

Psalm 51

We're nearing the end of Lent, so I thought this week would be a good time to meditate on and pray with Psalm 51, a prayer of confession and repentance. It is easy to go through our days asking God for what we need or want, thanking him for what he's given us, and even praising him for the beauty of creation and for his greatness, without stopping to look at ourselves and how we have offended God. Lent is a time for examining our hearts and souls and seeking reconciliation with God, as we recognize and turn from our sin.

That might seem a gloomy thought, but when we put that in the context of God's mercy and grace, it becomes incredibly freeing and renewing. Deep down inside we know we have done wrong; now we can let go of our efforts to convince ourselves that we are better than we are, so that we can recognize God's amazing love-- he cherishes us and readily responds with love and mercy as he cleanses us from our sin and washes away our burden of guilt.

Psalm 51 was written long before Jesus birth, death, and resurrection, but it points to him as the embodiment of God's grace and mercy. Meditating and praying with this psalm will help prepare us to wholeheartedly celebrate Jesus' resurrection on Easter.

Let's use each verse as a starting point for our own prayer, and then meditate on it throughout the day and week.

Monday: *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Psalm 51:1*

Come to God today with your sin, asking him for mercy and forgiveness. Thank him for his abundant mercy and love for you.

Tuesday: *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin...wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Psalm 51:2,7*

God's desire and power to cleanse us is greater than all of our sin. Ponder this and accept his word as truth, as you seek cleansing from him.

Wednesday: *Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Psalm 51:6*

Ask for wisdom to see yourself in the light of God's truth, rather than as other people or even you would define yourself.

Thursday: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10*

Ask God confidently for a clean heart and for the ability to be steadfast in trusting him and living for him.

Friday: *Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit. Psalm 51:12*

True joy comes when our fellowship with God is restored. Ask God for this joy and for a spirit that desires to live willingly for him.

Saturday: *O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. Psalm 51:15*

God has worked wonderfully to remove our sin and restore us to joyful fellowship with him. Praise him!!!!