

## 1. Introduction

- a. The joke this year is simple. Just look at someone and say, “2020, right?”
  - i. It’s easy to be overwhelmed by circumstances. It’s easy to be unmotivated this year, even spiritually. It’s easy to lose sight of the blessings that still around us. It’s easy to struggle with being thankful.
  - ii. Today, let’s quiet our spirits before the Lord in prayer and focus on what He is going to teach us and apply to us.
- b. David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11)
- c. Nathan and David (2 Samuel 12)
  - i. Read 2 Samuel 12:1-15
  - ii. Explain Psalm 51 context
- d. Today, we are going to observe 3 attributes of God that I see from 2 Samuel and Psalm 51. Each one of them are reasons to be thankful!

## 2. God is Holy

- a. Holy typically is defined as “being set apart”. The only reason we can be called holy is because Christ’s righteousness is applied to us at salvation. God’s holiness is unique because He alone is holy. He is perfect in purity. He is separate from all things in His integrity and perfection.
  - i. He hates sin; it opposes His very nature. His holiness.
- b. All sin is against God
  - i. 1 Samuel 12:13, “I have sinned against the Lord.”
  - ii. 1 Samuel 12:14, “because you did this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord.”
  - iii. Psalm 51:4, “Against you, you only, have I sinned”
  - iv. Even though David sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah and he involved other people in his sin cover up, his sin is against God because God alone is holy.
  - v. Have you ever stopped to consider what is involved in the slightest sin? In the slightest sin, I am saying that my will has a right that is higher than the rights of God.
- c. Response to God’s Holiness
  - i. Abhor sin.
    1. David recognized that his sin was against God and he hated it. He turned from it.
      - a. Psalm 51:2, 9, 10, “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! Blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”
    2. Sin will happen but do we HATE it?
    3. Are we repulsed by our sin because it opposes a Holy God or are with content with some sin because “that’s just who I am”?
  - ii. Thanksgiving
    1. Psalm 97:12, Psalm 30:4, “give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.”
    2. “Holiness is an attribute which inspires the deepest awe, and demands a reverent mind; but still—give thanks at the remembrance of it. “Holy,

holy, holy!" is the song of seraphim and cherubim (Isaiah 6:3); let us join it not dolefully, as though we trembled at the holiness of God, but cheerfully, as humbly rejoicing in it." CH Spurgeon

3. "He who can give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness, is one who loves holiness; who hates sin, and who longs to be saved from it." Adam Clarke
4. David recognized his sin because he recognized the holiness of God. Do you recognize His holiness and are you thankful for it?

### 3. God is Just

#### a. His justice is an expression of His holiness

- i. "God is just, but sometimes His actions appear to be unjust. The striking dead of Ananias and Sapphira by God in Acts 5, for example, seems to be an instance of the punishment far outweighing the crime. When we realize, however, that these acts of justice are expressions of God's holiness, they take on new light. A more complete understanding of God's character enables one to see these actions by God with greater clarity and helps us to avoid the very real danger of taking His grace for granted. The purpose of this lesson is to promote growth in the understanding of, and thankfulness for, God's grace." RC Sproul
- ii. Uzzah struck dead for touching the Holy of Holies

1. "So wait a minute, why did he do it? His motive was pure. He was trying to preserve the throne of God from being desecrated by the mud." But the presumptuous sin of Uzzah was this: he assumed that his hands were less polluted than the dirt. There was nothing about the earth that would desecrate the throne of God. The earth was lying there on the ground doing what God has called earth to do—being dirt, turning to dust when it's dry and turning to mud when it's mixed with water. It obeys the laws of God day in, day out, doing exactly what dirt is supposed to do. There is nothing defiling about the earth. It was of the hand of man that God said, "I don't want it on this throne." In a word, Uzzah broke the law of God, and God killed him." RC Sproul

#### b. His holiness demands justice (sin is not to be dismissed)

- i. God taking David's son was just.
  1. 2 Samuel 12:14, "Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child who is born to you shall die."
  2. We might suggest that this is awful. This isn't fair. Why a child instead of the one who committed the sin?
    - a. God and God alone is perfect in His thinking. He is perfect in His mercy. He is perfect in His justice. He is perfect in His care for us. He is perfect in His development of us. Whether we understand it or not, this WAS the perfect way of handling this.
  3. "Is there anyone who could convict a holy, perfectly righteous creator, who out of sheer mercy creates a creature and gives him all of this blessing? Is there anything wrong with God extinguishing a creature who has the audacity to challenge His authority to rule His creation?"

Have you ever stopped to consider what is involved in the slightest sin? In the slightest sin, I am saying that my will has a right that is higher than the rights of God. Even the slightest sin—never mind a heinous sin like abortion—defies the authority of God, insults the majesty of God, and challenges the justice of God. We are so accustomed to sinning and so careful to justify our disobedience that we have become recalcitrant in our hearts. Our consciences have been seared, and we think it no serious matter to disobey the King of the universe. I call it cosmic treason.”

- ii. “I don’t know the secret counsel of God. I can’t read the deity’s mind. But I wonder if the reason we find periodically in Scripture this swift and sudden exercise in justice is that perhaps God finds it necessary to interrupt His normal pattern of longsuffering, forbearing, grace, and mercy to remind us of His justice.” Hans Küng
    - 1. “God Himself complains that His forbearing mercy is designed to give us time to repent, but instead of repenting we exploit it.”
  - c. We must understand the difference between justice and mercy. God doesn’t owe us mercy. By definition, mercy is voluntary and He is not obligated to show mercy to a rebellious creature.
    - i. Exodus 33:19 (Romans 9:15), “and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.”
  - d. David understood his sin and he knew that God is just. While he asked God to have mercy on him, he knew that God cannot act unjustly so however God handled it would be perfect.
  - e. Are you thankful today that you can count on God to act unswervingly, perfectly, and fairly according to His perfect plan?
4. God is Merciful
- a. An important distinction to make, right away, is that God is holy and is both just and merciful, but He is never unjust. God never punishes an innocent person. He doesn’t know how to be unjust. Mercy is non-justice but not injustice.
  - b. The just penalty for David was death.
    - i. The law required death. He deserved death.
    - ii. Adultery and Murder both required death.
    - iii. BUT “The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.” 2 Samuel 12:13
      - 1. David responded by identifying God’s mercy
        - a. Psalm 51:1, “according to your abundant mercy”
      - 2. This verse is the close and it is where I have been focused on in my thanksgiving the last week and a half.
      - 3. I pray that you will experience thanksgiving when you ponder God’s incredible mercy on you.
5. Be thankful for God’s Mercy!
- a. There is no greater place to see mercy than in the life and death of Jesus Christ.
    - i. He walked in mercy every day, healing multitudes, feeding thousands, and casting out many demons. As He was dying on the cross, He mercifully asked God to forgive those who had crucified Him (Luke 23:34).

- b. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" Ephesians 2:4-6
- c. We were dead in our sin, cut off from God
  - i. He raised us up, in salvation through Christ, and seated us at God's right hand
    - 1. No higher position exists in the Kingdom of God
    - 2. Because of Christ, God already sees us sitting there!
      - a. "If you were a hundred times worse than you are, your sins would be no match for his mercy." Tim Keller
- d. No matter your circumstances...(Psalm 51)
  - i. Recognize Who God is
    - 1. "Steadfast love, abundant mercy" Psalm 51:1
    - 2. Holy, Just, Merciful
  - ii. Recognize What God does
    - 1. "Blot out my transgressions...wash me...cleanse me" verse 1-2
    - 2. "Renew a right spirit within me" verse 10
    - 3. "Deliver me" verse 14
  - iii. Recognize Who You Are
    - 1. "Have mercy on me, O God." Verse 1
    - 2. "You delight in truth...you teach me wisdom." Verse 6
      - a. Lower than God, unworthy of God, in need of help from God.
  - iv. Rejoice in those truths with thanksgiving!
    - 1. Psalm 51:12, 14-15, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation. 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."