

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

June 20, 2010

A Prayer of Repentance

**Focal Passage:
Psalm 51**

Cross References: Hebrews 9:11-14; 22; 1 John 1:9

Bible in a Year Daily Readings

June 13-20, 2010

Jun 13 Psalms 43 - 49
Jun 14 Psalms 50 - 55
Jun 15 Psalms 56 - 61
Jun 16 Psalms 62 - 68
Jun 17 Psalms 69 - 72
Jun 18 Psalms 73 - 77
Jun 19 Psalms 78 - 80
Jun 20 Psalms 81 - 88

Highlights of the Week:

Psalm 44: Sheep to be slaughtered
Psalm 46: God is our refuge and strength
Psalm 51: Prayer of repentance
Psalm 53: What the fool says
Psalm 55: Give ear to my prayer
Psalm 61: Lead me to the Rock
Psalm 63: My soul thirsts for You
Psalm 67: God be gracious to us
Psalm 73: My feet came close to stumbling
Psalm 77: My voice rises to God
Psalm 81: I gave them over
Psalm 84: How lovely are Your dwelling places
Psalm 86: Incline Your ear, O Lord

Central Idea: David confessed his sin and guilt to the Lord, and then promised to repent and share God with others.

Lesson Idea: We need to confess and repent of our sin and concentrate on being good witnesses of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

NOTE: The heading for this psalm in the NASB reads *“For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.”* This Psalm was written by David after being confronted by Nathan the prophet concerning his sin with Bathsheba (see 2 Samuel 11:1-12). True repentance is more than just feeling sorry for being caught in a sin; it’s realizing that you have offended God, asking forgiveness, and returning to serve the Lord.

Psalm 51:1-9
A Prayer for Forgiveness

¹*Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your loving kindness;
According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.*

²*Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity
And cleanse me from my sin.*

³*For I know my transgressions,
And my sin is ever before me.*

⁴*Against You, You only, I have sinned
And done what is evil in Your sight,
So that You are justified when You speak
And blameless when You judge.*

⁵*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.*

⁶*Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being,
And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.*

⁷*Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

⁸*Make me to hear joy and gladness,
Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.*

⁹*Hide Your face from my sins
And blot out all my iniquities.*

DISCUSSION:

“Grace” has been defined as “unmerited favor;” in other words, God giving us good things that we don’t deserve. Some versions translate these first words of the Hebrew text as “*Have mercy on me.*” “Mercy” is when God doesn’t give us the punishment that we deserve for our wrongdoing. In vs 1-2 David did not claim any goodness or worth; instead, what attributes of God does David appeal to as he asks for God to be gracious or merciful to him?

What three different words does David use to describe his wrongdoing?

- “*Transgression*” indicates a “crossing of the line;” a deliberate disobedience to a command of God
- “*Iniquity*” describes a general state of defilement; a perversion of something good; a state of being wrong in one’s heart
- “*Sin*” means to “miss the mark” as in Romans 3:23 “*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” Many times we refer to these as sins of omission, meaning you didn’t necessarily break one of God’s commandments, but you didn’t do the right things that He would have wanted you to do.

How do these three categories of sin sum up all the sins that we ever commit?

What are the actual actions that David asks God to do to his sins in vs 1-2 and 7-9?

How do these reflect David’s understanding that only God could get rid of sin?

Read Hebrews 9:11-14; 22. What do these verses teach about the only way that sin can be cleansed today?

Although David’s sin involved and affected Bathsheba, Uriah the Hittite, Joab the commander, Nathan the prophet, and the entire nation of Israel, why is it that in vs 4 David confessed that his sin was against God alone?

Sin should never be judged from a human point of view. It should always be considered like David says here--by asking if it is “evil in the sight of God.”

What phrases in vs 4 indicate that David acknowledges that God is always right?

How does vs 5 support the doctrine of “original sin” (that all humans except Jesus were born with a sin nature)?

Psalm 51:10-12
A Prayer for Restoration

¹⁰*Create in me a clean heart, O God,*

And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

¹¹*Do not cast me away from Your presence*

And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

¹²*Restore to me the joy of Your salvation*

And sustain me with a willing spirit.

DISCUSSION:

What does David ask God to do for him in vs 10?

What would a “steadfast spirit” look like in your life?

Though we don’t believe that someone who is truly saved could ever lose their salvation, if we continue to embrace sin in our lives, we do lose our close relationship with God and we quench His Holy Spirit’s work in our lives. How does David express this in vs 11?

According to vs 12 what happens to us when the Lord forgives us and makes us right with Him again?

How is the joy of your salvation?

How willing is your spirit to serve the Lord?

Psalm 51:13-17
A Prayer of Commitment

¹³*Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,*

And sinners will be converted to You.

¹⁴*Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation;*

Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.

¹⁵*O Lord, open my lips,*

That my mouth may declare Your praise.

¹⁶*For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it;*

You are not pleased with burnt offering.

¹⁷*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;*

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

DISCUSSION:

David makes a commitment to God that if God forgave him and restored him, then David would serve the Lord fully. What commitments does David make in these verses?

Because we have received the Lord's forgiveness, we are required to be His witnesses. How have you been "teaching transgressors" God's ways and helping "sinners to be converted" to the Lord?

What are some other ways that we can be better witnesses of the Lord's saving grace?

According to vs 14 what is another response we should have to God's gracious forgiveness?

What is the gift and sacrifice that the Lord desires from us the most?

How broken is your heart and spirit when you think about your sin?

Psalm 51:18-19
A Prayer for the Nation

*¹⁸By Your favor do good to Zion;
Build the walls of Jerusalem.*

*¹⁹Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices,
In burnt offering and whole burnt offering;
Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.*

DISCUSSION:

When David got his heart right with God, it led him to think about his nation.

What did David hope to see God do for Zion (the nation of Israel)?

What needs to happen for God to bless our church, our community, our nation, our world?

How often are you praying for that to happen?

APPLICATION

Is there unconfessed sin in your life?

Are there things that God wants you to do that you have not been doing (sins of omission)?

Do you look at the sin in your life the same way that God does?

Does your heart break because of your sin?

Are you ready and willing to confess your sins, ask God to restore your fellowship with Him, and use you in His work?

1 John 1:9 says *"If we confess our sin, He (the Lord) is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

Take the time right now to pray Psalm 51 back to God, confessing any known sins and committing to being obedient to everything He desires for you.

Note: *The scriptures printed in this lesson come from the New American Standard Bible (NASB)* La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1986.