

Psalm 51: Renewal

Read Psalm 51:10-12

The psalmist has confessed his sin and has believed God for forgiveness, but he doesn't stop there. Why? Because when we face our neediness before a holy God, when we realize our helplessness in the face of sin, we know that our need goes beyond forgiveness. If we stop with forgiveness, the sin will repeat. Nothing will change.

Faced with his own sin, what does he pray for beyond forgiveness?

- *“Create in me a pure heart”* (v.10a, NASB). This is the word for “create” from Genesis 1:1, when God *created* the heavens and earth out of nothing. We don't have pure hearts on our own, and we can't make them pure. But God can purify the source of our thoughts and desires.
- *“Renew a steadfast spirit within me”* (v.10b, NASB). The psalmist again wants an inner spirit that is “steadfast” - consistent, loyal, and reliable. Which of us doesn't want that? God can make us consistent, no matter how many times we've failed Him.
- *“Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me”* (v.11, NASB). The psalmist values God's immediate personal presence, and he doesn't want to lose it. God's is the source of all life and good. When we sin, we turn away from Him and separate ourselves from Him. But remember, God is forever drawing us toward Himself. If we repent immediately and sincerely, not even our sin needs keep us apart from Him.
- *“Restore to me the joy of Your salvation”* (v.12a, NASB). God's ways are not drudgery or duty, but joy! Walking with Him is natural and joyful.
- *“Sustain me with a willing spirit”* (v.12b, NASB). If holiness were a heavy obligation, none of us could maintain it. But we can obey God out of a free, glad, joyful spirit that delights to live in His presence.

When we have failed God and wronged Him, we can have more than forgiveness alone. He can renew a purity, a consistency, a freedom, and a joy in His presence and approval.

Listen & Sing: [An Undivided Heart](#) (from [LNWhymns.com](#))