

Read

Psalm 51

Consider

This is a psalm of David, and it is a psalm of confession. As it is a psalm of confession for David, it's important for us to just take a brief moment to try to understand what it is that David is confessing. Scholars have rooted the background for this psalm in the account of the prophet Nathan confronting David after his great sin with Bathsheba. For those of you who might not be familiar with this account, you can find that story in the Old Testament book of 2 Samuel in chapters 11-12.

There will be three sections that David carries us through as he prays to God. First, we'll see that David reminds us why we are in need of relief. The way we are, our very existence, our very being, means that we need help. We need relief. Second, David will help us to recognize that the relief from the brokenness of ourselves is in the form of a complete renewal and restoration. Nothing short of a remaking is what we need. Lastly, we'll see that as we are relieved, as we feel that joy of being a new creation, it means that we also have a responsibility. The joy, the relief we feel compels us to go out and to bring others into this new reality that we have in Christ. We are all relieved with the joy of renewal and restoration in Christ.

Pray

The following are some prayers you might use in your private worship time:

"Gracious Father, break me, convict me, and remake me into a person filled with a renewed and steadfast Spirit. Help me to recognize the brokenness in my own life. Help me to draw closer to you, as I find relief from my sin, through your Son Jesus Christ, by the power of your Holy Spirit."

"Merciful God, shape your community at SCBC into a people who would go out to teach and turn people back to you. Renew and restore all of us through your Son Jesus Christ, that we might go out and truly be a blessing to all peoples."

Diving Deeper

Review Psalm 51.

Psalm 51:1-6

- David's acknowledgement of his own sin begins with an acknowledgement of where he needs his relief- God.
- What is David saying to God?
- What is David saying about himself, and about us as human beings?
- What are the qualities that David identifies about God? Why are these qualities important, in light of how he describes human nature?

Psalm 51:7-12

- If David has just detailed the nature and depths of our sin and it is a part of our very being, then we need not just a deep clean, but relief in the form of renewal and restoration.
- What is David asking God to do for him?
- What does it mean to be cleansed? What does it mean to be purified?
- What does David experience as a result of this purification?
- Who is the agent of this cleansing? Consider what it means for God to create (reflect on God creating in Genesis 1).
- What does it mean for us to not just be cleansed, but to be a new creation?

Psalm 51:13-17

- David details the joy that we have from the restoration and renewal that only God can provide for us from our sinful state. What this does is that it releases us to be his people. We are now enabled to be in God's presence. As God's people we can now be a blessing to all peoples.
- What are some specific things David highlights that we might be called to do as God's people?
- What does it mean for us to offer true sacrifices? What does it look like for us to live in this way?
- Reference 1 Peter 2:9-10. What can we do as SCBC to teach and turn people back to God, through the way we live, together, as a community?