

A close-up photograph of a dark red granite surface with a rough, crystalline texture. The lighting highlights the natural grain and small white mineral inclusions within the dark matrix.

Red Granite

**15 Daily
Devotions**

**THE
FORGIVENESS
OF GOD**

**brought to you by
Marshall & Jessica Jones**

**Published by
Red Thread Poets**

The contents of these Daily Devotions, are based on quotations from The Holy Bible, King James Version, and the inspired writings of Marshall Jones, and include but are not limited to his opinions expressed; permission to use previously published materials included; and any advice given or actions advocated are solely the responsibility of the author, who assumes all liability for said work and indemnifies the publisher against any claims stemming from publication of the work.

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ENDORSEMENTS

From : Jessica Reavis-Christensen,

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=forged%20by%20fire%3B%20iron%20sharpening%20iron>

I'm a former Recreational Leader of the New Lisbon Correctional Institution and I have to say that I am SO thankful for the 9 months I got to spend in prison. I would have never understood the need for prison reform if it wasn't for my experience.

When I was hired at N.L.C.I., I came in with the understanding that my position was to help rehabilitate the men to become successful citizens of society. I encouraged them to put the work in during their time, so they would have the tools to thrive in their freedom. Well, administration did not like that. The administration was threatened by the joy and empowerment that I brought to Recreation. They didn't like that the men were choosing healthy outlets, they didn't like that the countenance of the general population was lifting, they didn't like that the men were excited to be treated with humanity rather than unimportant scum. My time in prison was cut short because of the administration feeling threatened by the atmosphere I brought to the dark institution. Light is not wanted within those walls and that is something I believe needs to change.

After 40 days of unpaid administrative leave, I was terminated on Friday, December 13th 2019 for "not passing probationary standards". It didn't matter that all the programming I had added and built upon was changing the atmosphere in the institution for the better. They needed a scapegoat to get rid of me, and "not passing probationary standards" was it. Friday, December 13th was a day of sadness but also a day of resolution. As I drove away from N.L.C.I., no longer employed by the DOC, I made a pivotal decision to write Marshall Jones.

Marshall Jones was one of four inmate workers that assisted me in my Rec Leader position. He lead fitness classes, reffed all competitive events, assisted setting up Rec events, helped encourage men that came to Recreation, and counseled the men to prepare for their release. Marshall's conduct spoke for itself and I could see he was a man of his word by the actions displayed. He worked hard in Rec and Marshall worked even harder doing his time by becoming a published author of his first book, "A Raven's Meal". While working with Marshall, I learned he was serving a double life sentence, and I was shocked he would be there for the rest of his life. The reason I was shocked was because Marshall lived more free within the walls of that prison than any other person I've met in my life. How is that possible? It was possible because of the faith he so boldly lives. Marshall was incarcerated at 21 years old and has served 17 years of his sentence.

When I drove away from N.L.C.I. I decided I wanted Marshall to know that he was remembered by someone. I wanted him to know he made an impact on my life by living the way he did within the walls of prison. I wanted him to know that despite the circumstances, I wanted to extend the olive branch of becoming his friend. Writing Marshall Jones was one of the best choices I have ever made in my life.

I believe so many men like Marshall are deserving of a second chance. This is something I wouldn't have ever understood if I didn't have my time in prison, working closely with the general population. There is a deep need for prison reform and Marshall is the perfect story of a cast away finding redemption. I know how many second chances I have had. I believe it's time for those who have proven rehabilitation exists, get their second chance. To make evident their efforts aren't for nothing.

From: Kelli

Comment from Kelli, who read the Climb, a poem by Marshall on Red Thread Poets Website www.redthreadpoets.com/the-climb/

Re: The Climb, by Marshall Jones

This poem personally speaks to my heart because I know the struggle of many who are fighting for their freedom from incarceration. Prisons are full of people who have been given unmerciful harsh sentencing who are just wanting to be given a chance to redeem themselves in society to help others. God wants to use those who have surrendered their hearts to His Son Jesus Christ who's incarcerated to become the mentors for our youths in today's culture. God has a plan for every individual's life. Keeping people confined to incarceration who God need to be Ambassadors for His Kingdom is certainly not the answer. Treating all people how one would want to be treated should be the defining moment when passing a judgment onto others. Love and mercy covers a multitude of sins. God and the Lord Jesus are expressing love and mercy everyday towards all people and humanity must practice in doing the same. God Bless all who read this comment and take it to heart.

From: Peter W Stevens,

Friend to the Founder of Red Thread Poets (Our Triune God). www.redthreadpoets.com/category/100-poets/peter-will/

I met Marshall through Jessica. We have become very close brothers in just a few short months emailing everyday. I live north of Toronto in Canada and was building a website to glorify God and honour poets. Red Thread Poets. Marshall sent me his poems, i have his book a Raven's Meal and he is one of our honoured poets on the site. HOWEVER it is his daily devotionals under the 'banner 'RED GRANITE' that show his anointing - they are high impact for me every day. We post them in Facebook under Red Thread Poets, and recap them on the website. <https://www.redthreadpoets.com/daily-devotions/>. Marshall is DEARLY LOVED, peter

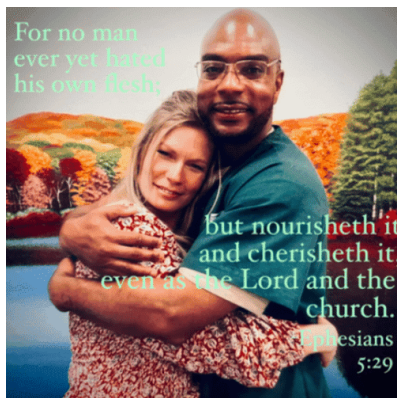
November 1, 2023, update:

Since November 1, 2020, Marshall and later with Jessica have written approximately 1,300 Daily Devotions, of which there are now over 12 Series. On November 1, 2022, they were married. Hallelujah.

Marshall continues to study and write from within the confines he remains in for now. He has commenced a bachelor's degree in biblical studies, please pray for them both, and for The Lord to arrange his release before too long. Jessica posted this recently:

'I can confidently say my husband is everything he's supposed to be in our marriage, and he is always wanting to love me more tomorrow than he did today. He's not smothering, nor is he one who says things but doesn't follow with action. My husband is the real deal, and I am so thankful to know what it means to truly be loved by him like Christ loves the Church. Today's message (Ephesians 5:29) is great encouragement to husbands, wives, and the whole walk of marriage. God bless each of you and your marriages you are committed to!'

Much love!



INTRODUCTION

Godly sorrow is a conduit to repentance, but guilt is a form of bondage that robs believers and unbelievers of a very rewarding relationship with our heavenly Father. The Forgiveness of God is a series that compels us to bring our faults to God in order to be liberated of the sin that has confined our victory and rendered our growth stagnant. In this study, we will discover how God has made provision for us to receive the forgiveness of sin since the fall in the garden, and how His love has desired to restore us into a right relationship with Him. When we are able to receive The Forgiveness of God into our spirits by faith, we can successfully begin the journey of forgiving ourselves, leaving the curse of guilt behind us forever. Only God can wash our sins clean through the blood of Jesus Christ, and only through Him can receive the joy of our salvation.

WHY KJV (King James Version)

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

This is one of my favorite Bible verses, a constant source of encouragement for me to dig deeper and deeper into the Word of God to receive truth in its deepest form. I believe it is our job as believers to study as deep as we can, and then build our way up. The King James Version of the Bible is one of most popular early translations of the Bible to English, so that is where my study begins. I have come to learn that by putting the King James Version side by side with other translations that may be easier to read, that easier doesn't always keep the deeper meaning intact. The "thee", "thy", and "ye" can be a little overwhelming at first, but as with anything else we study continuously, it will become easier to decipher.

The Bible I use, the KJV AMG Hebrew-Greek Keyword Study Bible, gives me an enormous tool to not only study the Word of God from an earlier English translation, but gives me access to study the keywords in the Scripture to find the deeper meaning of the verses I study. The more I studied the Word of God, the deeper I wanted to go. When I first started my incarceration over 17 years ago, I read the NIV version of the Bible. As I matured as a reader, I went back to the King James Version in 2007, wanting to learn the most difficult English translation. I went to the Hebrew-Greek Keyword Study Bible in 2014 and have been using it since. I recently was given a MacArthur Study Bible, NASB, which I use for scriptural cross-references and commentary purposes. I am in no way saying it is wrong for anyone to study any translation other than the King James Version, but I do suggest that everyone possesses one, so we can break down the Word of Truth side by side. It is important to go to the earliest possible translation, to see the modernized translations accurately convey the Word of God.

Studying the Word of God pleases Him, and I desire to break down the Scriptures rightly, understanding that by studying the Word of God, I am breaking down truth so I can position myself for the Holy Spirit's teaching. Whatever I learn, I then share, and by sheer repetition, I am able to retain what I learn better.

May the study of God's Word release amazing truths and powerful revelations in your lives.

God Bless!
Marshall Jones

Psalm 51:1 - have mercy upon me

We all have done things in our lives that we aren't proud of, and we definitely all have done things in our lives that have sorely displeased God. We have all sinned, we have all come short of the mark God has set for us, and we all need God, who is more than willing to forgive us of our sins. We live in a society where a person's sins and shortcomings are put on open display, but our God wants to forgive us and wipe our slates clean. The way God deals with sin and the way we deal with sin are sometimes two different ways, and that shouldn't be. We are more reluctant to forgive than our God, even after receiving forgiveness ourselves. Today we are going to look at Psalm 51:1, a study into the life changing forgiveness of our God.

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

David wrote this Psalm after coming to the realization of his sin, when he slept with Bathsheba, tried to cover up the sin, and when he was unable to do so, had Uriah the Hittite killed, taking Bathsheba to be his wife. God identified David as being a man after God's own heart, someone who fellowshiped with God daily, who inquired of the Lord about all things. He was someone God doted on and loved immensely, and yet he sinned terribly. In Romans 3:23, the Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." No matter what our status is in society; king, priest, believer or nonbeliever, we are all going to sin and come short of God's glory. No one is exempt, everyone will sin, but what happens next means everything. In 1 John 1:9, the Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God has provision in place for those believers who sin and come short, but what about the unbelievers? In Romans 5:8, the Bible says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God also has provision in place to forgive the unbeliever too!

The word "mercy" means "to bend or stoop in kindness towards an inferior, to be gracious toward someone in need." David humbled himself as a king, asking God to step in and show Him grace as a sinner. In Ephesians 2:8-9, the Bible says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." We have to believe that God is capable of forgiveness and willing to do it for us in order to have the confidence to come before Him. The word "lovingkindness" means "goodness and faithfulness to preserve our lives, and redeem us from sin." There is no true forgiveness without love. In 1 Peter 4:8, the Bible says, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." God's love and mercy opens the floodgates for forgiveness when we humble ourselves and come before the Lord with a sincere heart.

"According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies,"

The word "according" refers to the standard by which a command or promise is governed by. The word "multitude" means "abundance." The phrase "tender mercies" means "compassion like a mother cherishing the womb." In Psalm 69:16, the Bible says, "Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies." Our sins cause us to turn away from God, and also causes God to turn away from us. Asking for forgiveness is our turning back to God, asking Him to turn back to us. In Psalm 106:45, the Bible says, "And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies." When we turn back to the Lord, humble ourselves and ask for His forgiveness, God remembers his promises and removes the penalty behind our sins. To repent implies a changing of the mind.

"blot out my transgressions."

The phrase "blot out" means "to erase, or wipe out". In Isaiah 43:25, the Bible says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." God alone is the one who blots out our transgressions, erasing them from His memory. How many of us are capable of forgiving someone on this level? The word "transgressions" means "a revolt or rebellion against God and His commands." When we sin, we are sinning against God first! In Isaiah 44:22, the Bible says, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." God forgives us so we can return to Him, serving Him with our entire hearts, without our sins hindering our fellowship with God. He doesn't desire us to hold on to our sins, neither does He desire to hold our sins against us. Our God is mighty to save and redeem those who are lost.

Psalm 51:2 – wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, cleanse me from my sin

Sinfulness creates filth in our lives. Every time we sin, it is like we are taking something from a landfill and throwing it into our homes. The more we sin, the more our homes fill up with filth, and eventually our homes will be deemed uninhabitable and subsequently condemned. Christ came to this world to live and to die, allowing His shed blood to be the substitute for our sins, clearing the filth from our homes and making them brand new. Only the blood of Christ can cleanse us fully, but sadly, people try to cleanse themselves, operating on their own righteousness, and find themselves only adding to the filth that is heaping in their lives. It is only when we humble ourselves before God, acknowledge the sins that we have committed, and ask Him for His forgiveness that the cleansing process will begin. We can't miss a step in this process. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:2, the cleansing power of God.

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

The word "wash" means "God's internal cleansing of the heart". The key word is "God's". Some people have this almost insane mentality that doing good will cleanse them of the filth they have carried around, that doing good will balance out the wrong they have done. It is God's INTERNAL cleansing, spiritual cleansing that makes us clean. The word "thoroughly" means "completely or entirely". God doesn't miss a spot when He cleanses us. In Hebrews 9:13-14, the Bible says, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The Old Testament required blood sacrifices of bulls, goats, cow and sheep for purification, but this process would have to be repeated year after year because the sacrifices were only for a limited time. Their blood could not fully satisfy the debt of sin. In 1 John 1:7, the Bible says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from ALL sin." Man is incapable of cleansing himself from ALL sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ can!

The word "iniquity" means "perversity, moral evil, conscious and deliberate wrongdoing." I remember when I lived in iniquity, choosing to involve myself in gangs, choosing to pollute my community with drugs, choosing to get involved in shootings, and the list goes on. I was the worst of the worst, and there is no way that I deserved forgiveness of my sins and cleansing of my iniquity. In Isaiah 1:16, the Bible says, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil." God's cleansing allows us the ability to walk away from that iniquity,

from the life of sin that kept us in bondage. In Isaiah 64:6, the Bible says, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Man loves to condemn us for living a life that doesn't please God, instead of helping us find our way back to Him, but our best efforts at righteousness are still filthy rags to God. In Titus 2:14, the Bible says, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." ALL iniquity. This means that the blood of Christ will cleanse us from everything we have ever done. God's cleansing is complete.

"Cleanse me from my sin"

The "cleanse" means "to be pure, to be emptied." In Revelation 1:5-6, the Bible says, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Do we understand that God's cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ was the greatest act of love, and also positioned us to be a part of the kingdom of God, as kings and priests? We went from filthy to favored, from sinful to saved, from horrible to honored, all because of the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ to all who believe on His name. In Jeremiah 33:8, the Bible says, "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me." The word "sin" means "offense or habitual sinfulness." God is ready to cleanse us but we have to come to Him and ask, then get out of His way, and allow Him the room to do it. The question is, will we trust him with our filth?

Psalm 51:3 - for I acknowledge my transgressions: my sin is ever before me.

It can be hard to admit that we are wrong. The majority of our relationships suffer because we fail to admit we are wrong and humble ourselves to ask for forgiveness. My sister Angela, who passed away in 2017, felt she wronged me since we were kids, blaming herself for every bad thing that happened to me thereafter. She came from Florida to visit me in prison just to apologize and make things right. What happened in that visiting room July 16, 2016, is etched into my mind forever, and has really governed my life ever since. There IS no tomorrow when it comes to asking for forgiveness, or for forgiving those who have wronged us. Tomorrow may never come. My sister told me she HAD to come make things right with me, not knowing she would get diagnosed with cancer a couple months after the visit and go to be with the Lord 10 months later. God is standing right here, ready to forgive all who come to Him confessing sin, and seeking His mercy and forgiveness. The question is, will we swallow our pride and admit to our faults? Today, we will look at Psalm 51:3, acknowledging our sin before God.

"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me."

"Acknowledge" means "to discern, to perceive, or to confess." In 1 John 1:8-9, the Bible says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Have we noticed the word "IF" in this verse? The word "if" expresses a condition in order to receive forgiveness and cleansing. When we acknowledge our sin, we are bringing it to the surface, and calling it what it is, sin. Without this acknowledgement, forgiveness can't begin. In Psalm 32:5, the Bible says, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto

the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah." The word "transgressions" means "revolt or rebellion against God and His commands." Acknowledging our sins before man is okay, but acknowledging our sins before God is the key. He is the only Person who can completely forgive us from sin, and restore us into right standing with Him. Hiding our sins does nothing because God sees everything. In Psalm 38:18, the Bible says, "For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin." When we confess our sins, we should have the right attitude. It should bring us sorrow to displease God, and we should be genuinely sorry for what we have done. As people, we won't accept an insincere apology, so do we honestly believe God will?

"and my sin is ever before me"

The word "sin" means "offense against God." The word "ever" means "continually, or constantly". This is showing us that our sins will hang over us until we acknowledge them and ask God for forgiveness. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, the Bible says, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Sometimes we are convicted when someone else points out the sin within us. Sometimes, merely sharing the Word of God is sufficient to convict them of sin. I know this very well, because many times, it felt like the pastor's message was directed at me, addressing some fault I needed forgiveness for. In Isaiah 59:12-13, the Bible says, "For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood." When we sin against the Lord, it presents clear testimony of our actions before God, showing how apart from God's presence we are through our sin. As representatives of God on this earth, we reflect God's light, and when we sin, we make God out to be a liar. In Genesis 4:7, the Bible says, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." God knew Cain's heart and knew he had a heart fast approaching sin. He tried to warn Cain, but Cain rose up and killed his brother Abel. In Genesis 4:10, the Bible says, "And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Our actions will always give testimony, and our charges cry from the ground!

Let us acknowledge our sins before a merciful God who will wipe our records clean!

Psalm 51:4 - against thee, thee only, have I sinned

Do we really understand that when we sin, it is God who is the most offended? We may hurt people, and the scars may be extensive, but it is God who we have to seek forgiveness from in order to experience full and complete restoration. People may never forgive us for what we have done, and many of us still carry "Scarlett Letters" in the sight of others, but God wipes away our sin with His endless love for us. We as believers have to keep the proper perspective about sin - who our sin is actually against beneath the surface, if we are to ever be free of the burden sin carries. I remember apologizing to my family more times than I can count for the way I acted and treated them when I was in the world, but many of them still hold my faults against me to this day. The day I realized that seeking God's forgiveness would wash away the offense some of my family never forgave me for became the most liberating day of my life. The weight was gone! Today, we will look at Psalm 51:4, the real victim behind our sin.

"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

The word "sinned" means "missed the mark." In Genesis 1:27, the Bible says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." We have to first realize that mankind was created in the image and likeness of God, so we are to be both the physical and spiritual representation of God on this earth. Here is why, even when we sin against man, it still gravely affects our God. In 1 John 4:12, the Bible says, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." No one has seen the physical person of God, but we experience God through our love for our brothers and sisters. Here's where it gets real. In 1 John 4:20, the Bible says, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The way we treat each other is an example of how we will treat God. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, so when we sin against man, it is just as if we were looking in the face of God and committing the sin against Him. Here is why our sins hurt God more than man. 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Bible says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God does not sin, has nothing to do with sin, and even sent His son, who knew no sin to become sin for us, so we can become righteous in God's sight. God has done so much to give us the outlet of forgiveness from sin, so it grieves Him to continue to witness us sin before Him.

"And done this evil in thy sight"

The word "done" means "performed or accomplished". The word "evil" means "moral or ethical wrong, something disagreeable to God." The phrase "in thy sight" pertains to being in the presence of God. Putting all of this together, David, the writer of this Psalm, recognizes that he has performed a moral wrong, something that sorely displeased God, and he committed the act right in the presence of God. Ouch! In 2 Chronicles 16:9, the Bible says, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars." God doesn't miss anything that we do, good or bad. This is why bad things happen, because of the sin that is in the world. When we realize that it is God we are ultimately sinning against, it should convict us. In Acts 2:37, the Bible says, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Our conviction should always push us toward making things right with God.

"that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest"

The word "justified" means "declared right or innocent". This means we can't blame God for the sin we commit. In Romans 3:4, the Bible says, "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." The word "judgest" means "to pronounce a sentence to either vindicate or punish". In Psalm 119:160, the Bible says, "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." God calls it as it is, and whatever He declares has always been true since the beginning. There is no getting around it!

If our God declares that when we sin, we are actually sinning against Him, then let us approach sin from that standpoint.

Psalm 51:5 - behold, I was shapen in iniquity; in sin did my mother conceive me.

Since Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the fruit of the tree that God expressly told them not to eat from, mankind has been the heir to a sin nature. Sin becomes this natural occurrence in our lives, where we don't have to be prompted to do wrong. That attribute is in all of us, and no one is exempt from it. As people, we like to rate sin according to our personal convictions instead of rating it to the Word of God. There is no such thing as a little or big sin, because all sin carries the same stench to our Father's nostrils. Even in prison, one can chronicle the lives of brothers and there was always some level of negative influence that exposed us to things that are unnatural to God, and these behaviors can be traced back for generations. We were born with this sin nature, but it doesn't have to remain that way, because by salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, we are born again with a new nature, born of Spirit instead of flesh. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:5, the nature of sin in us.

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

The word "behold" is a word expressing emphasis that is needed to be placed upon a thought or statement. It can also be used to express surprise, as if one received an epiphany. In Genesis 1:31, the Bible says, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." I see the word "behold" in this verse and I see it hitting - God just how awesome His creative hand is, and how proud He is of what He created.

"I was shapen in iniquity"

The word "shapen" means "twisted or formed." This isn't God's fault, nor did He create us like this. This is the nature of sin that has passed from generation to generation since Adam. In Job 14:4, the Bible says, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." No matter how good we act, there is still a sin nature that must be eradicated from everyone's life, and my parents' salvation is not sufficient to pay for the sin nature I was born with. Everyone must receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in order to be born again and not be in dominion to the sin nature we inherited. In Psalm 58:2-3, the Bible says, "Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Our sin nature is rooted in the deepest parts of us, causing wickedness to spring forth, estranging us from God from the womb! Ouch! The word "iniquity" means "perversity, moral evil, and conscious wrongdoing." In Job 15:12-14, the Bible says, "Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at, That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth? What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" When we lived in iniquity, there was a rebellion in our heart towards God that made us disobey Him. Our hearts were tainted, our speech was sinful, and we didn't have to be taught this. Our sin nature is attracted to disorder, and addicted to lawlessness. In Psalm 5:4-5, the Bible says, "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Just because God knows we are born with this sin nature, doesn't mean that He is okay with it, nor will He ever condone it. Fortunately for us, Hebrew 8:12, the Bible says, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." This is done when we come to God in faith, accepting His gift of forgiveness and salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

"and in sin did my mother conceive me"

The word "sin" here speaks of the accumulated shortcomings that ultimately leads to sin. In Romans 5:12, the Bible says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We have to understand as believers that we did nothing to inherit the sin nature given to us through the disobedience of Adam. It was a generational curse, penalizing us for sin we have nothing to do with. Here's the good news! In Romans 5:17-18 the Bible says, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Our sin natures aren't final!! Through salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, we are born again of God to experience grace and life, and able to experience the spiritual nature!

Psalm 51:6 - behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts

Truth is something uncomfortable to those who has no desire for it, but for believers, it is woven into the tapestry of our faith. We cannot have faith without truth, and we cannot have truth without the Word of God. When we came into the faith, we had to acknowledge our shortcomings, had to confess the sin that had severely broken our lives, we had to express our understanding that we could do nothing to pay for the debt of sin we carried, and we had to understand that forgiveness could only come by God, and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Our God only accepts truth as we come seeking His forgiveness. How many of us can fully accept the wrong what we've done as wrong, without making excuses for why it was done? Today, we will explore Psalm 51:6, the necessity of truth.

"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."

The word "behold" is once again mentioned in Psalm 51, and this word is used, to beckon someone to pay attention to whatever is said or revealed, but it also expresses surprise, like one who has received an epiphany. It seems like, as David is praying, he is receiving revelation, giving him an understanding into God and how He works. David openly fellowshiped with God, and inquired of Him for any question, comment, or concern he had, and God gave him the answers He was looking for. David wasn't the only one! In Psalm 73:1-3, the Bible says, "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish" Asaph, another writer of the Psalms, was disheartened when he saw the wicked parading their wealth around, mocking God as they did it. He felt they didn't deserve any of the blessing they received, and he let God know how he felt. Asaph had to get to a place of complete honesty with God about how he felt. God requires brutal truth, but He will respond with the answers we need for our peace to return to us. In Psalm 73:16-17, the Bible says, "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." God allowed Asaph to see that the material possessions of the wicked are short-lived, because they are on their way to destruction. In Matthew 16:26, Christ says, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" God gives us the unfiltered truth, real truth.

The word "desireth" means "to incline to, to bend towards, also implying attraction." The word "truth" means "faithfulness, stability, and certainty." The only way we can be faithful, stable, and certain is by the Word of God. That is the only truth in this world. In John 14:6, Christ says, " ... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The truth is the only way to God, and also the only way to forgiveness. In John 1:14, the Bible says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and TRUTH." We can only become what we are full of, and if we aren't full of truth, then we

can't be full of forgiveness. In Proverbs 16:6, the Bible says, "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil." Sin can't be removed without truth, because in Proverbs 28:13, it says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Let us not give God half of the story. Let us trust God with the full truth. The phrase "inward parts" implies our innermost thoughts, the deepest parts of us, from the place we love to keep buried.

"and in the hidden part, thou shalt make me to know wisdom"

The phrase "hidden part" means "the secret portions." The word "know" is a relationship/marital term, that expresses us becoming one with what God reveals, so in this case, we become one with the truth. The word "wisdom" is the manifested knowledge and fear of God, given by Word and displayed through His will. In Proverbs 1:23, the Bible says, "Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." The truth is designed to show us where we are both right and wrong, and if we allow the truth to correct us, then we will receive the Holy Spirit's revelation of the Word of God. In Proverbs 2:6, it says, "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." When we become one with the truth, acknowledging our sin before God, He will begin a change in us from the deepest part of us that will give us His Spirit, His wisdom, and His truth to live abundant lives with.

Our God delights in truth. Do we?

Psalm 51:7 - wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow

In prison, when I invite people to attend church service or when I talk to brothers about the faith, I frequently hear the same type of responses from brothers who don't want to make the step towards God. They tend to say that they want to make sure they are all the way right before they come to church because they don't want "to be playing with God," or they say they don't want to be a hypocrite like others they have seen around here. Some have said that they have gone too far, and they are beyond saving. It is kind of odd that they are saying this to someone convicted of murder, serving a life sentence (at the current moment-God is at work on my freedom as I type!). There are too many people who won't come to the faith because all they see is the daunting task of trying to clean themselves up to come before God, and don't realize that it is the blood of Jesus Christ that God has given us that cleanses us. When God cleanses us, we are clean, but will we forsake the mentality that tells us we have to clean ourselves up first? Today, we will be looking at Psalm 51:7, the cleansing of our Lord.

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

The word "purge" means "purifying, to free, to refine." The idea of purging is to pull out impurities from a substance or person in order to make them pure before God. Last time I checked, we can't pull anything out of ourselves. In Psalm 73:13, the Bible says, "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." One of the major problems that prevent people from coming to the faith fully is we are trying to cleanse ourselves, we are trying to purge the filth from ourselves, and we are leaving God out of the equation. In Acts 10:15, the Bible says, "And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." What GOD hath cleansed, not us! If we could cleanse ourselves, or purge the filth from ourselves, then Jesus Christ dying on the cross was for no reason whatsoever. In Malachi 3:3, the Bible says, "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall

purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness." The results of the purging process are similar to the refining process, where the substance that touches us pulls the impurities from us, making us pure and clean. Only God can do this, so if we are looking to operate in our own strength and righteousness, we will fail miserably.

The word "hyssop" speaks of a leafy plant with a hairy stem, which could be used for brushing. Examples would be an Egyptian marjoram and thyme. In Exodus 12:21-22, the Bible says, "Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning." The first mention of the word hyssop was during the first Passover, when they used the hyssop to dip into the lamb's blood and strike the lintels and side posts, so when the Lord passed through Egypt to smite the firstborn, those who struck their side post and lintels were passed over and saved. In John 1:29, the Bible says, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Christ's blood cleanses us from the curse of death, purging iniquity and sin from us. The word "clean" means "unadulterated, uncontaminated, and holy (both moral and spiritual)." In Matthew 8:2-3, the Bible says, "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Leprosy was incurable, but a word from the Lord made him clean.

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

The word "wash" implies God's internal cleansing of the heart. We try to cleanse ourselves by removing things from our lives, but God removes things from our hearts. In Isaiah 1:18, the Bible says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." When God washes us, it changes our appearance completely! In John 15:3, Christ says, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." We try everything under the sun to make ourselves clean but only when God sends a Word do we become pure and holy. The effects of our cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ not only makes us whiter than snow, but gives us eternal life!

Psalm 51:8 - make me to hear joy and gladness

Forgiveness is designed to change our hearts and minds. We commit offences against God, we realize how far we have slipped from God's presence, we acknowledge that we sinned against God, and we humbly ask for His forgiveness. This should not only change our ability to fully experience the presence of God, but it should also give us a heart of joy again. Joy and gladness are something very important to a believer's life, and it is something that is constantly attacked by the enemy, and also something we relinquish every time we step outside of the will of God. As believers, we should desire happiness in our lives, but we should also want to continue to experience the joy that only God can give through our relationship with Him. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:8, experiencing the joy from the result of forgiveness.

"Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice."

The phrase "make me" isn't a demand as much as it is a request. David is asking God to "cause him to hear", or "position him to hear". This implies that David doesn't feel like he is in the right place to experience joy because of the sin that has damaged his life. In Isaiah 59:2, the Bible says, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Our sins separate us from the presence of God, and turn His hearing off us. This is not a good thing for anyone, but especially for a believer, because our faith and knowledge of the Word of God grows through our relationship with God. If communication is shut off in a relationship, the relationship will begin to lose power until it ultimately dies. God allow us to feel this separation so we can cry out to Him. In Matthew 27:46, the Bible says, "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Christ experienced this separation from God when He took on the sins of the whole world, as He hung on the cross. At Christ's worst possible moment, He no longer felt the presence of God, which is the first time in His whole life! It never once says anything about Christ complaining about the pain, which was extensive and unimaginable, but His complaint was about God's presence leaving Him. When will we see God's presence within us as the one of the most important aspects of our faith?

The word "hear" means "to understand, to witness, to regard, or to conform to." The word "joy" means "welcome cheerfulness." The word "gladness" means "glee, rejoicing, pleasure, blithesomeness." Blithesomeness means "having a cheerful, carefree disposition." This means we don't have to worry about the ultimate penalty of our sins, even if we may face some consequences as a result of our actions. In 1 John 4:17-18, the Bible says, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." To want to hear joy and gladness is to not be overcome with guilt about what we have done, to not be afraid of God's punishment because we are residing in His presence. In Isaiah 35:10, the Bible says, "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Does the thought and understanding of our salvation give us an attitude of joy, and does it give us a cheerful, carefree disposition about where we stand with the Lord?

The word "bones" means "body or the substance a body consists of." The word "broken" means "collapsed in contrition". In Psalm 6:2, the Bible says, "Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed." Our sin should cause us to tremble and become afraid, and the more we grow spiritually, then more out of place we feel when we step outside of the presence of God. In Matthew 21:43-44, Christ says, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Imagine that God is telling us that He is going to remove His presence from us and allow others to experience the blessing of His presence instead. He then gives us a way back in, by telling us that if we fall upon "this stone", which is Christ, we will be convicted and restored unto God without being utterly destroyed by this same stone falling upon us. Shouldn't this give us a real reason to rejoice?

Psalm 51:10 – create in me a clean heart

Sin taints our hearts. Those little indiscretions that don't seem like much on the surface actually cause spiritual heart issues that disturb our relationship with God. The ultimate goal of forgiveness is restoration into a right relationship with our God, to be able to hear from Him and for Him to hear us. Do we realize that we must not only stomp out the sin in our lives, but the heart behind it? If you remove drugs from someone, they won't use any in that moment, but if you remove the heart for drugs from someone, and they will never use drugs again. Not only is forgiveness essential,

but restoration of our hearts is as well, because we must return back to God's default settings if we are to ever become victorious over sin. We have to acknowledge that our hearts aren't right before the Lord because of the sin that tries to take over our lives, and we must come to God and ask Him to make our hearts new again. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:10, becoming new in God.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

The word "create" should be looked at the same way it was applied in the beginning. In Genesis 1:3, the Bible says, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." God spoke and it was. David is asking God to "create" in him a clean heart, so he is essentially asking God to speak to his heart, that it may become exactly what He has created it to be. We have to believe that the Word of the Lord is enough to cleanse us from sin and to heal our hearts. In Matthew 8:7-9, the Bible says, "And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." The voice of the Lord will bring about anything He desires to happen, but are we willing to allow God into our space to reset our hearts the way He desires? We live in a world where so many feel like they have to do everything themselves, but if that is the mentality, how can we ever get to the point where we rely solely on the Lord to repair what is broken?

The word "clean" means "morally pure", so one can intimate God. Default settings. In Genesis 1:26, the Bible says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." God created us to bear His image and His likeness, essentially becoming representatives of Him. Sin completely tarnishes God's intention in creating us, and it mars our appearance. The word "heart" means "seat of one's inner nature". In Acts 15:8-9, the Bible says, "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." God knows our hearts, and who better to fix our hearts but the Creator of our hearts? Self-help books may offer perspective, books by Pastors may even tell us what we must do, but until we cry out to God, asking Him to "create" in us a clean heart, we are just receiving information to no avail.

"And renew a right spirit within me"

The word "renew" means "to rebuild or repair". In Romans 12:2, the Bible says, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Being renewed by God continually will allow us to fully establish, by evidence, what the will of God is. In order for us to understand God's will, we have to have our ears, mind, and heart open to receiving His Word, and the best way of doing that is if God creates in us a clean heart. The phrase "right spirit" means "to be upright, constant, and steadfast in the seat of our emotions, mind and will." In Mark 14:36, the Bible says, speaking of Christ, "And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." Christ cast His will away to do the Father's will, knowing death was His fate. Why do we have the hardest time allowing God's will to be done in the smallest of matters? The word "within" implies our innermost being, so David is asking God to give him the type of spirit that will give him the desire to remain close to God and obey His Word, and to give him that spirit in the deepest places in him.

We as the Church must allow God to return us back to default settings, so we will always have a desire to dwell in His presence and follow his Word.

Psalm 51:11 – cast me not away from thy presence

It is a real scary thought for God to pull His presence from me. I still remember clearly the life I once lived, completely apart from God, and I cringe at the thought of being apart from Him. I remember when I was in a maximum security prison in 2016, just blessed with a security downgrade to medium security, and the thought of me going to a medium security prison and messing up terrified me. One of my "Big Brothers" told me that I was going to do well because of that same fear of messing up, because it shows that I respect the blessing God has given me so much that I don't ever want to jeopardize it. We have to be the same way with our faith, where we have such an appreciation and respect for what God has provided for us that we are unwilling to jeopardize our faith for anything in the world. Losing God's presence in our lives is the same as dying, because there is no life without God's presence. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:11, remaining in the presence of our God.

"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

The word "cast" means "to throw or toss", so to "cast away" something means "to throw out, to toss aside, to throw away." Kinda sounds like something done to trash; correct? When we allow the "world" to become God, when we allow sin to have authority over our lives, we become no different than trash in God's sight. Kinda harsh, isn't it? In Genesis 4:13-14, the Bible says, "And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." God punished Cain for killing Abel by not only casting him from his land but casting him from His presence as well. Cain couldn't bear the thought of this punishment, and immediately, the peace and safety he once felt by the presence of God was gone. Cain was terrified and outside of the presence of God, there is much to fear. A far cry from Psalm 91:2, which says, "I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." The protection of God leaves with His presence. David understood that his sin could've resulted in God removing His presence from him, which led to his repentance, unlike Cain, who was sorry for what was going to happen to him as the result of his sin. There is a difference between true repentance and being sorrowful of the punishment. Trust me, I know this well.

The word "presence" means "face." In 2 Chronicles 7:14, the Bible says, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." This is the type of attitude we must have if we want to keep the presence of our Lord in our lives. In Psalm 80:7, the Bible says, "Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." Salvation is made available to us because God chose to make His face shine upon us. When God's face shines upon us, we have a glow because of His light. In Psalm 67:1, the Bible says, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah." God's mercy and blessings come as the result of his face shining upon us. There are great benefits to being in God's presence. In 2 Kings 13:23, the Bible says, "And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet." God's grace, compassion, and respect await those who are in the presence of God, yet, so many people would rather be outside of the presence of God in order to experience the pleasures of a sinful life.

"And take not away thy Holy Spirit from me"

The Holy Spirit's anointing was upon David, and that was something he did not want to lose, neither should we. In John 14:16-17, Christ says, And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." God not only desires for his spirit to be WITH us, but IN us as well. David understood what he stood to lose as the result of his sin, and we have to be people who desire God's presence so much where we don't want to ever break fellowship with God again, causing His presence to leave us. That is like a car trying to run without an engine.

May our desire to please God and dwell in His presence outweigh the consequences of being without His presence.

Psalm 51:12 – restore unto me the joy of thy salvation

There comes a time in every believer's life where restoration is needed. No one is exempt, because as we acknowledge and confess our sins, asking God to forgive us, there is a restoration process that takes place. This can be a daily part of a believer's life, because there is always some area in our lives where we fall short. I know for me, as I have grown more spiritually, when I fall short, it bothers me a lot more, and it robs me of my joy. David was broken behind his sin, and feeling out of alignment with God, he cried out, asking God to repair what was broken in him. Sin produces guilt in a believer's life, and guilt will destroy all parts of a person's peace. God doesn't want His children walking this earth downtrodden, void of hope, fearful about condemnation, and He is the only Person that can restore our joy. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:12, a full restoration by God.

"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

The word "restore" means "to turn back, to bring back, to re-establish." It implies a return to a former or normal condition by means of repairing, rebuilding, or altering." What is that former or normal condition? In Genesis 1:26, the Bible says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Mankind is supposed to bear God's image and likeness, and have dominion in the earth. That role is jeopardized by sin, because sin separates us from God. David realizes that he is in need of restoration, so he is asking God, not trying to fix himself. We try to go at changing ourselves alone without realizing that we are only digging ourselves deeper into a hole that only God could dig us out of. In Joel 2:25-26, the Bible says, "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed." When God restores us, when He restores our years, there is much to praise the Lord about, and that fellowship returns between God and us.

The word "joy" means "welcomed cheerfulness, or gladness." In Psalm 122:1, the Bible says, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." When we fall short, guilt doesn't allow us to be glad to be in the house of the Lord or in His presence. In Genesis 3:9-10, the Bible says, "And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid

myself." Sin makes us want to hide from the presence of our Lord, so the person that hides from God can't be filled with His joy. In John 15:10-11, Christ says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Our joy is full when we keep the Lord's commands and abide in the love of Christ. The word "salvation" means "liberty and deliverance." Salvation should produce joy within our spirits. When was the last time we walked in joy solely because of the understanding that we are saved? In Psalm 13:5-6, the Bible says, "But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me." We can sing knowing that we can rest in God's mercy, can celebrate the fact that we have passed over from death to life, experiencing the true benefits of a great relationship with God.

The phrase "uphold me" means "to lean one up against, to take hold of". The phrase "free spirit" means "willing or generous Holy Spirit. In 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, the Bible says, "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD." We have freedom through our salvation, to experience the glory of God, and also experiencing the change God's glory makes in our lives. In Psalm 119:116, the Bible says, "Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope." We are held up and secure by the Word of God, and that provides a real reason to hope. When the Holy Spirit is upholding us, we are secure in the power of God, able to be exactly who He created us to be; the children of God!

Psalm 51:13 – then will I teach transgressors thy ways

Our God has every detail of our lives figured out, and our God is in full control of everything that is happening in our lives. God allows the harsh lessons we receive from our sin to be the teaching lessons we give others, so they don't fall into the same traps as we have. I look back on my past life, and all the wrong I have done, and now that I have been saved, restored, and filled with the Holy Spirit, the past I have been delivered from is now the testimony I give to show people that it is not too late for them to cry out to God. If we slipped on a wet floor, wouldn't we want to warn someone else, so they don't fall? Our God uses all parts of our lives to produce something for His glory, but we have to allow God to use us how He sees fit, and that is to advance the Kingdom and bring glory to God. Today, we will look at Psalm 51:13, experience becoming a great teacher.

"Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

The word "teach" means "to goad, instruct, to train, especially for war." In Exodus 4:10-12, the Bible says, "And Moses said unto the LORD, O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Our eloquence, our intelligence, or experience means absolutely nothing to God, because God qualifies the people He calls, and gives them the words that He desires for them to speak. God gives us the word, and we teach others what God gives us. In Proverbs 22:6, the Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Our past experiences should make us even better teachers, because we have been brought back from the brink of destruction to experience the salvation, restoration and power of the Holy Spirit having reign. That is a wealth of experience that can help someone else triumph over sin. The word "transgressors" pertains to rebels, people who apostatize, people who revolt against God, people who practice iniquity.

In Mark 12:14, the Bible says, "And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" Christ didn't care who the person was, what their background was, and He didn't discriminate who He made teaching available to. We have to have the same mind and teach from the same perspective, giving everyone a chance to know who Christ is through us. We like to pick and choose who we speak to based on our own personal sentiments and convictions, but that is not how God works, and that is not how He will work in us. The person who has been delivered from sin should have a desire to see others be delivered.

The word "ways" means "road, course of life, or mode of action." In Psalm 25:4-5, the Bible says, "Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." We can only teach a person what we ourselves learn from God. David assured God in Psalm 51:13 that his experience would not be vain because he is going to use his fall, and what God has taught him, to make sure others didn't fall behind him. In Proverbs 16:23, the Bible says, "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." Whether we agree or not, we are giving sermons every time we open our mouths. What type of message are we teaching, one of hope and deliverance, pointing the way to Christ, or one of the world, pointing the way to death?

"And sinners shall be converted unto thee."

The word "sinners" means "criminals, one accounted as guilty and subject to the wrath of God". The word "converted" means "to turn back in repentance." In Luke 22:31-32, the Bible says, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Our repentance should pave the way for others to seek repentance, because we should not only be willing to share our testimony, but also show them how to live a holy life in Christ. In James 5:20, the Bible says, "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Even our failures aren't about us, but about how God can use them to help turn someone's life around!

Who would've thought God could take our worst moment and turn it into someone else's best moment?

Psalm 51:14 - deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation

How did you feel when you were delivered from the penalty of your sin? Are we really appreciative of what God has done for us, or do we have this nonchalance about God's forgiveness, like it's nothing more than receiving a warning when stopped by the police for speeding? What happens after forgiveness? Do we go on living without understanding the sacrifice that was made so we can have forgiveness, that blood was actually shed, so we could have a clean slate? Many will never have the understanding that David has about his forgiveness, deliverance, and restoration, primarily because they haven't committed the type of sin he has. Murder, the killing of someone created in the image and likeness of God, is like staring at the face of God and taking His life. To be forgiven of that should make anyone proclaim God's goodness and righteousness to the ends of the earth. I tell people all of the time that if God forgave me, a former murderer, then He can and will forgive anyone. Today, we are going to look at Psalm 51:14, proclaiming the deliverance of God everywhere we go.

"Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness."

The "deliver" means "to snatch away, to rescue." Deliverance often indicates the power of one entity overcoming the power of another. In Hebrews 2:14-15, the Bible says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Christ took on this flesh and sacrificed Himself on the cross, that through His death, He would destroy the enemy, who held the power of death. This means Christ, in taking away the power of death from the devil, is now the only one who can convict and condemn a person of sin! In John 8:10-11, the Bible says, "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Christ didn't come to condemn the world of their sin, but to save the world from their sin. Everything Christ did through his life, death, and resurrection paved the way for the provision of forgiveness and restoration, whether we take the gift or not. God loves us so much that He doesn't want to hold our sins over our heads, like the charges they hung over the head of Christ when He was hung on the cross. In 2 Peter 3:9, the Bible says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." When we change our hearts and our impression about who we think God is, maybe our hearts and impressions will change about the provision of deliverance he bestowed upon us.

The word "bloodguiltiness" means "bloodshed causing death, violence causing death." The word "salvation" means "help, safety, victory, and deliverance." In Matthew 5:21, Christ says, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment." Murder had a penalty, and it was subject to judgement and death. However, in Colossians 2:13-14, the Bible says, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you ALL trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Through Christ, we have forgiveness and salvation from ALL our sins! In John 12:47, Christ says, "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." Our belief doesn't change the fact that Christ came to save.

"And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness."

The word "sing" means "shout for joy." The word "righteousness" speaks on the justice and will of God in our lives. In Psalm 35:27-28, the Bible says, "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant. And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long." Does the thought of us being forgiven and saved cause us to shout for joy? How is our attitude towards God pertaining to our forgiveness? In Psalm 71:15, the Bible says, "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof." How appreciative are we of our salvation? Well, who has heard about it?

Psalm 51:17 - The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart

What CAN we sacrifice to someone who sacrificed their Only Begotten Son, so we may have access to salvation and eternal life? For everything God has done for us, He really doesn't ask for much in return, but we frequently find ourselves doing things that displease God. Sin puts us in a position where we are out of alignment with God, so instead

of ushering us into new promises, and maturing us to be examples of the faith, we have to come before God and ask Him to get us out of the holes we have dug for ourselves. What good is a sacrifice when we haven't learned from the Ultimate Sacrifice? God allows us the privilege of returning to Him, so we can come before Him broken, so He can rebuild us the way He ordains, so we can be the pillars of faith that He created us to be, but we have the hardest time humbling ourselves, even when we have wronged the Lord. Today, we are going to look at Psalm 51:17, coming to a place of brokenness before God.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

The word "sacrifice" means "the slaughtering of flesh as an offering." Sacrifices were made in the Old Testament by taking an animal without blemish before the priest, who laid hands on it and killed it, sprinkling its blood on the altar and other places God designated. It was a pretty messy scene, but in Hebrews 9:22, the Bible says, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." The sacrifice, especially for sin, was an outward display of what is required when we sin, and that acknowledgement hopefully becomes the thing that caused us to obey the Lord. Not much changed all the way to Christ, because in John 1:29, the Bible says, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Christ came to the world to become a sacrifice, His blood shed in atonement for the sins of the whole world, but there was something different about His sacrifice! In Hebrews 10:10-12, the Bible says, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." The sacrifices of the law couldn't take away sin, but rather rolled them forward. Christ made one sacrifice, for all to receive through faith, and no other sacrifice had to be made to take away the penalty of our sin. He's seated at the right hand of the Father because the work is done!

The phrase "broken spirit" means "a shattering in the seat of the emotions, mind and will of a person." The phrase "contrite heart" means "a collapse in the seat of one's inner nature." In Luke 18:13, Christ says, "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Have we ever gotten to state of brokenness, where we won't even look up towards heaven, where we know we are completely out of fellowship with God, in desperate need of His mercy? In 1 John 1:9, the Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." How many of us read this verse, and have developed a nonchalance when we ask God for forgiveness, treating that request with the same attitude as we have when we ask God to bless our day? It tore David to pieces to disobey God, but can we honestly admit that we sometimes don't have this same brokenness behind our disobedience? Paul was frustrated behind his sin, and in Romans 7:24, it says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" How arrogant can we be in the presence of God?

The word "despise" means "to deem contemptible, to think to scorn." If we have the wrong attitude towards our sin, and there is no brokenness, then how can we expect forgiveness? In Proverbs 1:25-26, the Bible says, "But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." God knows our hearts and minds, and knows whether we are broken or not, knows whether we are saddened by our sin. We don't want to be the people whose petitions for forgiveness are laughed at because we aren't sincere. In Matthew 15:8, Christ says, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." God knows, and the last thing we want is our offering being despised by God.

What is our attitude towards our sin before God: brokenness or nonchalance? Let us examine ourselves.

Psalm 51:19 - then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness

It is our obligation to please our God, to offer sacrifices that please Him. When we fall short of God's glory by sinning against Him, we should have a desire within us to make things right with God. This requires the right attitude, one of humility, one of brokenness, one of genuine remorse for what we have done that has sorely displeased our God. God not only weighs our hearts, but He also looks at our sacrifice, whether it is pure and holy. The Old Testament had animal sacrifices, the New Testament began through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and this testament continues by us becoming living sacrifices. Sacrifice is absolutely necessary for the kingdom of God, because it signifies a dying to our own will and the way to seize God's will and Way. Today, we are going to close this study into "The Forgiveness of God" by looking at Psalm 51:19, an offering pleasing to God.

"Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

The word "pleased" means "to bend towards, to incline to, to delight in." In Psalms 37:23, the Bible says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." God must order our steps in order for us to live lives that please Him. We have to forsake our own way, and entrust the path for our lives to the Lord, to do as He wishes. In James 4:7-8, the Bible says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." God is pleased with children who willingly submit to Him of deep reverential respect for Him, and as we come near to God, He will come near to us. God loves to be in the presence of children with pure hearts, with submissive spirits, cleansed by Him.

The word "sacrifice" means "the slaughter of flesh as an offering to God." In Romans 12:1, the Bible says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Living sacrifices, meaning we present ourselves to God, ready to be used by Him how He pleases. It means our life doesn't belong to us anymore, but it belongs to God, who by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, redeemed us from the penalty of sin that ensured a death sentence eternally for us. God doesn't ask for much out of us, but He doesn't want a sacrifice that isn't entire. We can't sacrifice part of us. It's all or nothing. In 1 Samuel 15:22, the Bible says, "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." God doesn't care about our sacrifices, if they aren't done in obedience. We can do God's work daily, but if we're not doing what God told us to do, then does our sacrifice hold any weight in His sight?

The word "righteousness" means "being in right relation to a legal, ethical, or spiritual standard." Our sacrifices can't be just anything, nor can we have any type of bind when offering sacrifices. In 1 Corinthians 13:3, the Bible says, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." We can give everything we have and offer to go into the fire, but if it isn't done in love, then it won't have any value in God's sight. In Psalm 4:4-5, the Bible says, "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD." David knew that God required much more than just a dead animal and its blood for an offering. God really desired the heart to be right before the Lord, which will also make the sacrifice right. At this point David would do anything to make things right with God, but knew His heart being right before God is what God desired.

"Whole burnt offering" are offerings that are totally consumed. Sacrifices must go through the fire. in Hebrews 12:28-29, the Bible says, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire." Are we willing to come before God broken, in need of His forgiveness, having the right heart and attitude, so we can go into the fire and come out a vessel of purity, pleasing to our God? What God asks us for is so small compared to what He provides; but will we be willing to present our faults before the Lord on His terms?

God is more than willing to forgive us of all of our transgressions, but are we willing to present offerings that please Him?

Marshall's Bio, Poems, and History

Marshall's Bio

Marshall Jones is a 38 year old man on a lifelong journey of bearing fruit for the Kingdom of God. The author of "A Raven's Meal" (RoseDog Books), a poetry collection, he aspires to target the grey areas, and the people who are terribly misunderstood by society. Believing that everyone deserves a voice, he not only shares his testimony, but he also tries to use his gifting to share other people's experiences as well. He writes from the prison system that has housed his body for 17 years, but also from the place that has been the catalyst to his freedom.

Marshall's Poems

You can view Marshall's poems at <https://www.redthreadpoets.com/category/100-poets/marshall-jones/>

History

Red Granite Daily Devotions commenced on Red Thread Poets Facebook page on November 1, 2020. This is the 6th in his Daily Devotion Series. The Daily Devotions are recapped by date at www.redthreadpoets.com/daily-devotions/

Marshall uses these resources in his Bible Study: AMG Hebrew Greek Keyword Study Bible (KJV), Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, The MacArthur Study Bible (NASB), Webster's New World College Dictionary.

ABOUT RED GRANITE DAILY DEVOTIONS AND MARSHALL JONES

- Entirely influenced by Holy God Almighty
- Conceived November 2020
- First Daily Devotion November 1, 2020
- 13 Series available as of Q2 2026
- Over 1,300 daily Devotions written since November 2020.
- Written by Marshall Jones from his cell in Wisconsin, United States of America
- 22 years to 2026 serving a double life homicide sentence
- Jessica his wife and partner from November 1, 2022
- We all await the Lord's grace for a positive outcome from the new 2026 Commutation Advisory Board in Wisconsin, please pray for such

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2. LOVING YOU: 30 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on January 28, 2021.
3. THE FEARLESSNESS OF FAITH: 21 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on March 13, 2021.
4. WARFARE IN THE SPIRIT: -16 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on May 19, 2021.
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THE FORGIVENESS OF GOD

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