

## NATIONAL COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Soul Detox

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Well, it was a bit of a rough year. It was within 10 months that three of my immediate family members had been diagnosed with cancer. And our whole family was faced with questions of life and death and the importance of finding out more information about toxins and the effect that they have in our body. And here's the deal cancer is no joke, right? And I wonder, you know, I wonder if we could just today get the mass effect, a sense of perspective of the effect that this has had on our culture as a whole. And I wonder if you or somebody in your family has or is fighting cancer at all of our locations, I wonder if we could just slip up a hand. That's just crazy, right? It's crazy as we look around and God give us strength.

Lord, and I just pray, I rebuke cancer right now. I rebuke it and ask for your healing, Lord. I ask for your restoration that you would amplify immunities and white blood cells, Lord and bring your strength. Amen. And, I just want to speak encouragement to you that is within the family today. Just receive strength today and a wisdom and grace. You are a minister to your family, just received that today.

I think a lot of us have a base level understanding of what toxins can do to the body. Our culture is growing in understanding. As we begin to understand that the toxins; that we've got to be careful about the toxins that are in our food that we ingest. We've got to be careful about the toxins in our cleaning supplies and those in products that we put on our bodies. But today I don't want to talk about the toxins and how they affect our body. I want to talk about the toxins of the soul, the toxins of the spirit. Toxin or toxic by definition is anything containing poisonous material capable of causing sickness or decay. Detox is a process or a period of time in which one abstains from or rids oneself of toxic or unhealthy matter or matters. In 2017 and part of 2018 it was probably the unhealthiest stretch of my life and for a seven month period I was just constantly sick. And probably 75 to 80 percent of that time period I was sick and I had these constant recurring fevers that would come and I had sore throats and I couldn't sleep at night. I would sleep for just a few hours because I was hacking so much. And it was just crazy and I tried different things. I tried medicine, tried vitamins and Echinacea and home remedies and I finally tried an elimination diet. And the idea is this, the concept is that you eliminate the majority of what you're eating and then slowly over time, you begin to add foods back in to see if you can test and quantify what foods might have an effect on your body. And so I did it and I actually found out. I found out that certain foods negatively affect my body and they break down my immunities and they clog up my system and they have this effect on my body. And what I didn't realize was that, that what I was ingesting, what I was consciously choosing to put in me were the exact things that we're breaking down my body.

In II Samuel, we find King David, he's at the height of his reign in life is great for him and things are going well and he's the leader of this growing and thriving nation. And then he gets lazy and he makes a huge mistake and we find him in the scriptures and we see that he was supposed to be off at war; the nation goes to war, but he becomes complacent and so he stays at home and he

makes a bad decision. And while he's at home, then he would go up on his roof and he would look out over the city and he looks out one day and he sees this woman who was naked on a rooftop her name is Bathsheba. And so he calls for her to come to his house, another bad decision and he ends up sleeping with her. And then from there he decides to try to cover it up, another bad decision. And he covers that, but it doesn't work, the cover up doesn't work. And so then he makes another bad decision and he calls the commander of the army and he and he tells him to put her husband, this guy, Uriah at the front lines, which means he's going to die. But then he thinks that it won't be his fault or people won't think that, and so that happens. And then she comes and he takes her as his wife and it's just this horrible series of circumstances that results in a terrible outcome. And we see this and we look at David, at King David and his terrible decisions and it's a toxic buildup. The toxic destruction builds with every selfish decision that he makes. And we see David taking these; and things go on as normal until the prophet Nathan shows up at his house and they sit down together and let me just summarize it.

They're sitting together and he decides to tell him a story, Nathan does. And so he says there's two men in a town. And one of them is poor, one of them is rich. This poor man, he didn't have much, but he's got one little lamb and He loves that lamb, that's his lamb and he treats that lamb with love and care and it's like his little child almost. And he says, I don't have much, but at least I have my little sheep. And then there's a rich man in town as well and this rich man has; he's got a whole flock of sheep and he's rich and he doesn't really care for the sheep, but they're his riches, and so he's glad that he has them. And so a guest shows up in this town and Middle Eastern hospitality requires him to feed this guest and so he goes out into his flock and he passes his flock and he goes and he gets that one little lamb and he butchers that lamb and feeds this man. He takes the one lamb that the poor man had. And as he's telling the story King David, he's getting fired up. He's getting angry and he's boiling up this righteous indignation is as boiling up kind of in his soul.

And he says in verse five of chapter 12 of II Samuel, he says, *"As sure as the LORD lives, the man who did this must die!"*

And Nathan says; "that man is you". And David had been so engrossed in his sin, so engrossed in his decisions, in his normality, this slow building of bad decisions on bad decision, that he was blind to the cancer that was eating away at his heart, to the cancer that was eating away at his kingdom. What are the toxins or the infections that we have allowed to build up in our soul? And we hear this passage and we say, well that's huge and maybe you relate with it or maybe you don't, but we see that that's huge. But you know what? It was a series of missteps. It was a series of decisions that he made, a small missteps that led to that point.

I wonder what it is for you. Maybe it's a mindset, maybe it's a thought pattern and you have these cognitive distortions in your mind. Things were you categorize yourself or categorize somebody else and those things are untrue. Or maybe it's what we feed our mind and we put certain things in our mind and we're consuming media, certain media constantly or we watch pornography or we consume certain narratives and stories and we receive all of these things that are building up and we take on cultural values that we assume and they can actually all be toxic. It's this whole environment of toxins that we're ingesting and it affects who we are and what we think. Or maybe it's our actions, the belief or the idea that we have of self, but our beliefs or our actions

don't line up with actually what we think and so we say, I'm a good person. I don't know, but what if we look on paper, right? What if we actually look at our actions and we see certain things and I'm a good person well, but when you look for the proof, the proof is not quite there because we cut corners in our business or we look at our budget and there's no proof of generosity towards other people in our budget. Or the way we talk to people, the way that we treat people or we yell at our spouse. Or we do these certain things we don't care for anyone, we don't give our time to people outside of our circle. Or maybe it's our words we don't realize the words that were spoken to us, the effect that they have or the words that we speak into other people the effect that that has on others. Or it could be how you take care of yourself or unforgiveness or jealousy towards someone else, but we have allowed toxicity within our mind, our body, our spirit, knowingly or unknowingly that is crushing our soul.

I want to look at Psalm chapter 51 today, and it's the prayer of a broken man. It's a prayer of a man who is desperate to find healing in God. It's the prayer of David, right after he had found himself in this revelation of his sin and of his missteps, and it's a prayer of detox. That's what Psalm 51 is a prayer of detox. So can we just take a walk today? Let's walk through this passage is 12 verses the beginning of this passage. I'm just going to walk and I'm going to read a verse and then I'll talk through it and maybe the Lord has something to say and enlighten our hearts today.

Psalm chapter 51; *"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love."*

David gives direct confession to God. There's no excuse in this confession. Now, before you try to change, before you try to make everything right, you know what a good practice is? You come to God and you confess and you seek forgiveness from the Almighty. David calls out to God and he calls for his unfailing love, his 'hesed' and he calls for this; it's a loyal love, it's a compassionate, it's a covenantal mercy. He calls out to God for this 'hesed'; God give me your love that never fails, I call to you...

He says ...*"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions."*

This can refer to David's own conscious like God block this out because I'm carrying this, it's a massive weight, blot that out. Or it can refer to God's accounting of his sin or it could be both. But David is asking for redemption, for the redeeming power of the Almighty to come and free him from his mistakes, to cross out the black lines of sin with the red lines of Christ's blood and forgiveness.

Verse two; *"Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."*

Commentator McLaren says the word employed is significant and that probably means washing by kneading or beating, not by simply rinsing. A cleansing, a kneading, a purifying, a cutting that can hurt can't it, that can be painful and in somebody's life. If you detox from drugs, it's not just a separation mentally from drugs, it's not okay, I've got to decide to the best I can not to do that. No, there's a physical separation as well because your body crave, is dependent upon those things, so there's pain that comes in detox. If you've ever done whole 30, Melissa Hartwig, she

talks about this idea and she says a week or two weeks in, you're probably going to get sick. You're probably going to get a fever or some sort of setback and you'll be discouraged because your body is using all of its energy to rid the body of toxins, but it's also going through withdrawal of the dependence upon those toxins. Cleaning can be painful. It's a ringing out of us and it seems sometimes when we go through this pathway, this pattern, it seems like we're actually in a worse place than we were when we were in those dependencies, doesn't it? But we've got to understand this concept that to get full restoration to become a new creation sometimes you have to go through things that actually make it worse before it gets better. David understands the toxicity of his heart and his actions. In fact, he uses several different words to describe this to God; he says, transgressions, iniquities, sins. Transgressions are crossing those boundary lines that you shouldn't cross. Iniquities are those perversions or the distortions that we allow in us and sins are missing the mark, they're falling short of God. What pollution or toxic thinking have you allowed in your mind, have you allowed in your life and what do you need to cut back today? Is it sin? Is it bad habits? Is it unforgiveness, negative words, attitude?

The Nielsen Report Studies, media use, and trends of the average American. Can I just give you some stats that are going to encourage you today? Can I do that? Okay, so the average person, the average American spends seven years, eight months of their life watching TV. All right, so you feel encouraged yet? Okay, the average person spends five years, four months on social media. Now, personally I just think maybe the DC trend would be opposite, don't you? Like you just walk around and everyone's on their phone and I do it right and we're walking around and we're on our phones wherever we... It's like eight months of the year we spend just looking on our phone, doesn't it? And you walk around and we've got this amazing... we can go miles just looking at... our peripheral vision has to be amazing, doesn't it? Because we can walk any different direction, but we see things and we're texting and we're talking and we're pointing at people in the cafe and that see us and we do all these things, but we lock in and listen to this. We spent three years, five months of our lives eating and drinking, so we spend more time on social media; we spend twice the amount of time watching TV than we do filling our lives, our bodies with energy and things that will actually give us life. And we have blinders on, don't we, in certain areas of our life? We have blinders to the things, to the toxins, to the vices, to the bad habits.

There was a word association practice done with a number of students on the phrase self control. And it was interesting because almost all the words in the word association were negative; words like regulate and restriction, limit, diet, constraint, deprivation. And it's interesting because I think the enemy does this to us. It's amazing how the enemy can take something like self control and he can just turn it into a bad thing. CS Lewis says this, he says, for any happiness, restraint is necessary.

Verse three; *"For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me."*

The emphasis is on **I know, I know** my transgressions. He was fully aware of his responsibility. David didn't say, and my punishment is always before me. He didn't say, and my consequence is always before me. No, he says, my sin is always before me. What bothered him was his sin. Many grieve over the consequences of their sin, few over the sin itself. He can step back and acknowledge the deep hurt that he has caused God and caused himself and caused others.

Verse four; *"Against you, and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge."*

Now, objectively, David actually has sinned against others, right? He sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, their family, his family, himself, his own body, he sinned against his kingdom, but I think as David says this, it's an acknowledgement that sin against a fellow human, a fellow man or woman that, that sin is equal to sinning against God and you can see it in the New Testament, right? Jesus talks about this. He says, whatever you do to the least of these you have done unto me. And so he's acknowledging that this sin was so gross against them that it's a sin against God and he's repenting before the Lord.

Verse five; *"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me, yet you desired faithfulness, even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place."*

It's passages like this that we get the concept of original sin, this idea that we are born, we are made in the image of God and we have this beautiful character that the Lord gives to us and we're made in his image with with a good heart yet we have a sinful nature, don't we? And these two things for our whole life that battle against one another. Now this verse initially rubs me the wrong way because is David somehow excusing his actions as where he's from or what he didn't have growing or what he did have growing up or he is excusing that, no, it's just the nature, it's not really my fault. I don't think that's the case here though. I actually think it's quite the opposite. He's saying, you know what? This wasn't just a mistake. This wasn't just an action. I'm going to be honest, God as I deep reflect as I deep dive into my own soul? No, this is my prideful nature, God, forgive me of my prideful nature to the very core of who I am. I need you and I need your strength to overcome and to change. It's the same battle that every single one of us has maybe on different levels.

Romans seven, why is it Paul says that the things I want to do, I don't do and what I don't want to do, I do. Paul is talking about the fleshly nature, selfishness against the spiritual nature, selflessness and how they battle and come against one another. A.W. Tozer wrote a piece called 'The Hunger of The Wilderness'. I love this. If you have a few minutes this weekend, go and just Google this on your own. It's called 'The Hunger of The Wilderness'. And it's kind of a long quote, but stick with me they're powerful words, here's what he says...

"Every farmer knows the hunger of the wilderness, that hunger which no modern farm machinery, no improved agricultural methods, can ever quite destroy. If the owner neglects his prized and valued acres they will revert again to the wild and be swallowed by the jungle or wasteland. The bias of nature is toward the wilderness, never toward the fruitful field."

Now, if you ever planted a garden, you know this, don't you. That you don't have to work on the weeds, do you? No, nature takes care of that by itself. We understand this concept. He goes on...

"What is true of the field is true also of the soul, if we are but wise enough to see it. The moral bent of the fallen world is not toward godliness, but definitely away from it."

He goes on to say that...

"The jungle will creep in and seek to swallow up the tiny areas that have been made free by the power of the Holy Spirit. Only watchfulness and constant prayer can preserve those moral gains won for us through the operations of God's grace.

I want to tell you something today. We have been given the Holy Spirit in our spirit to help us overcome the enemy. The enemy will not give up. There is a battle like it or not, there are multiple battles happening. There are battles of the heavenly realms of the spirit of God, battling against the enemy, coming against our soul. There's a battle of the flesh nature within us and the godly nature within us, and there's this constant battle. The Holy Spirit was a gift. When we believe in Jesus Christ, he grants us his spirit that fills us and gives us strength and the spirit is above the flesh. That's good news right there, y'all. I want to get a tattoo where spirit is above the flesh actually, just to remind myself, listen; the spirit is above the flesh. I did not run that by Nina. I'm not going to do that Nina, okay.

Second Corinthians 10, verses four and five, it says...

*"4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world. On the contrary, they have the power..."*

The Greek word *dunamis*, which we get dynamite from. They have the explosive power to demolish strongholds. The word *ochuroma*, which means prisoner locked by deception, so through God, through the Holy Spirit, we have power to overcome sin, overcome that fleshly nature. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we have the ability to demolish deception from the enemy within our soul. We have the power to demolish distortions that are happening all around us, that's the power of the Holy Spirit. You can just throw out an amen right there if you don't mind, come on, amen. We have been granted the spirit of God and he makes us new and he gives us strength for the daily battles.

Now, we talked about this last week, but processed foods can break down our body, our mind, and our focus. Remember this part where Pastor Mark talked about the blue tongue coming out of the movie and that whole thing, remember that? And I was thinking about that this week. Processed food is when you take out the active agents within it, those active agents are what bring mold and decomposition and it's what kinda kills that food, right? And that's what we pull out and so we're left with the things that we like. We like the sweets and we liked the sugar and the carb and we have that, but we pull out those things that don't maybe tastes good, but you know what, they're really good for our body, aren't they? That's why fruit tends to mold, it tends to go bad, it tends to decompose. That's why vegetables tend to go bad and tends to decompose. Now, those yogurt cookies in the pantry that I really love, I could leave here today for five years, come back and they would still be there the exact same when they. I mean they're the same yesterday, today and forever those yogurt cookies are, but they're not good for my body. Natural foods, they mold, they decompose, they actually die. But now here's what I've been thinking about though, okay. Here's what kinda I've been wrestling with it that some of us have processed theology and here's what happens. You know, what we do is we take out the active agent of our theology, the Holy Spirit, and you know you have processed theology if your theology stands up without the Holy Spirit in it. Am I hurting a little bit here today? Can we apply this to our life? And so what happens? We take the danger out, we take the faith out, we

take the sacrifice out and we take the boldness of sharing our faith and the boldness of crossing lines and crossing bridges. We take all that stuff out and what are we left with? We're left with the stuff we like and it's sweet, isn't it? And it tastes good in the moment and you know what we do? We put that in our pantry and any time we need it we can go and we can get it. Why? Because it's dead and it has nothing in it. It's all the active agent has been pulled out of that and we think we're okay, but no, that's not true theology. That's not the living God, the living word at work within our souls. No, when we step into the Holy Spirit, he pushes us, he calls us toward submission and worship, and when we do that, we have to be active today. We take his spirit and we have to be obedient unto his word in our hearts, to consume his word, to consume his calling, to consume his obedience. James says, faith without deed is what? It's dead.

Our processed theology reads. 1 Corinthians 6:19 says...

*"<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit."*

And how do we process that? We process it by saying, yeah, I need to work out because I want to look good and I want to project a certain image, right? Come on, let's be real here today. That's me. You know, I want to look a certain way and we process it that way when in reality that scripture is talking about sexual immorality and having restraint and living within this certain bounds and the scripture is talking about having respect for your body and having respect for yourself. But, we don't want to hear that, do we? We don't like... I just want my yogurt cookies, come on, let's be honest. Anybody else with me on that? I see no hands on that one like those things are nasty, my kids eat those things. We don't want to hear that though, right theology forces us to live actively with and for God.

Verse seven..

*"Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow."*

Now, hyssop was used to apply the blood over the door posts during the Passover. That's where we get hyssop. It's also used by the priest in sprinkling and purifying water. And we see the word cleanse or purge and it's based out of the word for sin. So it's literally saying, de-sin me God, please pull this out of me.

Verse eight...

*"Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice."*

He's seeking redemption because he feels crushed.

Verse nine...

*"Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. <sup>10</sup>Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."*

The word that begins this section is the word, it's a Hebrew word *bara*, and it's the very first word that means create, and it's used in Genesis chapter one, when God creates the heavens and he creates the earth, and he uses the same word in this passage right here. It's a word that describes what only God can do that only God can create something out of nothing *ex nihilo*.

And then he says, renew a steadfast spirit within me. A steadfast spirit is needed when something is cleansed to keep that thing cleansed, right? There's a newness that happens. There's a cleaning, a renewing that happens, but you have to have a steadfast spirit to continue that on. David's acknowledging it's not just a single action that I want to be made, right. I know I need you, God, so I don't end up in this place again. Give me a steadfast spirit of persistence and consistency, a commitment, a resolve.

Pastor Tim Galina, he tells the story of one of the great PGA golfers and he's out of practice tee before his tournament and he's out hitting balls and he hears a fan behind him and the fan says, "Man, I wish I could hit a ball like that". And for some reason this guy decides to turn around and he acknowledges him. He says, "No, you don't, you don't wish this and here's what he says. He says, "You know what, if I hit a bad ball, if I had a hook or a slice", he says, "you know what I do? I got to go hit a thousand shots to make that better. I'm going to hit a thousand shots until my hand is bleeding and then I'll wrap it up and I'll hit a thousand more shots until I make that right. You don't want to do this." And he said this, he said these words, he says, "You want the result but you don't want the discipline. You want to do, what I do, but you don't want to do the work." A steadfast spirit is to do the work, it's the remain committed; it's to resolve and live consistently.

Verse 11...

*"Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."*

Marie Kondo is an organizational guru and she's a tidying consultant and she helps people that are drowning in a prison of their own making with so much stuff and so much clutter that they don't know what to do and so they need to call her in to help them escape this. Come on, I know there's some Marie Kondo people out there. Come on, where are you? And you just say that name and you feel more organized, don't you? And she's this Netflix sensation and she teaches people how to decide what must go or what is unnecessary. And it's interesting, she has this philosophy and here's the practice at the base level, the foundational level of what she teaches is this, that you should take every item and confront, essentially every item in your house and you ask a question, does this item spark joy in me? You asked that simple question and then as you hold an item, you asked this question, if it doesn't do that, then it doesn't serve your purpose and you say goodbye to that item. And there's a whole sense of built on just this concept; that an item needs to elicit joy within you, otherwise it doesn't fit in your life, it's an act of generosity towards self. And she's made millions on this concept of just helping people detox their stuff.

I wonder if you'll take a few minutes this weekend to reflect. Reflect on what brings you true, deep, long lasting joy. You know what I'm talking about? I'm not talking about short term happiness or gratification because if we go down that route, we'll answer questions very different, right? Like growing up, my parents made me go to church, I didn't want to go to church, I wanted to watch the pregame to the Bears game, get ready for the NFL game, but they made me go to church. If I was deciding that for short term happiness, I would have made a different decision, but you know what? I realized over a long span of time, I thank God for my parents decision because it built up character and principles and it taught me how to live life and how to be respectful towards others, respectful towards God and live life in a gracious and a



loving and a faith filled way and I thank God that they made decisions for long-term joy. As you take account of your life, how are you making decisions of things and categories that you have been given for long-term joy? Consider one of these action points this week. Seek out a Nathan in your life, a friend to speak truth or a life coach or a counselor. Spend an hour in inventory of your categories and prayer. Spend a day fasting for revelation, and as we take a few moments this weekend just to look inward and considered today what we need to detox, what we need to cut, start with coming before God and seeking him and forgiveness and seeking his revelation and end with this to seek him first is where we start. Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you. In Jesus name. Amen.