

Sin Is Against God

We begin by reading the Psalm that David wrote after he had Uriah killed so that he could take Bathsheba as his wife: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. **Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done evil in Your sight**, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psa. 51:1-10).

David was obviously very repentant, even though these few, simple words could hardly express the sorrow in his heart. However, what David said in verse 4 is not something most people understand. Some assume that David sinned against Uriah, because it was Uriah that was murdered. However, Uriah was dead and in the grave, and those who are dead know nothing (Eccl. 9:5). Furthermore, the Law did not originate with Uriah. God is the source of the Law. Uriah, if he were alive, could accuse David of breaking the Law, but Uriah could not claim that David sinned against him because David broke *God’s* Law, not Uriah’s. Because the Law *originated* from God (Rom. 7:7), sin is *defined* by God, which means that all sin is against God!

Why is this distinction important? Notice the next verse: “**Cast me not away from Your presence**, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me” (Psa. 51:11). Knowing that our sins are against God is important because sin *separates* us from God. Notice what Isaiah the prophet said: “**But your iniquities have come between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear**” (Isa. 59:2).

Uriah also has no authority to judge David. In other words, while David could have been convicted of breaking God’s Law and put to death, no man, including Uriah, has the authority to determine whether or not David loses out on eternal life. All sin is against God because God is the source of Law. He alone has the authority to determine who receives eternal life. This is why repentance *toward God* is crucially important; it is the only way to be reconciled to God. Notice how Paul describes the Corinthians when they *zealously* sought repentance from God: “For sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world works out death. For see how this very thing—your personal sorrow before God—brought about **such earnestness in you! And, what a defense, and what indignation, and fear, and vehement desire, and zeal, and vengeance!** In every way you have proved yourselves to be pure in the matter” (II Cor. 7:10-11).

This is what David expressed in Psalm 51. He asked to be purged, washed, and cleansed. Even in those few words we can feel his sorrow and repentance. Likewise, *we* too must repent of sin with the kind of repentance God gives—one that allows for His forgiveness. “Now after hearing *this*, **they were cut to the heart**; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’ ” (Acts 2:37-38).

Those who have God’s Holy Spirit do not need to ask what to do. *We know!* When we

sin, we must turn to God in true sorrow, pray to have godly repentance, and ask for His forgiveness. How much forgiveness do we expect to receive if our repentance is nothing but a show? We need to consider that sin causes God to withdraw and separate from us. Our repentance is a measure of how much we desire to be reconciled to God and be in His kingdom.

At the Passover, God made Jesus to *be sin* for us and then abandoned His Son in the final moments before His death. If God cannot tolerate sin to the extent that He forsook His Son, imagine the chasm that can exist between *us* and God for *our* sins for which Jesus died!

We must realize that the purpose of overcoming sin through repentance is not to be justified in the Law; it is so that God will not cast us from His presence. Knowing this, then, we must be as David—who repented in heartfelt sorrow, sincere earnestness, and fear with all desire to overcome. We must be like the Corinthians in zealous repentance—because we desire above all things to stand before God’s throne, now and forever.