



Finding Forgiveness

Psalm 51:1-19

The hard truth: Without God it is impossible to obliterate guilt—or even to ignore it.

A portrait of forgiveness:

- 2 Samuel 11 is a bitter act of sin and rebellion against God.
- 2 Samuel 12 is a tense confrontation about sin and rebellion against God.
- Psalm 51 is a broken and contrite appeal for forgiveness from God.

Question: What guilt is weighing on you—refusing to go away and refusing to be ignored and refusing to be removed by self effort? What can you do?

God's truths (selected) about forgiveness from Psalm 51:

- All sin is against God. It is only real because of the absolute holiness of God. (vv 4, 14)
- Forgiveness is only possible because of the compassion, mercy and grace of God. (v 1)
- We must own our sin without any rationalizing at all. (v 3)
- We must direct our appeals for forgiveness to God—David prays 18 personal petitions and 2 corporate petitions! God is the Actor in forgiving sin, cleansing us, and restoring us:
 - v1a: be gracious to me.
 - v1b: blot out my transgressions.
 - v2a: wash me.
 - v2b: cleanse me.
 - v7a: purify me.
 - v7b: wash me.
 - v8a: make me to hear joy.
 - v8b: let the bones rejoice.
 - v9a: Hide Your face from my sins.
 - v9b: blot out my iniquities.
 - v10a: create in me a clean heart.
 - v10b: renew a steadfast spirit in me.
 - v11a: do not cast me away from your presence.
 - v11b: do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
 - v12a: restore to me the joy of Your salvation.
 - v12b: sustain me with a willing spirit.
 - v14: deliver me from bloodguiltiness.
 - v15: open my lips.
 - v18a: do good to Zion by Your favor.
 - v18b: build the walls of Jerusalem.

- Joy is impossible without forgiveness. (v 8)
- Spiritual renewal is impossible without forgiveness. (v 10)
- Spiritual ministry is impossible without forgiveness. (v 13)
- Worship is impossible without forgiveness. (vv 14b, 15)

God's Core Message in Psalm: Genuine forgiveness from God and real relationship with God...always demand genuine spiritual brokenness and genuine contrition. (v 17)

- Brokenness of spirit:
- Brokenness and contrition of heart:
- “Nathan Experiences” are terrifying but spiritually wonderful:
 - We sin against God.
 - God relentlessly brings us to brokenness and contrition.
 - We humbly repent and confess our sin.
 - God gives to us forgiveness, cleansing, and restoration.
 - We are restored to joy, spiritual vitality, ministry, and worship ability.

God's Core Application: Without inner brokenness and contrition it is impossible to remove or even to ignore personal guilt and shame. *Humbly submit to God for help.*

Do not miss this: *Brokenness and contrition are inversely proportional to spiritual self-assurance.*

- If we think we are spiritually better than others—we remain in our guilt.
- If we think we have it made spiritually—we remain in our guilt.
- If we think we have merit from salvation tenure—we remain in our guilt.
- If we think we can please God by any self effort—we remain in our guilt.

Do not miss this: *God is inviting you and me to humble submission to His “Nathan experiences.” Psalm 51 and 1 John 1:9*

“Walking Papers for Psalm 51”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

- **Today:** What are the ways you think that you are spiritually pleasing to God?
- **Monday:** Please read Luke 18:9-14. What does it mean for you?
- **Tuesday:** What does “brokenness of spirit” mean? How can you get it?
- **Wednesday:** What does a “broken and contrite heart” mean? How can you get it?
- **Thursday:** Have you ever had a “Nathan Experience?” Think through it again.
- **Friday:** What specific sins is God putting His finger on in your life? What will you do in response?
- **Saturday:** Please write a prayer of confession and contrition and brokenness to God for any sins that He has been surfacing in your life through this study.

The Options: *Spiritual self-assurance or genuine forgiveness through brokenness?*