

DAY THREE:

CLEANSING AND JOY

INTRODUCTION

One of the encouraging things about the Bible is that it describes its heroes warts and all. Great men and women of God are seen as deeply flawed. King David is one of these godly heroes. Although the Bible says that he was a man after God's heart, many of the stories indicate he had significant weaknesses. But in the songs David wrote, we get a glimpse of his true heart. He certainly did a lot wrong. Preceding the writing of Psalm 51, David had committed both adultery and murder. And God was not pleased. David would live with the painful consequences of these sins for the rest of his life. But in Psalm 51 we find David seeking God's forgiveness and pleading for cleansing and a revived purity and goodness and joy.

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 51:7-12

*Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.*

*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

DEVOTION

You cannot separate repentance and revival. Because personal revival brings a new holiness and closeness with God, it is always preceded by repentance and maintained by repentance. As James said, "friendship with the world is enmity with God" (Jam. 4:4). So we can't be close friends with God and allow the world into our lives. The only way to stop sin getting a grip and destroying our friendship with God is continual repentance. This might sound like hard work, but it is actually incredibly freeing.

David refused to deal with his sin for over nine months and he found that it crushed his bones (51:8). I am not sure how you picture crushed bones, but having had a few broken bones in my time, it sounds incredibly painful to me. He felt ashamed. He lost his joy. And most significantly, he no longer knew the presence of God. He was even fearful of losing God's Spirit forever. Yet he still ignored and justified his sin until God finally broke through. Satan just loves to squash us and keep us imprisoned by our pride and shame.



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But as David repents of his sin, you can see the incredible freedom and life that he believes will flow from God. Cleanness (51:7). Purity – whiter than snow (51:7, 10). Joy (51:8). A new heart and spirit (51:10). Fresh faithfulness and obedience (51:10,12). This is the way to live.

The following illustration is a little gross, but then so is sin, so bear with me. I hate vomiting. I will fight so hard to hold it back. No matter how sick I feel, I will not give in. I am determined not to let that food come back up. Maybe it's fear or maybe it's pride. I do not know. But when I can finally hold it back no longer and I vomit, I feel really good (at least for a while). The wretched rubbish has been expelled. Sin is like that. We fight so hard to ignore it, or justify it, or hold it at bay, or pretend it is not too bad. We feel that nothing can be done about our sin and so we hold it in. But when it comes to the crunch and we admit, confess and repent, oh the joy and freedom that flows.

Personal revival involves giving up the deception of our goodness and letting Jesus take our sin and guilt away. We do not have to pretend anymore. We keep on repenting and are free through Jesus.

PRAYER RESPONSE

Read this Psalm again a few times and make it your personal prayer.

PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

Lord, sin is a terrible blight on our community. It touches everyone. It invades everything. It squashes our hope. It wrecks our peace. It crushes our bones. And it keeps us from friendship with you. Please bring your conviction like you did for David. May Satan's lies be exposed. May good grief and sorrow over sin lead to new life and freedom, and your revival.

