

Communion Evening Service

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Preacher: Rev. Andrew Macleod

[0:00] Well, with the Lord's help, let's turn back to Psalm 51, and this third part is going to look at verse 13, as we've just sang down to the end of the psalm. If you're taking notes, then the title of this sermon would be, A Broken Heart.

And first hearing, you may wonder, what good can ever come from our hearts being broken? If you invest in a sports team, be it Scotland or Rangers or Westside, then each of them are more than capable of breaking your hearts as you long for success.

Relationally, we can have our hearts broken by somebody else, and we, of course, can be the cause too. Our hearts break over wars, over our own nation, over our children, over the loss of loved ones.

However, as we turn to the final verses of Psalm 51, David is coming to God with his own broken heart, spiritually.

This is exactly how he has to come, and how he must come, if he is to be made whole. David has been praying to God about his sin for salvation, for forgiveness.

[1:34] And here tonight, he's doing that as he finds the cure, as he sings the chorus, and as he takes up the calling. Well, let's see, first of all, at the cure.

Now, with our remaining verses, I'm going to go from back to front. I want us to look, first of all, at verse 16. Verse 16 says, For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.

You will not be pleased with a burnt offering. Now, the sacrificial system that David alludes to here has been long established. We read about it all through the Old Testament, and it was still a very real part of life in David's day.

He was not abolishing it, nor was he neglecting it. However, he is perhaps referring back to what he said in verse 14. Verse 14 says, Because in the law, there was no sacrifice that David could have brought to atone for his specific sins.

According to the law, he should have been stoned for adultery and executed for the murder. David's sin should have brought to him condemnation and death.

[3:29] According to the law, this is what David deserved. This is what we deserve. What can wash away my sin?

What can make me whole again? We don't need to shake our heads at David as we plow the ground of his life again, of this particular season of it.

Because each of us know fine well the wrong that we've done publicly, and even more so in private. The Bible makes it very plain.

The cost of your sin, the debt that you have incurred, is death. And it's from this point of solemnity and realization that we must begin again this evening.

Before you go back out into the cold and Satan attempts to rob you of what you have heard, may the truth of the gospel warm and even change our hearts.

[4:44] Before you just start another weekly cycle of going to work or to school tomorrow, and then at the weekend sometimes or often appearing in church and just repeating it.

May the Holy Spirit's spotlight enable you who are unsaved to see your sin so that you will be saved.

And also for the Christian, as we thought about this morning, the broken, or as we'll see tonight, sorry, the broken heart. As we see more of our sin, that we would see more of our needs for our God.

And it would bring us more and more to praise Him, as we'll think about with David shortly. This is what David deserved. It's what we all do.

But it's not what David received. Nor does it need to be what you receive. Instead, what this psalm assures us is that his sin was met with forgiveness and with life.

[5:53] Don't let Satan let you hear anything else this evening. There is forgiveness and there is life for you to have in and through the gospel. As we've said over this weekend, no matter how many, no matter how deep the sins you have committed.

David says and sings in verse 17, The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and contrite heart.

O God, you will not despise. Nothing would be acceptable to God except a sincere and a repentant heart.

We can't drink from anything, from a broken glass. We cannot lean on a broken table. Most things that are broken are just useless to us.

But a broken heart is exactly what we must have. Because until it is broken, we cannot see what is exactly in there.

[6:57] What God truly wants is not our Sunday best dress, but a broken and a contrite heart. A heart that is aware of its flaws.

Aware of its need. Aware that only Jesus can heal it. Aware that only Jesus can heal it. Aware that only Jesus can heal it. Is that the kind of heart that you have this evening?

What is paramount is not the clothes we wear, or the rules we keep, or the people we seek approval from, but that we can sing with King David, Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

But of course it's not only because we are aware, or even feel bad for our sin, that we can be saved. David nor any of us are able to be forgiven because of broken hearts, but only because of Christ's broken body and shed blood.

[8:15] In our village, in the seaboard villages, where I am just now, there's a cafe down in the community centre, and I was there last week, and it's good to show face as the minister in these places, no hardship to enjoy their coffee and cakes, but it wasn't until I returned home that I realised that I hadn't paid for my coffee and cakes.

And I was thinking, what would the seaboard news, or tabloids that goes out monthly, say in April, local ministers steals from community cafe?

I phoned him up and I said, I'll be right back down. And so when I went down, in my own head, I was actually hoping that maybe somebody would have cleared my debts.

Oh, the minister forgot to pay for his coffee. Don't worry about it. We'll cover it. And I was hoping I would get a sermon illustration out of it. When I went down, I had £9.50 to pay.

That was the cost of my cafe fiasco. But the cost of our sin is death. And when we go to pay the price, for the Christian, the whole cost is covered.

[9:48] Covered by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Jesus says, this is my body, which is for you. This is my blood, which is poured out for you.

The deeper we look inside our broken hearts and acknowledge the sin of our lives, surely the louder we will open our mouths and sing to the Lord who has granted us.

eternal life. So this is the cure. It is Christ alone that can save us, that can heal our broken hearts.

But it leads us, secondly, to the chorus, to this chorus of praise. And again, we think of, whether it be stadiums for sporting matches or for a singer that you want to go and see, thousands of fans can pour into these arenas or stadiums up and down the country and across the world.

And every week, they come in there cheering on or even condemning the players on each team. Praising them because they love them and condemning them because they also supposedly love them.

[11:09] it can be proud and passionate and powerful. Singing is what resonates with tiny babies. And also what may gain some traction with, or some kind of reaction from our elderly relatives who perhaps otherwise wouldn't open their mouths at all.

You can find any sorts of quotes, but here's just one source I found that said, singing may help lower stress, boost immunity and lung function, enhance memory and so on.

But it should be no surprise to us that after being delivered from his sin, David wants to sing. He wants to praise the Lord.

He says to God in verse 14, my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise.

Charles Spurgeon, he said, when the soul has been saturated with the rain of repentance, the clear shining of forgiven love makes the flowers of gladness blossom all around.

[12:25] Let me unpack that. In other words, he's saying, when we fall down on our knees acknowledging our sin, we shall be raised up to sing all the more loudly and boldly and clearer and joyfully to the Lord our God for the good that he has done and keeps on doing.

Is that the case of Barba's Free Church? Of you who are Christians in here this evening? We thought about earlier in the weekend that the joy of the Lord, David is calling for that.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation. We can sing aloud because it is our response. There's no greater sound, I don't think, than to hear the church, the converted, praise the Lord.

David knew that with his guilt, his sin dealt with, he would again be able to sing aloud, that his mouth would again sing the Lord's praise.

For months, his lips were silent as he was unrepentant over his sin. But now, the sweet melody of the saved sinner was able to proclaim again on full volume.

[13:55] When I was just into secondary school, I used to be quite involved in primary school, as some of you guys maybe are, since you know Gaelic so well, in the mod.

But when I was in secondary school, I didn't really want to be up on the stage doing it anymore. But as they came closer to, whether it was the local or the national mod, our music teacher drafted in two of us boys to sing in the choir.

That's an exaggeration. She actually didn't want us to sing. She just wanted some male representation. And so she asked us, we didn't have time before the event to learn the words properly, and so she wanted us just to basically stand there and mouth to make it look like we were singing.

But in the Bible, and especially in the Psalms, we are invited to sing, to glorify, and to praise the Lord.

Psalms 92 says, it's good to praise the Lord. Psalm 95 is the invitation, come, let us sing for joy to the Lord. Psalm 100, as we sang this morning, shout for joy to the Lord all the earth.

[15:12] And the hymn writers also, they say, I will sing of your love forever. Or shout to the north and the south, sing to the east and the west, Jesus is ruler of all, the Lord of heaven and earth.

Praise is not just what we do to fill the time in a service. It's not a performance, it's not a concert. Praise is the inevitable result of hearing the preaching and the prayers of God's people.

The only response to hearing the word as it resonates with your heart is to praise the Lord. And surely, as God's people, we cannot contain it.

The last verses of Psalm 51, they are somewhat complex and debated. Zion, it says, so it's referring to Jerusalem.

Potentially a reference to the city being left to themselves while David's eyes are off his role as the king and as he's involved in sin.

[16:26] But probably more likely, it's a broader reference to the city as it's been rebuilt post-exile. So, Jerusalem was brought into exile in Babylon and now they had returned out of it.

And so, in Nehemiah, we read a lot about Jerusalem being rebuilt and Nehemiah was involved in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

And when the work on the walls was accomplished, there was organized this tremendous celebration. Nehemiah conducted one group to go east and then another whole group to go west. These two marching bands, they would go on one side of the walls all the way around and they would meet in the middle and they carried on into the temple in to worship God and there was the singing and the playing of trumpets and the cries of thanksgiving to the Lord for all that has been

accomplished.

Even Hebrews in the New Testament says, by Christ let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. That is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.

[17:57] You know, it is a great acid test as to where you are spiritually this evening. Is there this desire in your heart to open your mouth and sing?

Do you want to give praise to God? this is not about the quality of our voices this is about making music in heaven this is not about the choice of song this is about praising your Savior all the day long so Christ is the cure Christ is the chorus that we should continually be singing again.

And thirdly let's consider the calling that David had. Verse 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways and sinners will return to you.

I refer him back to verse 12 David his witness can reignite when he has the joy of salvation restored. As we said last night nobody can lose their salvation but it's all too common for us to lose the joy and maybe that's why we're not singing.

That's not because we've reached a tricky part in our Bible reading or the sermons have become boring or it's just not like it was in the good old days no it's because you have fallen out of step with the Spirit and you are now in step with the world and you cannot do both but however and I hope and pray you can hear this however many steps away from the Lord you've taken it is just one step back it is this prayer or like it that you must pray have mercy on me oh God according to your steadfast love according to your abundant mercy mercy on one commentator

[20:26] Derek Kidner writes that there is a very close connection between someone who has a joyous faith and it being an infectious faith so a joyous and an infectious faith as we have the joy of the Lord restored as we go out being the salt and light not hiding it not putting it on dim but shining for Jesus then there is something incredibly attractive that other Christians and unbelievers see and when you have experienced God's grace it creates this urge to show grace to those around you if something or someone is infectious we usually think about it in a negative way an infectious disease or an animal may be contagious but the

Christian who walks in step with the Lord is infectious in the most positive way possible they light up the room that they walk into not because they are calling everybody in there to repentance but because of their manner and their actions and their love and other people can see that David says here in verse 13 that he's going to teach this would have been David's practice before his fall before his sin here with Bathsheba and Uriah his practice before would have been sharing and teaching and helping others spiritually it's something that David's writings were his life was doing and his writings are doing for all of God's people even today this psalm as your own minister says is his favorite this psalm is words that I'm sure every

Christian has related to in their own experience who of us believers cannot relate to the feelings and emotions of what David pens for us in psalm 51 you know some of the greatest teaching that I ever received so far in my life as a Christian wasn't in a theology classroom but often even in an elderly couple's living room and Lord willing I'll visit one of these ladies tomorrow her husband has gone now to be with the Lord and she is a widow and yet I know that she prays for me very often and in their witness to me over several years they have taught me a lot as have many people and I think it's important for us as a church we don't wait till one generation goes that the next takes on the baton but all of us have a role to play as the church to be teaching others to be helping those of you who are older to be helping the younger

Christians to be nurturing them taking them into your homes or taking them under your wings in one way or another praying for them helping them as they journey and so that others are doing that for you too there is a general way that we can all be teaching helping sharing what Christ is doing in your life and is doing in our community but there's a specific way that David talks here too to teach and to be called into the ministry and it's something as our denomination that we must be praying about our islands here have prayed often and consistently the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few and so

I hope we continue to pray that the Lord would send out labourers and maybe even here tonight is the Lord calling you to come in and to labour amongst us to come and to be called into the ministry to teach others to come and to serve the Lord our God in this way David's teaching had an intended

outcome and there's no greater privilege for David I'm sure for any minister for any congregation to see as you all seek to sow the seed throughout this community David says there in verse 13 I will teach transgressors your ways and sinners will return to you as part of the

[25:55] Old Testament law you had to return somebody's animal if you found it lost it was there written in black and white but surely we don't need a law for us to know that that's the right thing for us to do to show that kind of compassion you see it now here I'm sure in Barvis there's no exception when you come across somebody's animal or undoubtedly if you're on Facebook you see it in your Barvis community group that a dog is wandering around the village or a sheep and you're trying to work out whose it is and you'll do your best to help if you can well how much more when our friend our Christian brother or sister we find them wandering spiritually how much more will we do our utmost in God's strength to lead them back we prayed already and we said already no matter how many steps you've taken

Christian no matter how many steps away from the Lord you may have taken even though you were here in church this evening and even though you were maybe at the Lord's table this morning remembering it is just one step back I was sharing with the children earlier this evening about my wedding ring and that I lost it and I found it but I should be totally honest this isn't the original I lost it again actually I didn't lose it I dropped it in my car it's definitely in there but I can't find it and I can't get it back you may not be a Christian you may be here but you're still lost like that wedding ring you may be in church

Sunday by Sunday but you are lost to Jesus Christ may tonight be the night that you too accept this invitation to come to Jesus to be saved that you may sing don't wait don't delay this is the promise ask and you'll receive seek and you will find knock on the door will be opened to you let's pray together Lord our God we thank you and praise you that you are a God who is forgiving who is gracious and merciful thank you for the 51st psalm that David has written in his own experience Lord how traumatic it must have been but how glorious it was for him to experience your grace and your forgiveness in his life and how great it has been for many of us here to experience that too enabled us to persevere to keep on going to be teaching and witnessing to this community that many more would come in Lord we pray that those who are here even tonight are watching in their homes that this would be the night in the power of your spirit working in their hearts show them their broken hearts Lord that they may come and be whole again through what Jesus Christ has accomplished in your name we pray amen let's sing in conclusion psalm 24 in the sing psalms psalm 24 we're going to sing from verse 7 to 10 so page 28 psalm 24 and the way we sing this psalm just if you're unfamiliar once we reach the end of verse 10 there will be five hallelujahs and three amens psalm 24 you ancient gates lift up your heads you doors be opened wide so may the king of glory come forever to abide but here's the question who is this exalted king what glorious king is he it is the lord of strength and might the lord of victory let's stand and sing to his praise new ancient gates lift up your hands new doors be open wide so may the king of glory come forever to abide but who is this exalted king what glorious king is here it is the lord of strength and might the lord of victory it is the lord of strength and might the lord of victory you ancient gates lift up your hands you doors be open wide so may the king of glory come forever to abide but who is this exalted king who can this sovereign be the lord almighty he is king of glory none but here the lord almighty he is king of glory number dear hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah amen amen amen amen amen with the benediction the Kirk session is closed now may grace mercy and peace from God the Father [34:18] Son and Holy Spirit rest and remain with each of you both now and forever amen