

Psalms Session 4 - Penitential Psalms

Welcome/Prayer

Penitential Psalms are Psalms of Confession. These psalms express sorrow for sin. Here, the psalmist admits his or her guilt and leaves the situation with God.

Read Psalm 51 as the focus scripture. Respond to the following questions:

Questions for Reflection

1. How would you define the words/concepts *grace* and *repentance*?
2. According to a penitential song like Psalm 51, what actions and attitudes are necessary to be truly penitent?
3. What does Psalm 51 say about who God is and about our relationship with God?
4. Reflect on one or more of the other penitential psalms listed below.
 - a. Examples include Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51; 102; 130; and 143.
 - b. Read each psalm aloud and react to its content.
5. What barriers often keep us from opening our eyes to our need for reconciliation with God?

Reading and Discussion

1. As a sinner forgiven by the mercy of God, when have you experienced God's mercy yourself or seen God's mercy at work in the life of someone else?
2. How would you say acts of repentance and assurances of God's grace have made you not more religious but more human?
3. What are the benefits of maintaining a corporate confession of sin in the order of service in congregational worship?
4. If prayer is a conversation with God, what kind of conversations do you have with God these days? In what way(s) do you allow God to talk with you?

Closing/Prayer