

Question Everything // Part 2

Psalm 51

Read the Scripture reference above and then read the introduction below to help guide your personal study.

The sermon this weekend builds on an important question from last week: “why am I not happy?” One answer stems from the inherent guilt, shame, and personal brokenness that haunt everyone of us. We all fail, we all do not even live up to our own mediocre standards of right and wrong. What resources do you have at your disposal to address your own guilt? While many of our friends and neighbors try to avoid guilt and shame, the Bible shows a better path to freedom and happiness.

We see in the Scriptures that we are to face guilt head-on and deal with the source of the problem. Christians know they have an endless fountain of forgiveness because of Christ’s death. However, it can still be very difficult to admit exactly where we fall short and need this forgiveness. The path to happiness amidst personal guilt comes through the process of repentance. As the sermon, Psalm 32 and Psalm 51 explain, repentance comes through specifically acknowledging the sin, thanking God for his forgiveness through Christ, and then planning to change the behavior or attitude that led to the sin. The result of repentance is what Psalm 51:10 calls a “clean heart.” Sin will still emerge in the life of a believer, but a clean conscience and corrected attitude will contribute mightily to your happiness.

The Psalms make a unique contribution to the Scriptures in that they put poetic words to the emotions and prayers of people who have known God intimately. Their words are brutally honest, but always seeking a godly perspective on the human experience. Let the words of Psalm 51 give voice to your own relationship with God.

Work through these questions before you come to small group and be ready to interact with the Scriptures and questions below.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. In the sermon this weekend, Pastor J.D. talked about how the human soul has an inherent need to feel safe, clean, and significant. How have you seen this to be true personally?
2. What else from the sermon stood out to you as insightful?
3. Read Psalm 51. What words and concepts are repeated, emphasized, and connected? What ideas are contrasted?

4. Examine: What does the Psalm say is the right way to deal with guilt and sin? What are some ways that won't work according to Psalm 51?

5. Consider the introduction to the Psalm (before verse 1) and verse 4. Why is sin that involves another person chiefly a sin against God?

6. What do you learn about God from this passage?

7. Apply: From the sermon and from this passage, how would you describe the process of repentance in your own words? Why is it important for your soul?

8. Identify a recurring sin that you have not yet eradicated from your life. What plans will you now make, after this study, to rid yourself of that sin?

9. Pray: Consider sharing the sin from question 8 with some members of your small group. Pray earnestly that God would help you remove that sin from your life. Thank God that he sent his son to die for that sin as you repent of it. Then spend a few minutes meditating and praising God for his gracious and merciful character. Here are some verse to look up that will help you praise him: 1 John 1:9, Acts 3:19, Isaiah 1:18, 2 Corinthians 5:17, and Micah 7:18-19