

Fellowship Group Notes – Psalm 51 (A Sinner's Song) – 13/14 June 2012

For the full background to this Psalm see 2 Samuel chapters 10 & 11. The sins of David, namely committing adultery with Bathsheba and effectively murdering her husband Uriah were now one year old. And although David had suffered in private, he had not yet publically acknowledged his sin. Nathan then confronts David with a story of injustice ... and David's sin is revealed ... at this David drops to his knees, and all the pent up remorse, shame and guilt he felt was released ... as well as this Psalm.

David's Confession (v1-6)

What is David praying for in this Psalm? (v1-2) Upon what aspects of God's character does David appeal to God for his forgiveness? (v1-2) How does David describe the extent of his guilt? (v3-5)

David says that it is only against God that he has sinned ... why do you think David name's God and not those humans who have been affected by his sin? (v4)

What does God desire of David? (v6. See also v16-17)

"We often try and combat entrenched sin by changing our outward behaviour ... and whilst this temporary behavioural modification can provide the change of context needed to allow spiritual change to get a foothold ... lasting restoration and recovery can only be achieved on the basis of a renewed spiritual relationship with God."
– Discuss.

David's Cleansing (v7-12)

As David prays for forgiveness and restoration what does he ask God to do? (v7-12)

It's clear from the Bible that every Christian receives the Holy Spirit to indwell them when they are saved as a seal of God's ownership of us (See Rom 8v9 and Eph 1v13). So what is meant by v11 ... can the Holy Spirit be "taken from us" when we sin? (*Think about the different role of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times – example Saul 10v10 and then 16v14*). What does the New Testament have to say on this subject? ... See Eph 4v29-32 and 1 Thess 5v16-21 ... in the context of these verses how might we 'grieve' and 'quench' the Spirit? Is there a difference between these two terms, and if so, what is it?

What are some of the signs in someone's life that they may have grieved or quenched the Holy Spirit? (To understand how the Holy Spirit works in our lives see: Rom 8v15-16 (Gives assurance of Salvation), John 14v26 (Brings God's Word alive), Gal 5v16 (Steers us away from sinful desires) Gal 5v22 (Produces good fruit), 1 John 2v26-27 (Helps us discern false teaching) ... see also John 14v16, 1 Cor 2v9-12, Matt 10v20, Rom 8v26-28.)

What do we need to do if we know we have grieved or quenched the Holy Spirit? (See 1 John 1v9)

v12 - What does David recognise that he has lost because he has sinned? Is this something you can relate to at times in your own life?

David's Consecration (v13-19)

What two things does David promise to do when forgiven? (v13-14)

Often we try to cover up our sin (as David had done) ... what benefits, if any, does acknowledging our sin in public have? (See v13 for one example) Is this always appropriate?

What do you understand a "broken and contrite" heart to be? (v17) Have you known times when this has been so in your own life?

What is David's prayer as he ends this Psalm? (v18-19) How does this "building up of Jerusalem's walls" mirror David's recent life experience?

Prayer Points – In quiet take time to reflect and confess your own sin to God, accepting his grace and forgiveness. – Pray for the new CAP centre at Surrey Chapel, for Chris Murphy heading this up and the team. – Pray for Holiday Club as advertising in Schools etc begins.