

Connection to Ezra 1:1-6:22

David needed forgiveness and restoration of his fellowship with God in the days following his murder of Uriah, Bathsheba's warrior husband. David's sin and his confession to God paved the way for renewed service and restoration. In Psalm 51, David cried out for renewed worship and a deeper level of obedience to God. In Ezra 1:1-6:22, the people also focused on restoring their worship of God by repairing the altar, reestablishing the foundation of the temple, and renewing the worship, committing to once again live in accordance with God's Word.

Introduction/Opening

There are television shows that have become wildly popular today, and the common denominator is the restoration of different kinds of objects. One show in particular focuses on the restoration of old mechanical equipment. An old soda machine, once left outdoors for years and now the home of rodents, spiders, and other creatures, is torn down, stripped, repaired, repainted, and put back into service by the end of the episode. Another show focuses on the restoration of classic cars. The host often finds a broken-down car in someone's backyard, left there for years unrepaired. But with renewed energy and a lot of know-how, a car that has been abandoned is fully restored and becomes a thing of beauty and power in just 30 minutes! Things that have been cast aside and broken down suddenly find new life.

Sometimes people drift away from the Lord and find themselves in need of spiritual restoration. They need their fellowship with the Lord restored so they can once again experience the joy of knowing Jesus and living daily for Him. Israel's King David learned that in spite of his great sin, God loved him and was willing to restore him. David learned, and we can also learn that God is gracious and forgiving, and restores those who humbly turn to Him.

The people of Ezra's day had drifted away from God and had allowed their worship and obedience to wane. In chapters 1-6 of the book of Ezra, we discover that repentant, humble people can be restored to their God. They renewed their commitment to God, and restored their worship. God is still in the business of restoring people, as we can see in the words of Psalm 51.

Outline

1. David looked to God for grace as a sinner.
 - a) God is a gracious God (Psalm 51:1)
 - b) God is a compassionate God (Psalm 51:1)

2. David took responsibility for his sin and didn't blame others.
 - a) David used 3 words to describe his sin (vv. 2-3).
 - i. Rebellion
 - ii. Guilt
 - iii. Sin
 - b) David repeatedly used personal pronouns (vv.2-5)
 - i. My sin
 - ii. My rebellion
 - iii. I have sinned
3. David asked God to give him a clean heart (Psalm 51:12-14)
4. David asked God to renew his worship and increase his obedience (Psalm 51:15-17)

Conclusion

Failure isn't fatal. Failure often precedes our greatest moments of service and loyalty to God. There is no need to go through life feeling cast away by God, useless, and unable to worship Him.

God is gracious and kind, and is quick to forgive and restore His people. He gives grace to the humble and lifts the head of the downtrodden. For the child of God, failure doesn't have to separate him from his Heavenly Father. We can boldly approach the throne of grace and cry out, "Abba, Father!"

When God restores us to Himself, we can know our sin is completely forgiven and forgotten by Him. We can worship unashamedly again, and serve Him with renewed confidence in His love for us. As the old hymn says, "Mercy there was great, and grace was free...at Calvary!"