

# Lesson 4

## Psalm 51

Take some time to slowly read through Psalm 51 this week, asking the Holy Spirit to illumine your thinking and to speak to you through this portion of the Word of God.

*“Search me, O God,  
and know my heart;  
Try me and know my  
anxious thoughts...”*

*Psalm 139:23*

1. What concept from last week’s lesson was especially helpful or thought provoking to you?
2. Look for a verse in the lesson this week that is meaningful to you and make it your memory verse. Write it down, carry it with you, put it on your refrigerator or mirror or dashboard and memorize it. Share your memory verse with your small group.

Psalm 51 is one of several penitential psalms by David. His other penitential psalms are Psalms 6, 32, 38, 102, 130 and 143. In these psalms David expresses his lament over his personal sin.

3. As you initially read Psalm 51, what strikes you?
4. Psalm 51 was written by David when Nathan the prophet came to confront him about specific sins that he had committed. Read this context in II Samuel 11-12:14. Sketch out what has happened in the life of David.
5. As David comes to confession before the Lord in Psalm 51, does he come on the basis of his own merit?

6. What is the basis of his request for forgiveness according to verse 1?
7. What does David specifically ask for in verse 2?
8. From verse 3, is David in denial about his sin or is he “owning” it? How does he express this?
9. Even though David sinned against other people, who does he acknowledge that he sinned against first and foremost in verse 4? Consider Isaiah 59:12 and the words of the prodigal son in Luke 15:21 and discuss.
10. Who is speaking in Jeremiah 33:8 and what is His offer?
11. What is the promise given to all believers in I John 1:7-9? Discuss what this means to you personally.
12. Take some time to get quiet before the Lord this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to search out your heart and remind you of any situations for which you need to ask forgiveness. Confess anything that comes up to the Lord. Remember I John 1:7-9 and write a prayer of thanks for your forgiveness and reconciliation.
13. Who alone is the righteous judge according to John 5:22 and 5:27?
14. How does Ephesians 2:3 express the same thought as Psalm 51:5?

15. What do you think truth in the innermost being means? See Psalm 51:6.
  
16. What makes us whiter than snow in the eyes of the Lord? See also Isaiah 1:18 and Revelation 7:14.
  
17. What does the Word of God say about a person who has turned from his sin in confession and repentance? See Psalm 103:10-14, Isaiah 44:22, Jeremiah 31:34 and Romans 8:1 and discuss what these verses mean to you.

In the Old Testament time, before the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit to individuals was primarily to equip believers for service. The Holy Spirit came upon individuals to equip them for a particular job and then might depart when their service was finished. In verse 11 when David asks God not to take the Holy Spirit from him, he is asking that the presence of the Lord not depart and that he be allowed to continue in service as king.

In our day, on this side of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit resides in every believer from the moment of salvation on. Though we may sin and grieve or quench the Holy Spirit, He will never leave us. As believers we are sealed with the Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13-14).

18. Trace the progression in Psalm 51:10-15. Discuss what you learn from this progression.
  
19. In the book of Leviticus God set up a system of sacrifices that were necessary for man to approach a holy God. What do you think David is talking about when he says God does not delight in sacrifice in Psalm 51:16 but that He will delight in righteous sacrifices in verse 19? See also I Samuel 15:22 and Micah 6:6-8.

## Prepare for Life

20. As you think about Psalm 51 this week, ask yourself: *Is there some encouragement or invitation here for me?* Spend some time asking the Lord to speak to you through this psalm. Write down what you sense He is encouraging you to do or to be based on your time in Psalm 51.
  
21. Summarize the purpose of the Lord's Supper.
  
22. Why do you think Jesus had so eagerly desired to have this meal with His disciples? See Luke 22:15.
  
23. What will you remember from I Corinthians 11:17-31 the next time you celebrate the Lord's Supper?
  
24. Based on your study this week, what do you think God is teaching you or inviting you to do or to be?

## Lecture Notes: