



Lesson 16

The Penitential Psalms or Songs of the Sinner



Introduction



- Psalms of penitence – *Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143*
- “It is difficult to totally separate physical illness, spiritual anguish, and sin...we will look at psalms where the writer clearly understands sin to be his major issue and the cause of his suffering.” (pg. 64)
 - *Psalms 6:2, 6; 32:3-4; 38:3-5, 7-8, 11*
 - *Cf. James 5:14-16; 1 Corinthians 11:30; Hebrews 12:5-6, 11*
- Admitting guilt through confession, and forgiveness from God are hallmarks of these Psalms.



Value to Today's Reader



“Observable in the penitential psalms is the great difference between biblical model and modern therapies for misbehavior and its consequences.” (pg. 64)

- **Bible** – the problem is sin and the consequence of spiritual death. (*cf. Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 6:23*)
- **Psychology** – the problem is the feeling and effects of guilt.
 - Can the feeling of guilt be removed, and the sin remain? (*cf. Isaiah 3:8-9; Jeremiah 6:14-15; 1 Timothy 4:1-3*)



Psalm 51: David's Psalm of Penitence



I. A Prayer for Forgiveness and Restoration (vv. 1-12)

- A. Acknowledgment of Sin, and Appeal to God for Forgiveness (vv. 1-4)
- B. Acknowledgment of Dependence on God, and Appeal to Him for Restoration (vv. 5-12)

II. A Promise of Faithfulness (vv. 13-17)

- A. A Promise to Testify of God's Grace (vv. 13-15)
- B. Acknowledgment of God's True Desire (vv. 16-17)

III. A Prayer and Promise Extending Beyond Self (vv. 18-19)

