



The Lord's Prayer as a Guide Through the Psalms
Dominican Republic Mission Project, Trip 2007 Daily Study

Psalm 51

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy 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, 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.
- ⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- ⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

(See your Bibles for the other 9 verses.)

(English Standard Version)

Forgiveness

(From Matthew 6:12 – “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”)

David wrote this psalm after Nathan, the prophet, confronted him with his murder of Uriah and adultery with Bathsheba. It is for David's attitude in this psalm that he is called “a man after God's own heart.” Doesn't it seem strange that David would get such an epitaph? It was the repenting David that received God's approval, not because of his sin, but because he recognized his sin for what it was – sin against a holy and just God. Have you considered your sins? Do you see them as being directly against God – the living, Creator God? Spend some time reading this psalm and ask yourself how David dealt with his sin and how you deal with yours.

Here are some questions to help get you thinking. Jot your thoughts down on the notes on the back page.

- What attributes of God did David focus on in repenting? (vs. 1)
- Do you see your sin for what it is? (vs. 3)
- Who had David sinned against? (vs. 4) What about his responsibility to Bathsheba, Uriah, and the people of Israel?
- How did David view God's judgment? (vs. 4)
- What is the root of David's sin? Circumstances? (vs. 5) Does he use that as an excuse to push blame to God or someone else?
- What is the hyssop of vs. 7?
- What does David refer to in vs. 8? Think about yesterday's lesson.

In vs. 10-15, David goes further than just asking for forgiveness. He wants to be as God wants him to be – pure, without sin, and rejoicing in the justice of God. Ask yourself about your own sin. Do you want to be forgiven? Do you go to God for forgiveness but are unwilling to change your behavior? That's the root of repentance – turning away from your sin.

If God so loved sinners and died as a ransom for lost sinners, and if He delights in our repentance, how much more should we “forgive our debtors” – those who sin against us? God promises full and complete forgiveness if we come to Him as David did and ask for His mercy and love. Can we deny forgiveness to people who have wronged us?

Spend some time re-reading Psalm 51 and ask God to open your heart to the sight of your own sin and your need to forgive others.

