



Romans

11 The Mission

Courage Church, Detroit, MI

March 31, 2019

scriptures: Romans 3:1-20, Psalm 51

Today will be, in a way the last ascending piece to Paul's explanation of justification... and as we will see next week, the entire thing culminates at the end of chapter 3 and then gives us amazing hope from that culminating moment, all the way through chapter 4

where we will land beautifully right at Easter... and then after Easter we will step into the second movement of the book of Romans so it will definitely change up a bit.

The focus today will be on "The Mission of God" - but more specifically... the things that get in the way of the mission, and the bigger point of how God ultimately achieves what He always said that He would achieve.

The big issue that Paul has been working through in his letter so far is the fact that God gave man everything.. He intended great things for us... He CREATED great things for us... His plans for us are far beyond anything that we could ever even imagine... yet from the beginning of time we have tried to make our own way... convinced that we can do it better... that we know more than God.

And I am sure that there is not a single person in this room who would say to me "I think that I know better than God" - yet the way that we live our lives often tells a different story.

But Paul uses a word in verse 9... and believe it or not... through all of the things that we have walked through already in this loaded letter... Chapter 3 verse 9 is the first time that Paul uses the word: It is the Greek word "*hamartia*"

in English it is: SIN.

In 2:12 Paul says “all who have sinned...” but its a slight variation of the word there, and here in 3:9 it paints a picture not just of something that you have done... but actually of something we are under... What is described in Romans 3:9 is “sin” as a POWER that actually controls our lives and sets us off track.

which is not something to take lightly... but often begins as something that we think would be okay to take lightly.

Sin is anytime we choose something other than God. It is the concept of a person missing the mark... God gave us a clear path to walk... a clear mark to aim for... and sin is when we veer off of that path... we don't hit the mark... we chose something other than God.

And there are a lot of different ways that that looks, which we talked about earlier in the series... like the words transgression and iniquity... transgression is a breaking of trust, and outward action that you actually follow through on... an iniquity is an inward motivation that often leads to transgression... whatever your eye hooks to, multiplies...

sometimes it is a winding road in our minds... God has laid out a straight path for us but we instead take the road that curves... it bends and winds and though it feels like it is only in our minds, we wake up one day and don't know where we are, or how in the world we got there.

But like we learned about when we studied chapter 1... sin is not the root of the problem, sin is the RESULT of ungodliness... sin is the RESULT of us believing that we can remove God from our lives, make decisions ourselves, cut off accountability... etc.

But today Paul reaches the furthest, most extreme part of his argument... He will return to that courtroom setting that he has laid out for us, in which a day will come where God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. And Paul here paints the clearest picture anywhere... that ALL people... no matter who you are, or what you have accomplished...

all people are guilty. And ALL people who think that they will be able to stand before God on account of THEIR WORKS, and THEIR MERITS... their accomplishments... will be condemned... Paul leaves NO room in this passage for their being any possibility of anyone achieving salvation apart from Jesus Christ.

We need to make that clear... and we will continue to make that clear throughout this message, because it matters. Sin matters... the corruption that destroys our world matters... and repenting of our sins and believing that we can't save ourselves... that matters and we will keep returning to it.

but there is another underlying idea that we must get our heads around in this set of scriptures besides just the fact that everyone is guilty... because there is a gospel hope that is woven into even these dark scriptures...

so let's read the first half of chapter 3 together.

Pastor Austin did a great job laying a foundation for this last week... so even though I will read verses 1-8 again, I won't spend much time on those but there are a couple of things that he mentioned that I want to recap so we approach today with that same framework because it has an enormous affect on the rest of the passage. Let's read and then we will explore this.

Romans 3:1-20

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means! **Let God be true though every one were a liar**, as it is written,

“That you may be justified in your words,
and prevail when you are judged.”

But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) By no means! For then how could God judge the world? But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being

condemned as a sinner? And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

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okay, Pause here for a couple brief recaps before we continue. We will go back to the first part of this... It is extremely important to note first of all, what Paul says about the Jews... The people of God. This verse is a key to understanding this passage.

He says “they were entrusted with the oracles of God” - they were GIVEN God’s Word, they were given the revelation of who He is and what He intends to do in the world...

but to be entrusted with something does not mean that you are given it to hang on to... it means you were given it with a mission. The Jews, who were the first to receive the Revelation of God, were given it in order that **THEY MAY BE THE MESSENGERS OF THE GOSPEL**. The carriers of the hope.

“Entrusted” there is the same word that Paul uses in 2 Corinthians 5 when he says that **WE HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED** with the message of reconciliation. We have been given the **JOB** of making sure **OTHERS** are reconciled to God. It is the word “*pisteuō*” - it comes from the word faithfulness... entrusted means you are trusted to be faithful with something.

Now, watch this... verse 2 and 3 -

“To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?”

The Jews were *pisteuō* - **TRUSTED TO BE FAITHFUL**.

but what if some were: *apisteō* - unfaithful to the deliver the oracles.

The word was often used to describe someone **WHO BETRAYS** a trust... what if the Jews betray God’s trust and don’t share the news with the world...

does their *apistia* - their faithlessness... nullify the "*pistis*" (the faithfulness) of God?

it is all one idea...

What this is trying to say is simple: The message is going to go out, whether the Jews are faithful to it, or not.

THE MESSAGE THAT THE JEWS WERE ENTRUSTED WITH... the message that God gave them having faith IN THEM that they can do it... EVEN if they fail... God still won't.

The world is going to be reconciled back to God, whether you are faithful with the ministry He has given you... or not.

Detroit will continue to see better days... whether we hide in our closets and our churches or we become proactive and are a part of building a better world. Whether we show up, or we don't.

God is going to do what God is going to do... and one thing that I love about what Paul gets in to in these next couple verses, is it shows us not only that God is going to put the world back together... but that He is going to use some of the most broken people you can imagine to do the work of putting it all back together.

So the next time you feel like God can't use you because of what you have done... just know this: God writes all His stories with broken people. All of them. There are no perfect people besides Jesus... and He called the lowlifes of society into the highest calling imaginable... Paul himself... what a mess. Don't let the devil tell you that you can't do something, BECAUSE AT SOME POINT IN YOUR LIFE YOU DID SOMETHING.

I don't care if it was yesterday. Or this morning. Jesus is in THE RECONCILIATION BUSINESS and so is His church. But its very clear that there IS A MISSION. There is something that the Jews were ENTRUSTED WITH... there is something that we are entrusted with...

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LET'S CONTINUE (v9):

No One Is Righteous

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and 'Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;
no one understands;
no one seeks for God.

All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;

**no one does good,
not even one.”**

“Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive.”

“The venom of asps is under their lips.”

“Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”

“Their feet are swift to shed blood;
in their paths are ruin and misery,
and the way of peace they have not known.”

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. **For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.**

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Okay... story time... because we just got back from a trip and we have a ton of them.

Last week our family had a bit of an odd adventure. We did a trip, half working and half vacation... we camped a lot... we met with several churches about the possibility of sending missions teams up to Detroit...

So we left Michigan, with our first Florida destination being Melbourne Beach, where some friends of ours planted a church a few years ago and

we were excited to visit that Sunday morning and spend some time with our friends there.

But along the way, we had a random mission. So the car was packed to the brim already with all of our gear for camping, our clothes, our food, all of it... and our friend J.P. Dorsey (who has spoken here before and we are having out again this fall) had a random request... we were already going South, and he asked us if we could deliver a package for him to someone in Nashville.

The item that he needed delivered he didn't trust with a fedex or a UPS truck, but for some reason he entrusted it to a family with four tiny kids and an already crowded car full of stuff...

and what it was, was the fireplace mantle from the study of J.R.R. Tolkien. It was this large, heavy piece of furniture that Tolkien would have sat next to while writing and doing much of his work. For those who don't know who J.R.R. Tolkien is, he wrote the Lord of the Rings books and many others.

I know that the final deal was not for anything close to this amount, but I found this old blog post from like 3 years ago and the first time someone tried to sell it, it had to have been a joke but in it they said that they wanted like a quarter of a million dollars for it. Where it didn't sell for close to that, its obvious that this was a pretty big item to be entrusted with.

But it was huge.

To try and make it fun for the kids, we bought the audio book of "The Hobbit" and we listened to it throughout much of our journey... we tried to get the kids to envision him sitting by the mantle, writing the words that were being read to us in that very moment.

Okay... now that sounds like a good story. And it is a good story. It is one that I hope my kids remember and share with their kids as they read them these stories that will by that time be considered ancient.

But the entire time in the car, the kids were anxious... overwhelmed by how cramped we were all the way to Nashville... not exactly happy about the mission we were on.

we woke up that morning with plans of getting to Nashville by like 5pm, but due to an initial series of events we didn't leave town until 1pm so we delivered the thing to the poor buyer at like midnight.

So we pulled into Nashville, and went and dropped all of our kids, and all of our stuff off at our friends Kenny and Debra's house in Nashville (Kenny also spoke her last year) - and while we unloaded the 50 items in our car, Dawn sliced her finger on a piece of glass in their garage... there was a ton of blood.

finally, we delivered the fireplace mantle. I think it made it in one piece.

From there... we went back to Kenny's house... and they had given us their master bedroom, and they had WAY too many pillows on their bed... so we tossed a couple of them onto the floor, next to where the baby was sleeping, and in the morning, we would head the 750 miles to Melbourne.

In the morning, we woke up prepared to do our drive to Florida because church was the next day... but the baby was already awake and was wandering around, and her diaper was so full that it was leaking everywhere... all over where she had slept... and when she exited her little sleeping mat thing, so plopped herself down onto our friends pillows.

yep. It soaked through every layer.

Now we had a REALLY big mess to clean up... so we went downstairs to the washer and dryer... and Kaila, our friend's daughter was doing laundry. She went to switch the laundry out for us, and she noticed that the load that she had run over night was not done... as it turned out, their washing machine, THAT HAD ALWAYS WORKED... now was broken. We spent an hour trying to troubleshoot it, with no luck.

So we had to go to the laundry mat. Which, they don't live in the city, and it took us 35 minutes to get to the laundry mat.

We did the laundry, drove back to their house, loaded up all of our things, and at about 4pm we left Nashville heading toward Melbourne Beach, Florida. 11 driving hours away, where we had a service to catch the next morning. Which would have been no problem had we left at 8am as we intended.

Suddenly, the mission became much more difficult... the night became long...

But the destination never changed. We were always going to Melbourne, and we would eventually get to Melbourne. We arrived exhausted, smelly, and not put together at all, just minutes before the service started... but we arrived none the less.

Now...

We had a mission. We were entrusted with something important and we had a destination... and a lot of things got in the way of what we had originally intended but in the end it all came together.

and in a way that is *somewhat* related to that story that I just told you... God has given his people... you and me... and in the case of Romans... specifically, the people of Israel... a very clear mission. To reconcile the world back to the Messiah.

But that mission does not go as planned because of this thing called sin that keeps getting in the way. Diapers that leak... kids that are overwhelmed by all that is being asked of them and having difficulty going with it...

The mission never changes... what God is doing never changes... But the people who God has called to do his mission have complicated the process by letting their own lives and desires get in the way of the bigger picture of what God is doing in the world.

In fact... the only reason God had to give them the mission in the first place is because of how off track man had gone... The first mission was just to BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY.

God created the world, and He created it PERFECTLY.. and He gave us a specific way to live in it... and from the VERY BEGINNING man has said “I don’t want your way, I WANT TO CREATE MY OWN WAY.”

Let it be made very clear, this passage is about sin, and about the way sin has put the Jews off course... but ultimately... how sin has put EVERYONE off course.

Tim Keller (Keller Sermon Archive, No One Seeks God, March 1, 2009) actually says of this passage that it is “perhaps the most radical, strongest of all statements the Bible gives us about what is wrong with the human heart”

Keller actually identifies this passage as being a Biblical summary of the doctrine of SIN.

Which, we know from chapter 1, that sin is not the source of their problems, sin is the RESULT of their removal of God from their lives. Sin is the RESULT of their exchanging the truth about the GLORY OF GOD, for the lie that says that they are fine on their own doing whatever they want.

But the result (sin) creates road blocks that stand in the way of mission and stand between us and God... and the key to Paul’s argument here is EVERYONE.

Everyone is under sin. It is written in a way that implies that this thing called sin is literally weighing us down... holding us down... looming over us and we are UNDER it... it has a power over us THAT NEEDS TO BE BROKEN - all of us.

It is important that we look at this passage within the flow of thought that begins in chapter 1, and continues all the way to where we are right now.

Because there is a VERY significant shift in Paul's language that takes place in chapter 2, and then a shift that takes place again here in 3:9.

In chapter 1 we get that scary list of sins that it seems only people who are NOT like us would commit... (I say that sarcastically, but that is how the Jews would have interpreted it) - but Paul uses a very specific word through 1:18-32.

The word is THEY.

They did not honor God... They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God. They know God's righteous decree... they not only do these things but give approval to those who do them. God gave THEM up and THEY exchanged the truth about God for a lie.

Chapter two shifts.. it begins:

Therefore... YOU.

You have no excuse, anyone of you who judges.

Do YOU suppose you who judges, that you will escape judgment?

Because of YOUR hard heart YOU are storing for yourself wrath on the day of wrath.

You preach against stealing, do you steal?

You say one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?

If YOU break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.

Now, look at what Paul says here in 3:9

Are WE Jews any better off? No. Not at all.

Romans 1-3 builds before finally landing in a place where Paul himself, the most dedicated follower of Jesus you can imagine, lumps himself into a category with all of the rest of humanity saying that we are ALL under SIN.

Then what he does, is he quotes several passages from the Old Testament that back up his claim.

The reason that this section is so important, is because Paul is using the Hebrew scriptures... their very own code of law and ethics and everything else... and he uses it more here than anywhere previously at one time in the letter... to show the Jews... to show the WE... that we are no better.

But beyond that, what it does is it shows his Jewish readers that HIS GOSPEL... The Gospel that he is preaching... IS CONSISTENT with their gospel. It is consistent with the message that they have heard... forever!

He begins by quoting Psalm 14:1-3 - no one is righteous. They don't understand... they don't get it... they don't even seek God...

you don't seek... you don't care. It is not so much a direct rebellion against the things that you are told, as much as a passive approach that says "I will live my own way" - this is an ECHO of what we get starting in 1:18. Sin is a result of ungodliness and injustice.

ALL have turned aside, and together become worthless...

and then we get to no one does good.

Not them. Not you. Not us.

if you put your good and your bad on a scale in hopes that your good will outweigh your bad on the day of judgment... Paul is saying THERE IS NOT A SINGLE PERSON IN THE WORLD who would have those scales tip in their favor.

Next in Paul's progression, he quotes Psalm 5:9 when he says "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive."

We have already in this series talked about the power of the tongue and the destruction that it can cause. Paul just gives us more emphasis here... our words have the potential to destroy people's lives... and what Paul says is not only do we have the power... **BUT WE USE THE POWER.** We destroy one another in the way that we speak of each other... all are guilty.

So they first are people who don't do good... they don't seek God... and in turn they then become people who do evil with their lips... they destroy worlds with their words...

Then in verse 15, Paul takes it further, when he quotes Proverbs 1:16 and Isaiah 59:7 "their feet are swift to shed blood and the WAY of peace they have not known..." because what we allow to come out of our mouths will eventually manifest in our lives... words create worlds of destruction or of life... there is power of life and death in the tongue and when that power is used it will begin to shape other parts of your life.

if you look closely at this, you notice that just like with what he does in Romans 1 in his own words, He does in Romans 3 using other's words, piecing together ancient texts to show us a progression that only further backs up what we said earlier in this series about iniquity... that whatever your eye hooks to, multiplies.

anytime there is a sin that you get comfortable with... that sin becomes a part of who you are and leaves room for another level of sin to be committed... like, once you cross a line enough times... you forget the line was ever there... you forget there are any lines, until you cross the next one... and the next one...

Paul uses a slew of verses that the Jews knew well, to show them that it is true... whatever your eye hooks to really does multiply... and if you remove God... it will lead you down a path that ultimately has the power to destroy you.

It leads from not understanding... to eventually actually being THE people causing destruction, and lands in a place where there is no fear of God anymore... we don't have reverence for the things of God... we don't care what God says or what He will do...

I want to encourage you today with a bit of a warning... that the subtle things are almost always the ones that destroy us.

Satan loves subtlety - because it allows him to creep into areas that we don't even know we should be guarding from him...

if he can get your mind off of Jesus and onto yourself... you are in big trouble... if he can get your mouth to open up and speak words against other people who were created in the image of God... you are in trouble and you don't even know it...

the pathway to destruction is paved slowly by people who don't even know they are working for the wrong side. We think we are just venting... or sharing something as a way of coping... We shelter our slander under the umbrella of "spirituality" - "hey... pray for that person..." or "hey... I am a warrior for the Lord who is still fighting even after so and so did such and such to me..." - sometimes things that are TRUE can become evil weapons that you use against another person... and it leads to all sorts of destruction in your life as much as in the community that God has been working to cultivate while we have been working against Him.

We do it in so many ways.

Lets look at this last line of this section:

A couple of weeks ago we talked about judgment... and we talked about the scales in a courtroom and how justice is determined by the way the scales tip...

and thank God, for those who have PUT THEIR TRUST IN JESUS, it will be Jesus on that scale being weighed.

Paul returns to the courtroom language here in verse 19. It is incredibly powerful.

verse 19 and 20:

“Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. **For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.**”

The idea of “every mouth may be stopped” - its actually fascinating that so many of the verses Paul quotes in this section have to do with the mouth... and then it says this... every mouth may be stopped.

but again, it is courtroom language. It is when you determine “I have nothing more to add to this case” - it is knowing “everything that I say can be used against me” so its the concept of putting your hand over your mouth and keeping quiet... not trying to plead your case because you yourself know your own guilt.

and what Paul says here about the law, at the very end... explains this part about our mouths being stopped... because... see, this is what the law does... the law shows you that you can't live up to it.

The law's job is to show us that we can't keep it. That is why it exists... its not an evil law... its a perfect law that imperfect people will never be able to keep... and what the law is designed to do, is to cause you to shut your mouth when it comes to your own case... because the law in and of itself is evidence against you.

You have no case. You have not kept it.

The heart of justification is that when you open your mouth in your own defense your world will unravel because you have no defense. And we have said it over and over... but if you stand on what you have done, you will stand alone, and if you stand alone, you will stand condemned.

But if every mouth may be shut because when they look at their lives against this perfect law that they know that they could never keep... what that indicates is that you have come to terms with the fact that you are guilty. And on your own, you are without hope... and when you close your mouth, it gives Jesus a chance to open His and MAKE THAT

DECLARATION OVER YOU THAT WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT THIS ENTIRE SERIES.... JUSTIFICATION... GOD DECLARING you to be righteous... because of Jesus.

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But the thing that makes this passage so unique, is that in the middle of it being probably the most descriptive image we get of sinful man and our inability to save ourselves... buried in all of that is a mission.

A mission that God promised to fulfill through Israel's faithfulness... but unfortunately for the world... Israel was not faithful.

They failed. They made a golden calf. They never kept the sabbath years. They worshipped other gods... they gave themselves over to other cultures. They committed sins against each other, against others and against God.

They made a mess of their lives, and it cost them greatly generation after generation after generation.

Their trajectory changed... things took longer than they thought that it would... and they were far from the Israel that God wanted them to be.

Just like you and I so often find ourselves far from the people of God we are called to be...

Babies poop.

Machines break.

mistakes are made.

The journey rarely goes exactly the way that we thought that it would BECAUSE WE ARE INVOLVED... we are human, and like Paul said of ALL HUMANS... no one is righteous... no one does what is good.

Yet God still uses us.

God always gets us to the destination - He always shows up whether we do or not... and He is reconciling the world back to Him through the only Israelite who has been faithful... and that is Jesus. We will find next week that everything we have been building toward will culminate at Jesus.

All of the language about sin, and judgment... all of the lists that everyone is on... all of the guilt... it is all nailed to the cross with Jesus - He took everything that we are... and let Himself be CRUCIFIED WITH IT... we now become everything that HE IS... blameless before God.

Think again about this verse that is such a core part of the heart of this letter:

“To begin with, the Jews were **entrusted** (*pisteuō*) with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful (*apisteoō*)? Does their faithlessness (*apistia*) nullify the faithfulness (*pistis*) of God? By no means!”

Even when we aren't faithful... The faithfulness of Jesus, the son of David... the promise of Israel... He remains faithful.

But that does NOT mean that when we accept Jesus as our savior, that we just continue in our ways so that He can keep being faithful. NO. His kindness is meant to lead us to repentance... We need to make Jesus Lord of our lives just as much as we need to make Him savior... and honestly, when I look in the mirror at the person that I am without Him... THAT IS GREAT NEWS. Who wouldn't want to be made more and more like Jesus every day?

I believe with all of my heart that when Jesus comes into your life... your life will change.

I believe with all of my heart, that as followers of Jesus who understand what the Gospel has done FOR US... we must shape our lives around the INTENTION of right living... a transformed life is a testimony for Jesus that will lead others to Him... a life that stays the same is a case for why NOT to accept Jesus. What you do MATTERS...

But don't you dare think that what you do will save you...

on that day... may your mouth be silenced... because you KNOW that it is by grace THROUGH FAITH that God would account to you the person that Jesus is.

But do you know what the word faith is in the Greek? It is "*pistis*" - it is NO DIFFERENT than the word: faithfulness.

Being faithful to what Jesus has asked you to do is evidence that the saving grace of Jesus has a hold on your life.

It's not that you will never fall... but it is that you will keep going. We didn't turn around when we knew that we weren't going to make it to Florida unless we drove all night... it didn't go right... but we kept going.

and that IS OUR LIVES... we are going to screw it up... and we are going to have a hundred opportunities to give it up... to just say "screw this. I choose something else." - but the faithful people... the ones who HAVE FAITH IN JESUS, they understand that God is worth the work of picking yourself up... fighting for what is right... tearing down what is keeping you from being who you should be in Christ... and keep going.

Keep fighting the urge to do the things that you know will knock you off track.

We know from this passage and from so many other passages... that we are going to mess it up... we are going to be unfaithful... And in those moments God remains faithful BECAUSE GOD IS GOD and He will NOT FAIL. If there is one mission I can tell you that I believe with all of my heart "this thing is going to succeed" - it is the mission of God. And it will move forward, whether we do or not.

Paul, just after the part about God's faithfulness, says:

Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written,

"That you may be justified in your words,
and prevail when you are judged."

This is one of the most important Psalms in the Bible, it is a Psalm of David, after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba and it ultimately lead to her pregnancy and the murder of her husband Uriah.

In the verse that Paul quotes, David actually is asking God for His forgiveness, and this is the reason he gives... David says to God "it is against you that I have sinned." He goes on to say what Paul is quoting here... and remember, he is asking that God forgive him... he says:

THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, and blameless in your judgment.

He is saying "God, I know that you are so powerful, and you can do ANYTHING THAT YOU WANT - but I also know the promise that you have made to me... the promise you made to those who have come before me... that you will keep your side of the deal even when I haven't kept mine... and I really need that right now God.

David really postures himself here in a position of someone who wants to change... BUT HE KNOWS THAT HE CAN'T DO IT HIMSELF.

He knows that he is an adulterer. He knows that he is a murderer.

He says in verse 7 - IF YOU WASH ME... I will be whiter than snow...

I can live the life of a person who is washed clean God... but first I need you to wash me clean...

It is then that David cries out these words to God and says "create in me a clean heart, oh God" and renew a right spirit within me."

and this is so significant: cast me not away from your presence.

See, David totally understood what he deserved. But He knew what God had said, and the promise was that from DAVID was going to come the Messiah. From David would be a seed that would reign forever.

Yet God at any moment could have cast David away from His presence... He could have chosen someone else... David knew that... and He pleaded with Him.. "GOD... this is what I deserve... I didn't live up to the law... I broke them all... I have no defense... but don't give me what I deserve."

And we know that God still used David after this moment. David is a man after God's own heart WHO FOLLOWED GOD closely... who did ALL that God said to do... who had moments of unfaithfulness... but was carried by God's faithfulness... and it was FROM HIS SEED that the Messiah finally came.

It was from David's seed that the mission actually became a reality.

God wants to use broken people to carry out His mission - but He uses people who love him. He uses people who care about doing the right thing, even though sometimes they don't. More than that... He uses people who allow Him to do the work of transformation on their lives. Who aren't content watching God work in our world but not through us.

If we are going to impact our city for Jesus, we need to allow the cross to transform us today.