

BEDWELL GLOBAL MINISTRIES

**EXPOSITORY SERMON
February 2017**

**E Mail
PKBedwell@hotmail.com**

**WEB PAGE
Bedwellglobalministries.com**

PARDON! PURITY! PRIORITY! OR THE PATHWAY TO PARDON AND PURITY

**Scripture Reading – Psalm 51:1-12. Scripture Background - Psalm 51.
INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm lays the soul of David bare before everyone who reads it. This exposing of the heart is not the most comfortable action to take. But David does not hold back in his confession of his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. He is brutally honest about himself and his sin. This humble confession is all the more significant because he was king when he made it. He had been appointed and anointed to be King over Israel and he had reached the pinnacle of his career. Throne of Israel was a long way from those long nights and lonely fields where he once had tended his father's sheep. His ascendancy to the throne of God's chosen people was a difficult but phenomenal one. God had raised him up from tending and caring for his father's sheep and place him on the throne to be a ruler and shepherd of His people.

I'm sure most of us if not all of us know the story of His anointing to be king. God told the prophet Samuel to go to the house of Jesse and anoint one of his sons to be the future King of Israel. As the sons appeared before the prophet the

the prophet was sure that the future king of Israel stood before him. After all from outward appearances - from man's point of view - from human assessment and perception each one of them could have fit the role of a king. But God said to Samuel "The Lord does not look at the things that man looks at. Man looks on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7. That is where God makes His assessments. It is the condition of the soul that influences the heart and mind and decisions of God. Samuel turned to Jesse and said, "I have seen seven of your sons, and do you have anymore? Jesse replied that David the youngest was out tending his sheep. Samuel asked to see him and so David the youngest son was brought in. The Lord said to Samuel "Rise and anoint him he is the one." **Man's last choice was God's first choice.**

Now as you read about David, you will discover the reason why God chose him. He was not only chosen as king in Israel but he was to be the human ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ. When you study some of the reasons God chose David. You will discover the values that God places on His servants who He chooses. They should get our attention.

- I. He was a dedicated, faithful and fearless shepherd who was willing to face death in order to protect his father's sheep. – indeed he killed a lion and a bear in defense of the flock. Secondly,***
- ii. He was a courageous warrior who was willing to face, fight and conquer the giant Goliath, while the armies of Israel cowered in their tents. He killed the giant with a sling and a stone. But you will note that he announced that it was not in his strength that he was able to do it. It was in the Name and***

power of God that victory was assured. This dependence on God by itself qualified him to be King. Thirdly,

iii. He was talented as poet and a musician. He wrote and played so successfully that he was able to sooth the foul moods of King Saul. His Psalms reveal a deep trust and devotion to God. He possessed a vibrant faith in the God who had anointed him to be king. Someone named him the sweet "Psalmist of Israel." Fourthly,

iv. He was a spiritual man who God called a man after His own heart. It is no surprise then, that at the end of his life an Epitaph was inscribed across it that David did "what was right in the eyes of the Lord and had not failed to keep any of the Lord's commands all his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite." This is the man who penned his humble confession in Psalm 51. .Psalm 51 is a humble and repentant confession of his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband Uriah the Hittite to cover that sin. The importance of this confession is that so often the higher up the scale we are in this life, the harder it is to be repentant and humble one self. In a day when there is a reluctance to mention repentance and sin in the church for fear of offending someone, David's prayer clearly shows the way to reconciliation and God's heart. King David was willing to acknowledge his sin and repent of it and turn back to God. As we look at this humble confession, that has been called the sinner's guide, you will see that David talks about,

1. A DISTURBING PROBLEM. Psalm 51:3-5.

David is obviously disturbed by what he had done. He describes his problem in a two-fold way. He outlines the two-fold nature of sin. He talks about

a. The Haunting Presence of Sin's Guilt. Psalm 51:3. "I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me." The sensitive soul is always troubled and haunted by sin's guilt. The sin to which David refers is the sin of his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband. Sin has way of mushrooming. One sin gives birth to another but the Bible warns us be sure your sin will find you out. When Bathsheba informed David that she was expecting a child by him, he immediately devised a plan to remove Uriah her husband. He instructed Joab his commander in chief of the armies to place Uriah in the hottest part of the battle and so it was that Uriah died and within seven days Bathsheba was taken into David's household so that the child would be born within the bounds of a lawful marriage. And David thought he had successfully covered his sin. But there was a fatal flaw in his thinking and his planning, for the Scripture says, but the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." He sent the Prophet Nathan to him who told him a story about two men. There was a rich man who had a large number of sheep and cattle. The poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb. He cared for it! - He nourished it! He nurtured it!. It shared his food, drank from his cup, and even slept in his arms. The Bible tells us that it even was like a daughter to him. One day a traveler came to stay with the rich man and instead of taking a lamb from his own herd to prepare meal for his guest, he took the little ewe lamb from the poor man, killed it and prepared a meal for his guest. When David heard this, the Bible

says that He burned with anger against the man and said to the Prophet Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives the man who did this deserves to die." He must pay for the lamb four times over because he did such and thing and had no pity."

Then Nathan said to David "you are the man." David with his power as King, his possessions, his servants and his many wives, took the only wife that Uriah had.

"You are the man' said Nathan, "You are the man." In this way the Lord used Nathan to expose David's terrible sin. David immediately responded, "I have sinned against the Lord." And it was the expression of the guilt incurred because of the sin that haunted him. Someone that told a story of a man who one day discovered in the sun that he had shadow, for some reason or another he had not seen it before and it startled him even scared him. I got to get away from this black thing, he said, so he ran as fast as he could for a mile to see if he could out run it. He stopped out of breath, with his heart pounding and looked the back and the black thing was still clinging on to him. He saw a ladder leaning against the wall of a house and thought to himself; "if I climb on to the roof of this house maybe I will leave it behind me." But when he climbed on to the roof that black thing was still latched on to him. This put him at the point of desperation he looked down and saw a fence. He climbed down the ladder and thought if I jump over that fence maybe the fence will be too high and this black thing will be left behind. He took a running jump at the fence and cleared and quickly looked behind but that black thing was still glued to him. In absolute frustration he flung himself to the ground and pounding it with his fists, cried out I can't get rid of this black thing it will haunt me forever. " David had the sense of the haunting

presence of guilt. "For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me. The black thing continually. haunting him But he also knew ,

b. The Holding Power of Sin's Nature. Psalm 51:5. "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." **Man is born with a**

nature that is sinful. The King James Version has it, "I was shapen in iniquity..." The late Rev. Seth Joshua told of how he met a man who said that he could not swallow what the preachers call original sin. "My good fellow." said Mr. Joshua, "there is no occasion for you to swallow it. It is inside of you already." Paul said that in Adam all sinned." That is why David said "I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

There is a two-fold nature of sin. There are the sins we commit and the sin we inherit or are born with – because this is so we are not responsible for it. We are however, responsible what we do with it. We are responsible for the sinful deeds we commit. The sinful nature was not ORIGINALLY part of man. It became part of the human race when Adam sinned against God. It has men and women in its grip.

A young African convert was given a position of trust on the mission station. But he violated that trust and stole something. The missionaries were distressed. "Why did you take what didn't belong to you?" They asked him. He replied, "It wasn't I who stole. It was the grandfather in my bones!" This was his way he spoke of his old nature. This was David was disturbed about when he cried out, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." The haunting presence of sin's power and the holding power of sin's nature both

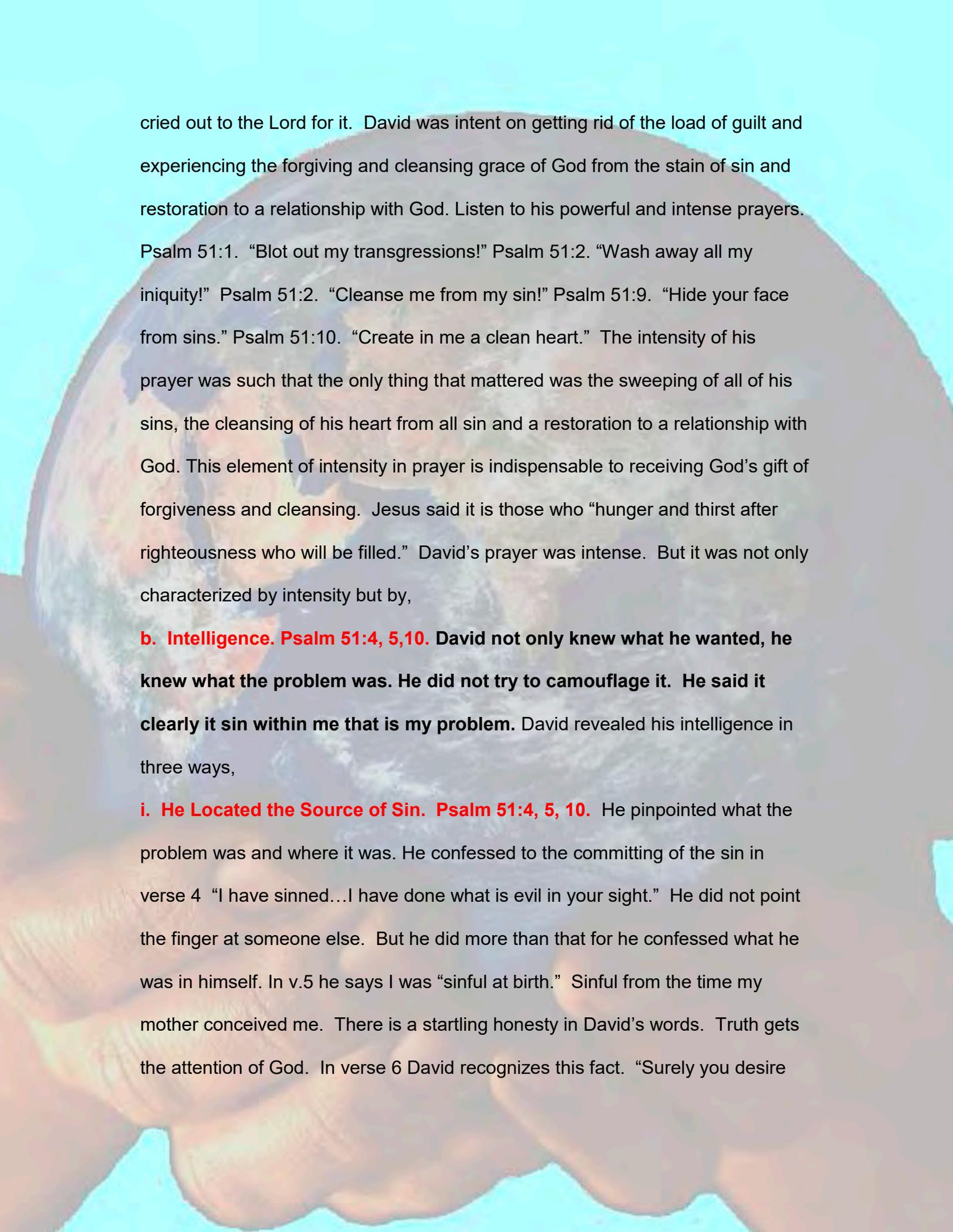
disturbed and distressed David's heart and life. This drove him to his knees and he prayed,

2. A DESPERATE PRAYER. Psalm 51:7,9,10-11.

Having pinpointed his problem, David proceeded to cry out to the Lord for forgiveness, cleansing, restoration and reconciliation and the joy of salvation.

V.7. Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean, wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. V9 Hide your face from my sins. V.10. Create in me a pure heart, O God and renew a steadfast Spirit within me." V.11. "Do not cast me away from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from me." This is not the prayer of a proud King, but the heartfelt cry of a guilty sin laden repentant soul. This is the kind of prayer that reaches the heart of God. Indeed it no doubt gets the attention of God. Will you note, and it is important that we do, that this prayer is characterized by,

a. Intensity. Psalm 51:4-5,10. This is a prayer that is concentrated and focused. There are no generalizations in this prayer. David recognized the gravity and the seriousness of what he had done. He did not down play its malignancy. He did not blame his parents for it. He revealed its naked ugliness. It was not simply a mistake. It was sin in his life that caused him to do this wicked deed, and he suffered from the inner agony of offending the Lord Himself. **Psalm 51V.4. "Against you, you only, I have sinned and done what is evil in your sight."** He was honest and told it like it was. He did not defend himself, or whitewash what he had done. He staggered under the load and burden of a suppressive and oppressive guilt. He knew what he needed and wanted, and



cried out to the Lord for it. David was intent on getting rid of the load of guilt and experiencing the forgiving and cleansing grace of God from the stain of sin and restoration to a relationship with God. Listen to his powerful and intense prayers. Psalm 51:1. “Blot out my transgressions!” Psalm 51:2. “Wash away all my iniquity!” Psalm 51:2. “Cleanse me from my sin!” Psalm 51:9. “Hide your face from sins.” Psalm 51:10. “Create in me a clean heart.” The intensity of his prayer was such that the only thing that mattered was the sweeping of all of his sins, the cleansing of his heart from all sin and a restoration to a relationship with God. This element of intensity in prayer is indispensable to receiving God’s gift of forgiveness and cleansing. Jesus said it is those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness who will be filled.” David’s prayer was intense. But it was not only characterized by intensity but by,

b. Intelligence. Psalm 51:4, 5,10. David not only knew what he wanted, he knew what the problem was. He did not try to camouflage it. He said it clearly it sin within me that is my problem. David revealed his intelligence in three ways,

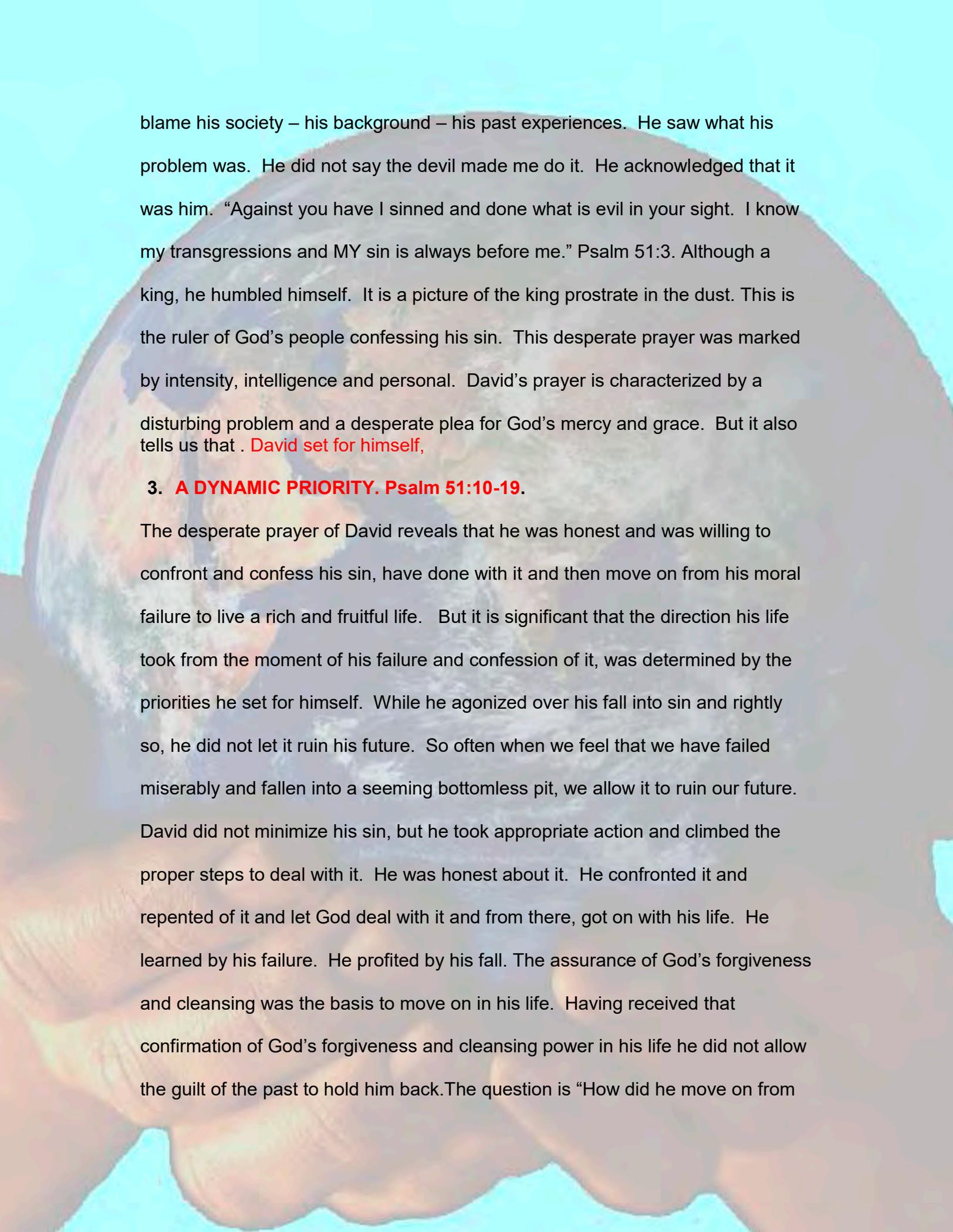
i. He Located the Source of Sin. Psalm 51:4, 5, 10. He pinpointed what the problem was and where it was. He confessed to the committing of the sin in verse 4 “I have sinned...I have done what is evil in your sight.” He did not point the finger at someone else. But he did more than that for he confessed what he was in himself. In v.5 he says I was “sinful at birth.” Sinful from the time my mother conceived me. There is a startling honesty in David’s words. Truth gets the attention of God. In verse 6 David recognizes this fact. “Surely you desire

truth in the inner parts. David was not self-deluded or self-deceived. He was intelligent enough to know where the source of his problem lay. He was alert enough to realize where the source of his sin was and he was honest about it. The second way in which he reveals his intelligence is the he,

aa. He Recognized his True Need. Psalm 51:2,7. Having located the problem he knew what his need was. In verse 2 he says, “Wash away my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” and verse 7 he prays “**Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean; wash me and I will be whiter than snow.**” He recognized his need and confessed it. But also,

bb. He recognized his own Helplessness. Psalm 51:10. “Create in me a pure heart, O God.” Powerful as he was, an acclaimed warrior of the armies of Israel, Sovereign Ruler of God’s chosen people. He was a man with vast resources of wealth, but he was intelligent enough to know that these things could not solve the problem of his personal sin, only God could create a pure heart in him. “Create in me a pure heart O God.” The third characteristic of his prayer is its,

c. Personal. Psalm 51:1-14. The problem of sin is an individual’s problem. It is a personal problem. David did not blame others for what he did. Its me who needs mercy. Its’ me, who needs forgiveness and cleansing from my sin. Its’ me O God who needs a new heart. “**Its me! Its me! O Lord standing in the need of prayer.**” **No less than thirty three times did David use the personal pronouns I, ME, MY in this prayer.** He located his problem! He recognized his need! And placed the blame where it lay, in himself. He did not



blame his society – his background – his past experiences. He saw what his problem was. He did not say the devil made me do it. He acknowledged that it was him. “Against you have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. I know my transgressions and MY sin is always before me.” Psalm 51:3. Although a king, he humbled himself. It is a picture of the king prostrate in the dust. This is the ruler of God’s people confessing his sin. This desperate prayer was marked by intensity, intelligence and personal. David’s prayer is characterized by a disturbing problem and a desperate plea for God’s mercy and grace. But it also tells us that . **David set for himself,**

3. A DYNAMIC PRIORITY. Psalm 51:10-19.

The desperate prayer of David reveals that he was honest and was willing to confront and confess his sin, have done with it and then move on from his moral failure to live a rich and fruitful life. But it is significant that the direction his life took from the moment of his failure and confession of it, was determined by the priorities he set for himself. While he agonized over his fall into sin and rightly so, he did not let it ruin his future. So often when we feel that we have failed miserably and fallen into a seeming bottomless pit, we allow it to ruin our future. David did not minimize his sin, but he took appropriate action and climbed the proper steps to deal with it. He was honest about it. He confronted it and repented of it and let God deal with it and from there, got on with his life. He learned by his failure. He profited by his fall. The assurance of God’s forgiveness and cleansing was the basis to move on in his life. Having received that confirmation of God’s forgiveness and cleansing power in his life he did not allow the guilt of the past to hold him back. The question is “How did he move on from

this failure of his? He started by establishing, **A Fundamental Principle. Psalm**

51:10-11. This principle has to do with two relationships. Firstly it has to do with

a. David's Relationship with Himself that was Rooted in Purity of Heart.

Psalm 51:1-2, 7, 10. This is David's deep concern. He expresses by repeating

the same prayer. Psalm 51:2. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from

sin and in verse 7. "Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean; wash me and I

will be whiter than snow." In verse 10 "Create in me a pure heart, O God." He

not only want God to save him but to sanctify him. His deep desire was that God

give him a pure heart. That is essence of his prayer. He not only wants the

symptoms of sin removed, but also the stain of sin to be cleansed away. The

Apostle John is clear that the Blood of Jesus not only brings forgiveness

but also cleansing form all sin. 1 John 1:7-9. The Apostle James seemed to

have this in mind when he wrote for he talked about a twofold operation of God's

grace, "Wash your hands you sinners and purify your hearts you double minded."

The Apostle Paul writes powerfully to the church at Colosse, **"In Christ you are**

also circumcised in the putting off of the sinful nature, NOT with the

circumcision done by the hands of man, but with the circumcision done by

Christ." Colossians 2:11.

David's cry was clear and unmistakable, "Create in me a clean heart, O God."

Our relationship with God must have as its basis a pure heart. The Psalmist

makes this clear in Psalm 24:3-4, "Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who

may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart..." His

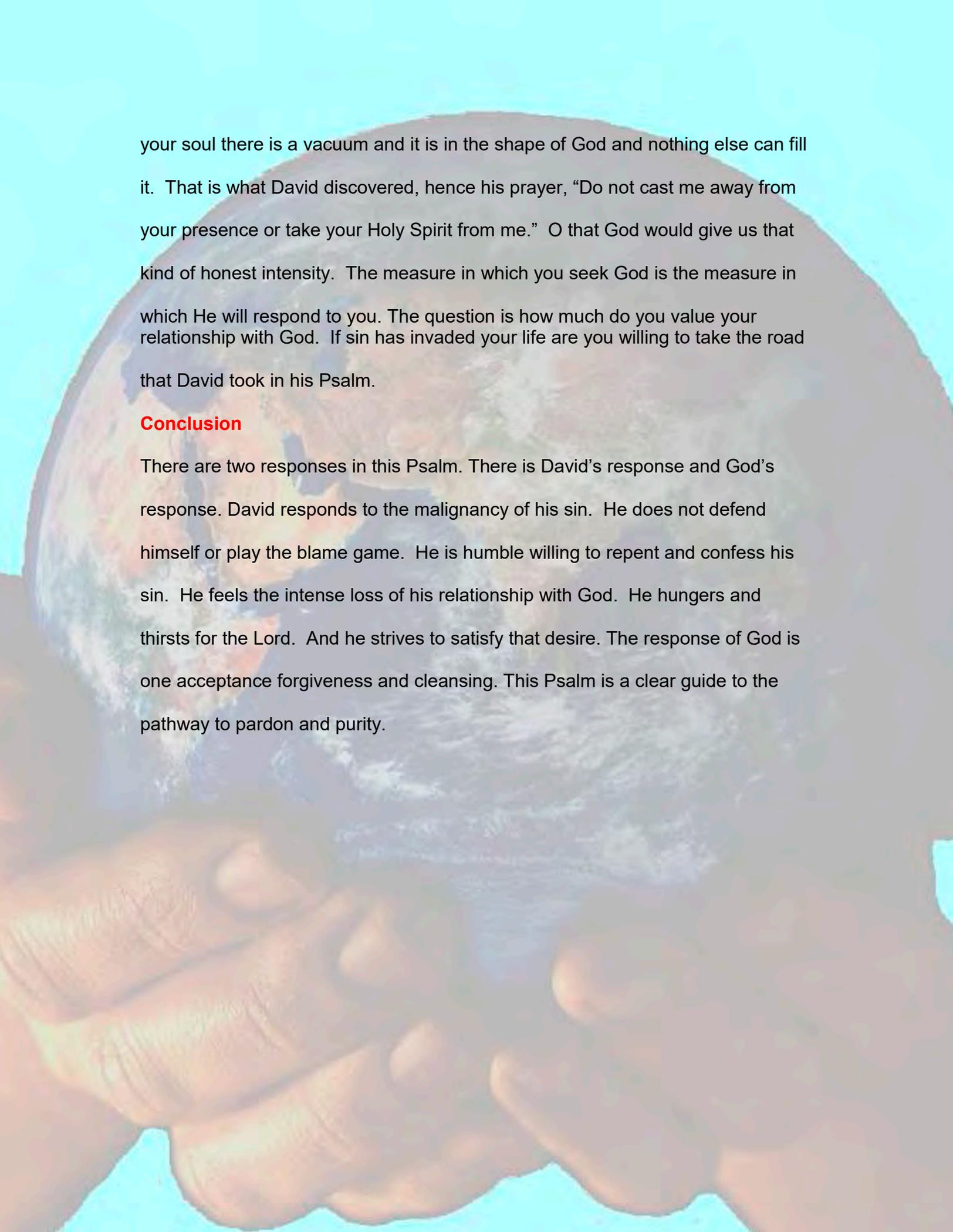
relationship with himself must rooted in purity of heart. The second relationship

is,

b. David's Relationship with God that is Rooted in the Presence of the Holy

Spirit. Psalm 51:14-17. David recognized this not only as a priority but as indispensable to him. The words in verse eleven speak to this truth. The words of David in verse eleven are firm and filled with urgency. "Do not cast me away from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me." Dr James Stewart would say this is the "cry of a man suddenly feeling that the foundations of his world are in danger of being swept away. Take anything else I have but not the one thing that makes life livable." This, I believe, is the sense and feeling that David had. One has pointed out that It is like Beethoven would say "Do not remove my music from me, or the opera singer "do not take my voice from me," or the professional pianist "Do not take my hands from me." That is the intensity and the urgency with which David prays this prayer. He knows that life for him would have no meaning apart from the presence of God the Holy Spirit. Do not cast me away from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me..

David had all that this world could offer him, power, position and possessions but when he fell into sin he did not mention any of these things. The most precious possession he pursued was the Holy Spirit. Life was empty without that relationship. Only those who have had a relationship with the Holy Spirit and lost it know, how David felt. And those who have never had that relationship do not know what they have missed. Once you have accepted and tasted of the Lord's presence in your lives, you will never find anything else fulfilling or satisfying. In



your soul there is a vacuum and it is in the shape of God and nothing else can fill it. That is what David discovered, hence his prayer, “Do not cast me away from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.” O that God would give us that kind of honest intensity. The measure in which you seek God is the measure in which He will respond to you. The question is how much do you value your relationship with God. If sin has invaded your life are you willing to take the road that David took in his Psalm.

Conclusion

There are two responses in this Psalm. There is David’s response and God’s response. David responds to the malignancy of his sin. He does not defend himself or play the blame game. He is humble willing to repent and confess his sin. He feels the intense loss of his relationship with God. He hungers and thirsts for the Lord. And he strives to satisfy that desire. The response of God is one acceptance forgiveness and cleansing. This Psalm is a clear guide to the pathway to pardon and purity.