

Life Lessons from Book of Psalms

LESSON 7: DEALING WITH GUILT

REFLECTION

Begin your study by sharing thoughts on this question.

1. Think of a time when you received something you did not deserve. How did you respond?

BIBLE READING: Psalm 51:1–12 NIV

¹ [For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.]

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

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

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

DISCOVERY

Explore the Bible reading by discussing these questions.

2. List the attributes of God described in this Psalm.

3. What does God think of our sins?

4. How did David, the psalm writer, react to God's correction?

5. What did David ask God to do for him?

6. What does God do for a person who repents of sin?

INSPIRATION

Man by himself cannot deal with his own guilt. He must have help from the outside. In order to forgive himself, he must have forgiveness from the one he has offended. Yet man is unworthy to ask God for forgiveness....

You can't do that by yourself. I don't care how many worship services you attend or good deeds you do, your goodness is insufficient. You can't be good enough to deserve forgiveness. No one bats a thousand. No one bowls three

hundred. No one. Not you, not me, not anyone....

Listen. Quit trying to quench your own guilt. You can't do it. There is no way. Not with a bottle of whiskey or perfect Sunday School attendance. Sorry. I don't care how bad you are. You can't be bad enough to forget it. And I don't care how good you are. You can't be good enough to overcome it. You need a Savior.

(From No Wonder They Call Him the Savior by Max Lucado)

RESPONSE

Use these questions to share more deeply with each other.

7. How does God convict us of sin? (Related passages: Job 36:10; Proverbs 6:23; John 16:7, 8; 1 Thessalonians 1:4, 5; 2 Timothy 3:16.)

8. How do people try to cope with guilt?

9. What does this psalm say about dealing with guilt?