

PSALM 51

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

- 1 **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.
- 13 **Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
so that sinners will turn back to you.**
- 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
you who are God my Savior,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.
- 15 Open my lips, Lord,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
- 17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise.
- 18 May it please you to prosper Zion,
to build up the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous,
in burnt offerings offered whole;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

(Message Outline on the back)

1. **Confession** (v. 1-6)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; For I know my transgressions...

- **Reality-check** • **Repentance**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin. **Psalm 32:5**

The first gift of solitude is its capacity for separating the individual from the crowd. When you're alone in the wilderness, you escape the fretful arena where performance and the search for approval govern so much of your life. There are no expectations to meet, no authorities to please, no audiences to impress. In wilderness, you stand outside of the throng, outside of the pressures of admiration and blame. Only there... outside... are you alone enough to resist being defined by anything external.
—**Belden Lane, *Backpacking With the Saints***

Here's my heart // Lord Here's my heart Lord // Here's my heart Lord //
Speak what is true. **Here's My Heart, David Crowder**

2. **Forgiveness** (v. 7-11)

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

- **Re-creation** • **Restoration**

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.
Genesis 1:2

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **2 Corinthians 5:17**

3. **Ministry** (v. 12-19)

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back from you.

- **Redemption** • **Rejoicing**

'Cause I am found, I am yours. // I am loved. I'm made pure. // I have life. I can breathe. // I am healed. I am free. // 'Cause you are strong. You are sure. // You are life. You endure. // You are good, always true // You are light breaking through. **Here's My Heart, David Crowder**

"The context for the most personal and private religious experience is usually in the context of the worshipping community. In turn, the worshipping community must be nurtured by personal spiritual life like that expressed in the original psalm. Neither can thrive without the other."
Tate, M. E., *Psalms 51-100*