

Sermon Discussion Questions

Speaker: Dr. Stephen Burrell

Topic: Forgiveness: Restoring Broken Relationships

Scriptures - Psalm 51

Opening:

Open your time in prayer by thanking God for His mercy, asking for humility as you examine your own heart, and inviting Him to help your group grow in confession, forgiveness, and restored relationships.

Give Background & Context:

Psalm 51 is David's response after being confronted with his sin. Instead of making excuses, David models true repentance—appealing to God's mercy, owning his sin personally, and seeking full restoration. This passage shows that restoration is not about managing appearances, but about humility before God and a transformed heart.

- Read Psalm 51:1-2
 - What does David appeal to in verses 1-2—his own actions or God's character? Why is that significant?
 - What do the words "blot out," "wash," and "cleanse" reveal about how David understands his sin?
 - Why is it important to recognize that the offended one has the right to forgive or restore?
 - How does focusing on God's mercy rather than our own performance shape the way we approach repentance?
- Read Psalm 51:3-5
 - What do you notice about David's use of "I," "my," and "me" in these verses? What does that teach us about confession?
 - David says, "Against you, you only, have I sinned." What does this reveal about the nature of sin?
 - Why are we often tempted to shift blame to circumstances, other people, or stress instead of owning our sin?
 - What would it look like to practice honest, personal confession in your relationships this week?
- Read Psalm 51:7-15
 - What actions does David ask God to take (cleanse, create, renew, restore)? What does this show about who is responsible for restoration?
 - Why does David avoid making promises or proving himself, and instead simply asks for God's work?
 - How does restoration lead to renewed worship and testimony in verses 13-15?
 - What role does humility play in experiencing true restoration with God and others?
- Sermon Reflection Questions
 - The sermon highlighted the difference between a hollow apology ("I'm sorry, but...") and true repentance. What makes the difference between the two?
 - The sermon emphasized that forgiveness and restoration are grounded in the character of the one offended, not the effort of the offender. How does that deepen your understanding of God's grace?
 - Think about a relationship that may need to be restored. What would it look like to take the first step—not by defending yourself, but by owning your part?