

Living on a Prayer - A Prayer of Confession

Introduction:

David, the king chosen because he had a heart after God's own, sinned deeply. He had committed adultery with Bathsheba and sent her husband, Uriah, to his death. In the following days, the prophet Nathan had shown David the depth of his sin. It was then that David penned Psalm 51, a prayer of confession. In this psalm, he pleads to God to receive his prayer and to give him mercy, a new spirit and a clean heart. David prays this prayer with a broken spirit and a spirit of hope, trusting that God is the God of mercy and grace.

We, too, need to confess to God our sins and receive the forgiveness that comes to us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. David's prayer serves as a model for our prayer. His words can be ours, his confession can be ours, and his hope can also be ours. We are sinners in need of mercy. God is good and gives us his son. Scripture tells us that when we confess those sins before God, he hears us and cleanses us from the unrighteousness that rules our hearts. What a promise for us to stand on!

Read Your Bible

- Psalm 51
- Matthew 6:9-13

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. What cultural norms do you observe regarding admitting faults and failures?
2. Why is it so hard to admit when we are wrong? Why is it so hard to apologize?
3. What does David ask of God in his prayer in Psalm 51?
4. How can we use this as a model for our confession?

5. In the Lord's Prayer, we ask for God's forgiveness. Why is it important to do this daily?
6. What do we expect of God when we ask for forgiveness?
7. What does God expect of us when he forgives us?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Forgiving Father, your love is unfailing, and your mercy endures forever. Our sins are many and our hearts are broken. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and restore a right spirit in us. Bring us into your presence and give us your Holy Spirit that, as forgiven people, we may enter the world to forgive. In Jesus' name, Amen.