

Spiritual Talk

Discussion and Understand the Context are adapted from EXPLORE THE BIBLE: PSALMS –INSPIRING TRUTHS
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Psalm 51:1—17

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! ³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. ⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. ⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. ⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. ¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. ¹⁴Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. ¹⁶For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Understand the Context

This is a Psalm that King David wrote after being caught in sin with Bathsheba. Once David gave in to sin of adultery, other sins followed. When he learned Bathsheba was pregnant with his child, he had her husband killed. After allowing Bathsheba a period of mourning, David brought her into his palace as his wife under the guise of providing for the widow of a war hero. Sin didn't gratify David; instead it led him on a downward spiral of lies and death. David, tried to cover his tracks. He thought he had gotten away with his sin until one of God's messenger's came to him and confronted him.

Once David's sin was exposed, he realized his sin was an act of rebellion against God (and ultimately the people he ruled over). He had broken the sixth and seventh commandment by committing adultery and murder. As the king, he understood the severity of his sin. His only recourse was to confess and admit to his guilt and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. Integrity comes from a Hebrew word meaning "stability, truth, and trustworthiness. David lost these virtues when he fell into sin. His life became unstable, and ultimately knew that he was no longer trustworthy. David longed for a right relationship with God and sin severed that relationship. He finds the way to restore this relationship with God begins with confession and repentance and this Psalm gives us a look into the broken heart of David.

Discussion

- What are some ways people minimize or rationalize sin to deal with their guilt?
- Why is it easier to point out other people's sin than to acknowledge our own?
- What role does forgiveness play in our relationship with God?
- How are remorse and repentance related? How are they different? Can you have one without the other?

