34, the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation.

That was God's self-revelation of himself. And David appealed to that. He says, God, you've revealed yourself as a God who has steadfast love and who has abundant mercy.

Would you, in accordance with that, blot out my transgressions? Brothers and sisters, it is the extent to which we remember that and that we believe that about God in the midst of our sins, in the midst of our worst sins and failures, that we will run to the Lord rather than running from the Lord.

We would run to him and remember that he is this kind of God. He revealed himself in this way. I'm sure if I were to ask for a show of hands, every hand would go up.

[ 28 : 42 ] None of us likes to be taken advantage of. And one of the ways we tend to protect ourselves from taking advantage of is we don't reveal certain things that we think we'll be taken advantage of.

We think people would abuse it if they know it, so we withhold it. God didn't withhold this about himself.

He didn't withhold from us that he is a God who loves without limit those who have no merit. That he loves despite their demerits.

That he is a God who is abundant in mercy. didn't withhold it. With the dark thought that sinners would abuse it.

But he revealed himself and David leaned on that as he confessed his sin and asked the Lord that he would blot them out.

[ 29 : 56 ] God would forgive him in accordance with his steadfast love and his abundant mercy.

And it's because David's sins and our sins are against God and they create a legal record of wrong against us that only God can deal with.

Only God can forgive. Only God can blot out and it no longer stands against us. But our sin is more than a legal record of wrong.

Our sin also creates moral and cleanness within us. And that's the basis of David's second petition. He prays for God's cleansing.

thing. Notice again his prayer in verse 3. Sorry, in verse 2. He says, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

[ 31 : 08 ] Notice the first part was, Lord, blot out my sins. It's a legal record. Legal record that's against him. And now he is praying, God, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

And in his prayer for cleansing, what David is recognizing is that there is moral dirt that comes as a result of our sin.

There's moral filth that comes as a result of our sin. He says it even more graphically in verse 7. Look at what he says in verse 7. He says purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean.

Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. I think we get the view now in verse 7 of how David sees his sin, how he views his sin, how he views the effect of his sin on himself.

Under the law of Moses, lepers were considered unclean. and they would be separated from the community. And when they were cured, they were to go through a cleansing process before they could be restored to the community.

[ 32 : 30 ] And this cleansing process involved the sprinkling of blood and water on the person with leprosy. and they would use a hyssop branch, which is like a leafy, kind of hairy plant that was very common in those days.

And when David would talk about hyssop, everybody would know what he was talking about. And they would use that plant to sprinkle the blood and the water on the person. And we see that David is getting at this issue of needing a cleansing, needing a ceremonial cleansing, but one that only God can give.

Not what the priest can give, but only God can give. And then he asked God to wash him. He says, God, wash me and I will be whiter than snow. He's talking about the dirt, the darkness of sin. He's aware of it. And he recognizes only God can address it. He couldn't address it. The people around him couldn't address it.

And so he rightly looks to God, the only one, who's able not just to forgive, but also to cleanse from sin. Notice again how David expresses his desire to be cleansed from sin.

[ 33 : 49 ] In other words, in verse 10, he says, create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. David is aware of the uncleanness of sin and how it affects us to the very core of our being.

And the Bible talks about our heart. It talks about the core of who we are. And that's what sin does. Sin affects us to our very core. And it says, God, would you create in me a clean heart?

And would you renew within me a right spirit? Brothers and sisters, that's the effect of sin. Sin is not just a little quibble.

It's not just a little thing. sin affects us deeply. It pollutes us and makes us unclean before the Lord and in our own conscience. Now, while it might seem like this is a splitting of hairs, talking about forgiveness of sin and cleansing from sin, it's not a splitting of hairs.

The Bible teaches both of these, and though they are connected, they are different. They're not the same. The legal record of wrong can be removed from us, and there's no legal penalty against us.

[ 35 : 12 ] We can still walk around with a guilty conscience, an awareness of this moral filth, and then cleanness before the Lord.

And here's a very good example of how Scripture separates these two as well. In 1 John 1 9, we read, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

God forgives our sins and he cleanses us from unrighteousness. Brothers and sisters, Psalm 51 should sober us to the seriousness of sin and its effect upon us.

we can see the extent and the effect of sin by the things that David prays for in verses 11 through 17.

It's connected to his prayer for cleansing. Look at what he says again in verses 11 through 17. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

[ 36 : 22 ] Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with the willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways and sinners will turn to you. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

O Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise for you will not delight in sacrifice or I would give it. You will not be pleased with the burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. David's sin made him fearful that God would treat him the way God had treated Saul.

He rejected Saul. And the spirit left Saul. And David is appealing, O God, don't reject me the way you directed Saul.

Don't take your Holy Spirit from me. And God would have been justified had he done so. God would have been justified if he had rejected David just for breaking the tenth commandment of lusting and coveting Bathsheba.

[ 37 : 34 ] Just in that moment, God could have rejected him. But God gave David mercy. Not the judgment he deserved, not the rejection he deserved, God gave David mercy.

We see in verse 12 that sin takes away the joy of our salvation. It doesn't take away our salvation, it takes away the joy of our salvation. It removes a willing spirit within us and instead we have a depressed, discouraged spirit.

You see that sin gives us a guilty conscience and only God can remove it and he washes us and he cleanses us from the guilt of our sin. And it is only when he does that that we are able to sing in freedom aloud of his righteousness and we're able to declare his praise.

And brothers and sisters, when we fail miserably, not only do we need God's forgiveness, but we need his cleansing from sin. I want to close the sermon this morning by answering two important questions that many people easily overlook when we consider this passage.

And the first question is this, why did David repent? Why did he repent? This thing had gone on for about a year.

[ 39 : 12 ] he was pretty much home free. He was the king. He could do whatever he wanted. Why did he repent? He lusted, coveted, committed adultery,!

Murdered a man. And the reality is there's only one reason that David repented. And that reason is God.

God went to David in the person of Nathan. God went to David in the person of Nathan.

And brothers and sisters, this is always the biblical picture. This is the picture from Genesis. When Adam and Eve sinned, they didn't go looking for God and say, hey God, we want to tell you that we sinned.

No, they were hiding. God went looking for them. God went to David and through the lips of Nathan, he rebuked him, he corrected him, and it was through that confrontation that David repented.

[ 40 : 32 ] And in going to David, what God was doing was he was demonstrating to David that he was a God of steadfast love, that he was a God of abundant mercy.

David, I mean, sometimes, have you ever had a person to just upset you in such a way and you're like, I don't even want to see their face.

It's wrong, but that's the way we sometimes go. I don't want to see their face. God had every right to be that way with David. David. And if you're taking the view, I'll wait for David to come.

No, David will never come on his own because no sinner comes on his or her own to God. And God demonstrated abundant mercy and grace to David, confronted him with his sin, gave him the word of God in the midst of his sin, and that evoked repentance in David's heart.

And that's the only reason that David repented. David deserved one thing from God, and that was death. The Bible says the wages of sin is death, and David had abundant reasons to deserve the wages of sin.

[ 41 : 43 ] But God was merciful to David. He showed him steadfast love and abundant mercy. And brothers and sisters, the same is true for us.

We who have repented, we've repented for one reason. God in mercy came to us. We didn't go looking for him. We were not that good and wonderful that we recognized that something was wrong with us.

Until God's light comes on our lives, it is in his light that we see light. And that's the only reason that we repented the first time.

That's the only reason we repent any time. And that is because God breaks in mercy and in grace. And he grants us repentance and he enables us to turn from our sin.

That's the first question. Second question is how can God forgive sin? How can God legitimately and genuinely forgive David God and us of our sins?

[ 42 : 55 ] Remember the passage we read a little earlier from Exodus 34 verses 6 to 7? I focused on the first part of that but I want us to hear that again. Let me read it.

Exodus 34 verses 6 to 7. The Lord passed before him, Moses, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty?

Notice that. Who will by no means clear the guilty? God is holding out two aspects of his character in this revelation of himself to Moses and to us.

He says, I'm a God of steadfast love and abounding in mercy. I keep steadfast love for thousands of generations. I forgive iniquity. I forgive transgression, but I will not, I will not clear the guilty.

I won't. I won't. I won't just say, hey, don't worry about it. That's okay. We do that because we're sinners and we think nothing of it. But if God were to overlook sin, if God were to just say, don't worry about it, it besmirches his holiness.

[ 44 : 19 ] It is a stain on his character. It shows a defect in him. God can never simply brush sin aside and overlook sin. David was guilty and yet God cleared him.

But he says, I don't do that. I don't just tell the guilty, don't worry about it. So how was God able to not require the wages of sin at David's hands?

He's able to do it by one means. God's God's sins. He's able to do it through the cross of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus, the innocent, became a substitute for the guilty.

He became a substitute for guilty sinners like us. He bore our sins, endured God's wrath for those sins. Jesus took the sins of his people on his back, on the cross, and he atoned for them. He paid the price for their sins. He was the innocent suffering for the guilty and this is why Isaiah said he was wounded for our transgressions.

[ 45 : 43 ] He was crushed for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him and by his stripes we've been healed. And so all of us who have trusted in Jesus, all of us, we are guilty sinners who God justly allowed to go free for one reason, that Jesus was the substitute for our sins, paid the price, satisfied God's justice, and so we're able to go free.

But the guilty was not acquitted. Our guilt was poured on Jesus and he paid the price that we deserve to pay and that's the price of death.

And you know what? This was not an afterthought. The Bible tells us in Revelation 13, 8, that Jesus is the lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world.

God determined that he would slay his son for guilty sinners.

He would slay his innocent son who would be a substitute for guilty sinners, on which basis he would forgive them, he would acquit them. And he forgave David on that basis.

[ 47 : 14 ] No, Christ had not gone to the cross yet, but that was as done as done as done can be. And David was set free because of the cross of Christ in the future.

We are forgiven through the cross of Christ looking back. David was looking forward. And for those of us who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we should look back on the cross and we should marvel that God allowed the guilty to go free because he placed our guilt on his innocent son on the cross.

If you're here as an unbeliever or you are watching online, I want to say this. There's no accident that you are here listening or online watching.

No accident at all. There are no accidents in God. He works and wills to do his good pleasure in all of our lives. And so there's no accident you're hearing what you're hearing today. And the good news of the gospel is this, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

And God commands everyone, everywhere to repent. And so this morning I say to you, repent.

[ 48 : 56 ] Turn from sin and turn to Christ and believe the good news of the gospel. And it doesn't matter who you are. And it doesn't matter what you've done. God is a God of steadfast love.

He loves without limit those who have no merit. And he's a God of abundant mercy. His mercy cannot be scratched by our sin.

And so I urge you this morning to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. I didn't have this scripture in my notes this morning, but I want to read it as we close.

It's a scripture from Micah. Micah chapter 7. Micah asks this question. Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us. He will tread our iniquity is underfoot.

[ 50 : 34 ] He will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham as you have sworn to our fathers from days of old.

This is an old covenant where God swore from days of old and now he has brought it into effect. God will cast it.

I say to you this morning, whatever your circumstance, whatever your sin, however serious, however grievous, God will cast it. If you come to him in repentance and faith, he will cast it into the depths of the sea.

Let's pray together. Oh, dear Lord, we thank you for your word today. would you help us, oh Lord, to remember that ultimately our sins are against you and only you can forgive them.

Would you also help us to remember that only you can cleanse us from the moral filth and dirt of our sin.

[ 51 : 52 ] Lord, I do pray that through the power of your spirit, you would convict hearts this morning, open eyes to the truth of the gospel.

Would you be pleased to grant repentance to those who do not know the Christ. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's stand for our closing song.