

**Sermon Title: The Fundamental Principle of Confession in Prayer**

**Sermon Text: Psalm 51**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to practice the act of biblical confession, leading to restoration of the offender.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 5 characteristics of biblical confession and repentance.**

**Introduction:** This psalm must be seen as a full meditation on the importance of confession and repentance. After a believer has sinned, he must obtain forgiveness if he is to enjoy full participation in the fellowship and service of the Lord.

The main message of this psalm is that the most offensive offender among God's people can appeal to God for forgiveness, for moral restoration, and for the resumption of a joyful life of fellowship and renewed service, if he comes with a broken spirit and bases appeal on God's compassion and grace.

Confession includes two aspects. The word in Greek is (homologeō), to say the same thing. It is agreeing with God that you sinned, and it is turning from it. It isn't asking to be forgiven (**John 2:12** *After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.*). It is saying "God, I've sinned. I thank you for already forgiving me, and I turn from it." True confession involves repentance. And repentance means turning away. You haven't really, honestly confessed your sin until you stop doing it. (**2 Corinthians 7:8** *For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. 9 Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.*). True confession is a brokenness, that changes the behavior. True confession involves a right view of 3 things. A right view of sin, God, and self. True confession can only occur when we see God truly, when we see sin for what it is, and when we see ourselves for what we are.

In this Psalm, David prays for five realities. Sin has made him dirty, and he asks to be clean. Guilt has made him physically sick, and he asks to be healed. Iniquity has broken his friendship and fellowship with God, and he asks to be restored. But mostly, he asks for pardon and mercy. This is a Psalm of true confession.

**I. Biblical confession includes a plea for forgiveness. V.1-2**

A. Biblical confession recognizes that sin deserves judgment. V.1a

**Psalm 103:10** He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

**Psalm 130:3** If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

**Ezra 9:13** "And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, since You our God have punished us less than our iniquities *deserve*, and have given us *such* deliverance as this,

B. Biblical confession appeals to God's mercy. V.1b

**Nehemiah 9:3** And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God *for one-fourth* of the day; and *for another fourth* they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God. **4** Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

**Job 11:6** That He would show you the secrets of wisdom! For *they would* double *your* prudence. Know therefore that God exacts from you *Less* than your iniquity *deserves*.

**Romans 11:32** For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

**Ephesians 2:4** But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),<sup>6</sup> and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,<sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,<sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

C. Biblical confession appeals to God for cleansing. V.1c-2

- 1) Blot out
- 2) Wash me – cleaner used on a foul garment.
- 3) Cleanse me – total cleansing

**II. Biblical confession includes a plea for acknowledged sin. V.3-6**

A. Biblical confession acknowledges ownership of sin. V.3-4

**Joshua 7:19** Now Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide *it* from me."

**Luke 15:21** "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

B. Biblical confession acknowledges origin of sin. V.5-6

**Psalms 58:3** The wicked are estranged from the womb; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.

**Genesis 8:21** And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

**Job 14:4** Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? No one!

**III. Biblical confession includes a plea for moral cleansing. V.7-12**

A. Moral cleansing starts with recognizing God's holiness. V.6

God is not first concerned with external behavior. He is concerned with what's going on inside a person. David is saying, "God I know you don't desire the process of exterior ceremonial purification that every Jew is so used to. God, I know that isn't what you're after. What you want is truth on the inside."

B. Moral cleansing starts with recognizing God's power. V.7

C. Moral cleansing starts with recognizing God's discipline. V.8

D. Moral cleansing starts with recognizing God's forgiveness. V.9-12

**Isaiah 43:25** "I, *even I, am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

**Micah 7:18** Who *is* a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights *in* mercy.

**19** He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our<sup>1</sup> sins Into the depths of the sea.

**IV. Biblical confession includes a plea for restored service. V.13-17**

**V. Biblical confession includes a plea for national restoration. V.18-19**