

David had done it! He had covered up and gotten away with everything! You can almost see him snickering like a little child who has just made up a lie to their parents and got away with it, he had hidden treacherous act after treacherous act! The nation of Israel still saw him as a righteous king, because they didn't realize the heinous crimes that he had committed, and he had set up a bullet proof plan to keep his name clear! As far as he could tell he got away with everything!

It took creativity and persistence, but David was able to manage to keep his name clear in the sight of the nation that he ruled. All starting from a covetous urge from his heart that lusted after what wasn't his, everything seemed to snowball viciously! What commandment of God had David not committed a crime against, there were very few! After the adulterous thoughts as he watched Bathsheba on her roof, David couldn't help himself so he used his power as king to have her brought to him. He slept with her, caused her to become pregnant all while staying back when he should have been fighting to protect his people. In order to clear his name, he attempted to have Uriah come home and sleep with his wife, but Uriah being such an upright man, could not do so while his companions were out fighting. So David tried harder, getting him drunk! Hoping, pleading that he would go and sleep with his wife. But again no luck.

Now the creativity and persistence had to make way for the ruthlessness. David ordered Uriah to be sent to the front of the battle line, so that he would be killed. Being done in this way, then there is nothing that would cause people to see David as a cruel person, rather it was just an unfortunate part of war. It worked, David had Uriah killed, and he had successfully covered up his adultery with Bathsheba! He got away with it!

And David kept the cover going for months! And from a human standpoint, David was getting away with it! But the sins that David had committed were blinding him to the real problem. What David had done displeased the Lord, and while he had by every account gotten away with his crimes and kept his name clear in the eyes of the Israelite people, what David had done was fully known by the LORD. Even though David tried to downplay everything that had happened, even though he tried to cover up for and successfully did, from a human standpoint, cover up each of his sins, there was no hiding...the guilt was bone crushing to the point that he wrote later in one of the Psalms it was as if his bones were wasting away, and his shame had sapped his energy to the point that it was as if he were baking in the hot summer sun. The guilt of what he had done would not go away. Though outwardly David had seemed to get away with everything and he appeared righteous, inwardly he was wasting away!

Nathan was an old friend of Davids, they had talked about the construction of the temple with each other, but now Nathan has the difficult task of confronting the king. Here he is speaking to one who was called a man after God's own heart, here he was speaking to the one who was too conscience bound that he could not kill Saul who was after him, so instead he simply cuts a piece of his cloak and spares his life. The prophet Nathan has David on the edge of his seat listening to this heartrending story ready to burst out in anger at any moment, saying this heartless rich neighbour, he deserves to die for what he has done! And the man after God's own heart can't see it...until Nathan reveals it... like a physician with a cutting knife to cut off a sore, Nathan the physician of God, uses his cutting words to cause David to see the sore and sticks the knife right in...You are that man.

The unimaginable evil that David had seen, it was him. The spiritual evil that you and I encounter and carry out throughout our lives is ugly! Almost unimaginable at times! My spiritual problem is much more than just I have failed to tell my neighbour about God's word, my spiritual problem is much greater than I have told a white lie to my friend or spouse. Our spiritual problem is that we are rotten with sin to the core! And as sinners rotten to the core we often want to bask in our self righteous ways and stand up for the evil that we do, or hide away in the darkness of our sin. We may sit back and say how could you David! But is it really that hard for me to look at the story and wonder how David could do all of this, or can I can see myself in the self righteous, power hungry, adulterous, lust filled, angry man who simply wants to hide away his sin to display a picture of righteousness. Outwardly maybe I think I have even

gotten away with what I've done... but if those around me only knew... only saw the thoughts the corruption of my heart. I know my sins...and every single action of sin is a rebellion against my God.

Recognizing our sin, there is really only one thing that we can be led to say, and it's what David said too! I have sinned against the Lord. And it's after all of this that David writes Psalm 51. God you're right when you bring the verdict of guilty and deserving of hell upon me a sinner, and God you're justified when you bring judgement, because it's against you that I have sinned.

In his essence, God is beyond our comprehension. But in his Word, God graciously comes down to our level to reveal himself in ways that human beings can grasp. He reveals himself as having many different characteristics. He is, for example, immutable, meaning that he will never change. He is eternal, without beginning or end. He is all-knowing and all-powerful.

God is also just. He will—and he must—dispense perfect justice. He hates sin and must punish those who transgress his commandments. The punishment for sin is hell, and it is just and right for him to sentence those who have sinned to everlasting suffering. But God is also love. He loves perfectly. In his perfect love, he is merciful to sinners. He desires that all sinners would be saved from his wrath and live forever.

Those last two characteristics of God seem to contradict each other, don't they? In perfect justice he must punish sinners for their sins, but his perfect love means he wants sinners to be saved. How can God be both just and loving at the same time? How can those unchanging attributes of God be reconciled? In only one place—in Christ. In Jesus, we see God's perfect love satisfying his perfect justice.

The Son of God chose to become a human being. Conceived by the Holy Spirit - he entered the world without sin. As true man, he was subject to the law and required to obey everything and he did so perfectly. He obeyed the law in the place of—and for the benefit of—every human being who had ever failed to do what God required. God satisfied his justice by punishing the sins of the world on Jesus. While hanging on the cross, Jesus endured the just judgment of God. As true God, his willing sacrifice covers all sins of all people of all time. Through faith in Jesus, we are no longer subject to the punishment of hell for our sins. Instead, Jesus' perfection becomes our perfection because he took our sins on himself and suffered our punishment. With repentant hearts we come to Jesus and, we receive the forgiveness of sins.

We have a just God who perfectly punishes sin. David didn't get away with his sin like he may have thought, and God doesn't just turn a blind eye to the rebellious nature of our sin. But our Lord is loving and merciful, and in that love and mercy he has given Jesus, who suffered and died for us, who bled on the cross so that in faith we may be comforted by the sight that God's justice has been satisfied and by his wounds, we have been healed! Let us always remain in that love as we realize our sinfulness, it is against you Lord that we have sinned. But then in faith turn to our Lord, who judges us justly through our faith in Jesus. And by faith that judgement is innocent in the sight of God. Set free from sin to live in peace with God forever! You are judged no longer according to your sin, but according to the perfection of your Saviour! Live in that peace! Amen.