

Living by Faith: Confession | Psalm 51:1-4
Pastor Nick Shults | St. Mark Lutheran Church | Sunnyvale, CA

How things are: We value our privacy...not airing our “dirty laundry”. But we feel trapped in loneliness...never known by another. Locked away in “lonely cells”. We are left alone with our own fear and guilt and shame.

What happens when we sit alone in this? When we dwell in it? We are crushed by our own sin, etc.

How things could be: Confessing our sins...risking vulnerability...yet receiving pardon and peace from God. Identity as a sinner is buried in the tomb. Confession/absolution as a dying and rising (just like baptism)

Outline:

1. Introduction → What is a story about someone who is lonely? Struggling because they have a secret they are holding on to?

The story of David...third person? David commits adultery, then he commits murder. Psalm 51 is the prayer of this man.

2. How things are: in our obsession with privacy and security, we lock ourselves away in lonely cells, sitting with our own shame and guilt. Or maybe it's our obsession with wanting to see ourselves as a 'good person' or guiltiness?
 - a. Don't abandon yourself to your own thoughts or an abstract spirituality! Run to the means of grace for comfort...for support....for...grace!!
 - b. Our minds spiral us down...maybe it's a spiral of hopelessness...maybe it's a spiral of guilt and worthlessness.
3. How things could be: Confession and Absolution
 - a. Luther calling us to be a Christian...
 - b. Running to church in order to receive the grace of not.
 - c. Not under compulsion but out of freedom...because of the desire for God's grace
 - d. Freedom of the conscience - set free by the Word of God