

Small Group & Personal Bible Study

Memory Verse: Acts 3:19

“Repent then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”

Small Group Study Questions

1. How often must a person repent to be right with God?

To become a Christian, a person must repent. Acknowledge sin, ask for forgiveness and turn from sin. It is literally changing the way you think. We change direction. We turn from our sinful way to God's holy way. But repentance does not stop at the time of accepting God's plan of salvation. Christians continue to be tempted to sin and even though we are a new creation, we fall to temptation. When we do, God convicts us and we should confess and forsake our sin.

- Read & Meditate on all of Psalm 51 – This is David's prayer of repentance after being confronted by the prophet Nathan about his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and his attempt to cover his sin. (The entire story is found in 2 Samuel 11 & 12)

2. Read Psalm 51:1-6. Who is David placing blame for this sin? Why is it important to step to accept full and complete responsibility for our sin?

David accepts the entire responsibility for his sin. In order to truly repent we can not harbor excuses or justifications in our mind. To repent is to see sin just as God sees sin and to accept responsibility.

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

3. What is David asking from God in this part of his prayer? What does having a clean heart and being renewed in spirit have to do with repentance? Why is it an important step in repentance?

He asks for a clean heart; a renewed spirit to live in him. He is asking for God to change him. If we are to really experience repentance, we must take full responsibility. At the same time, if we are to experience a real change in our life, we must rely on God to make that change in us.

Psalm 51:11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

4. What is David asking God in this part of his prayer? Why would he fear being cast from the presence of God and having the Holy Spirit depart from him?

He is seeking the face of God. He understands the depth of his depravity and that God should want nothing to do with him. He knows how King Saul betrayed God and God rejected him. (1 Samuel 16:1, 14) David acknowledged his dependence on the Lord's mercy and grace.

Psalm 51:12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

5. What is David asking God in this part of his prayer? Why is it important that we receive the joy that comes from salvation to overcome sin? Why is a willing spirit needed to be sustained by God?

David is recognizing the agony it comes from being out of the will of God. He is acknowledging his own lacking capacity to sustain himself and that he needs the Lord's hand to be upon him. When I recognize the joy of salvation I gain the confidence in God to help me overcome sin. I still have a choice in life, a choice to follow God or not. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in me that I can overcome and make it through the battle.

Repentance (Greek word metanoeo) means to change ones mind.

6. Repentance goes beyond acknowledging sin and asking God to forgive. Repentance is a change of mind that moves us to agree with God and allow Him to make the sin that entangles us become very distasteful in our lives. True repentance moves us to worship God with our lives. How does David demonstrate a change in his mind in 1 Samuel 12:20-25 and Psalm 51:13-15?

God wants sin to be forgiven by Him and forsaken by me. God knows that a repentant heart is able to worship Him. True worship requires humility. Psalm 51:17 says it perfectly, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God you will not despise.”

Personal Daily Reading Plan

- Day 1 – 2 Samuel 11 (David’s Sin)
- Day 2 – 2 Samuel 12 (Nathan Confronts David)
- Day 3 – Psalm 51 (David’s Prayer of Repentance)
- Day 4 – Psalm 32 (David’s Testimony)
- Day 5 – Revelations 2:1-7 (A Warning to the Church to Repent and Return to God)