

PSALM 51

A penitential psalm

Seeking God's forgiveness

PREPARATION:

Carefully read Psalm fifty-one seeking to answer these questions about the text:

1. What does David ask the Lord to do for him? (v. 1) To what features of God's character does he appeal?
2. What does David ask for in v. 2? Why? (v. 3)
3. Though David had committed adultery and participated in murder what did he say about his sin? (v. 4) Why do you think David said this? What does he acknowledge about the Lord's judgments concerning him?
4. What did David mean by his statement in verse 5? What however did he say God wanted? (v. 6)
5. David probably in v. 7 refers to the ceremonial acts of cleansing required by the Law. However in them David saw a deeper spiritual significance. What would be the result of God's purification and washing?
6. What inner attitudes did David want to again experience? (v. 8) This could only occur if God did what? (v. 9)
7. As David looked ahead, what did he seek from God? (v. 10) What else did he not want to lose? (v. 11)

8. What inner attitudes did David seek from God? (v. 12)
Consequently he would be able to do what? (v. 13)
9. From what did David need deliverance? (v. 14) What did he want to do for the Lord? (v. 14b-15)
10. Was God merely interested in sacrifice? (v. 16) What kind of sacrifices did God really want? (v. 17)
11. Finally, David asks God to remember whom else? (v. 18) What would be the result of this? (v. 19)

KEY QUESTION:

Write in your own words below what you think is the main message of this psalm.

**FOR CLASS
DISCUSSION:**



Historical and cultural setting

1. How does the text note before the song help us with the historical background of this psalm?
2. Briefly summarize David's experience with Bathsheba and the aftermath.



What does this psalm tell us about God and His people?

In what way might this psalm point to Jesus? (Cf. Eph. 1:7)

How could the Christian apply the teaching of this psalm to his life today? (1 Jn. 1:5-2:2)

