

How do you want to respond, in the light of God's forgiving, restoring love in your life?

What does this tell us about ourselves, when we struggle to want to share Jesus with others?

Read Psalm 51:16-19. God isn't interested in superficial worship or pretend Christianity. He responds with mercy to broken, sorry hearts. The psalm ends with a picture of not just an individual in restored relationship with God, but a whole community. Individual response is so important but imagine our whole church worshipping out of truly humble, repentant hearts – recognising the wonder of God's amazing grace. What would that look like? What would we see overflowing out of our life together?

Was David 'a man after God's own heart'? It's hard when we think about what he did. But his prayer in Psalm 51 reminds us that the most important thing God requires is a humble, repentant heart of faith.

Prayer

Finish by praying together the words of Psalm 51. Make these words your words. When you get to the final two verses about Zion and burnt offerings, think about our church and our worship and life together.

Lismore

Baptist Church



After God's Own Heart -DAVID-

Growth Group Study Guide

Week 8

2 July 2023

"After God's Own Heart?"

Psalm 51

Series Overview:

Over seven weeks, we will study and reflect on a central character in the Old Testament; David. We will look at events leading up to his birth, as well as his development and faith in God. Our prayer is that we will grow closer to God through viewing the life of God's servant and friend called David; a man after God's own heart.

Last week we basically wrapped up our series on David, 'After God's own heart', with 2 Samuel 6 where we see David's desire to have God at the centre of his kingdom, as he sought to bring the Ark of the covenant back into Jerusalem. We also see David re-engaging with the holiness of God, as well as his mercy and the joy of knowing him – through the lessons he learnt as he brought the Ark back. So David is looking pretty good at this point, and that story continues in the next couple of chapters...

Background

Review 2 Samuel 7-8. What good things do we learn about David in these chapters?

When we read these stories, we can perhaps understand why Samuel called him 'a man after God's own heart' back in 1 Samuel 13:14 (see also Acts 13:22). Until...

Read 2 Samuel 11. What did David do?

It's hard to see how these could be the actions of 'a man after God's own heart'. Read 2 Samuel 12. What does the prophet Nathan do, and how does David respond?

This is the context for Psalm 51, which is introduced (NIV): 'For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.'

Read Psalm 51:1-2. What is David's starting point in this psalm?

Reflect on a time when you have felt the need to cry out to God for mercy. Only share with the group what you feel safe to share.

Read Psalm 51:3-6. What does this tell us about how David saw his sin?

In Romans 3:10-12 (NIV), the apostle Paul says: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." And in v23 '... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

In the light of the above, how would you feel about praying the words in Psalm 51:3-6 to God, for yourself?

Read Psalm 51:7-12. List at least 5 things for which David asks God.

Read again Psalm 51: 1 & 17. David is asking a lot, but what do these verses tell us about why he would be confident in asking so much of God?

In the light of your own sin, reflect on how you feel about asking God to forgive you. Why can you go to him with confidence that he will forgive you? (Hint: we know what David knew about God, plus we know about Jesus!)

Read Psalm 51:13-15. How does David respond, in the light of God's forgiving, restoring love?