



BIBLE READING NOTES

SOAP

PREPARE

What does the word 'sin' make you think of? What are some of the reasons that we may now feel uncomfortable talking about confessing our sins?

BIBLE PASSAGE

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions. ² Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. ³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. ⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.....⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. ⁹ Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. ¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. (verses from Psalm 51)

EXPLORE

- The need for forgiveness is a very real one, both spiritually and in our society. Look at verses 3 and 5. What place do we need to come from in order to be forgiven? In what ways is this counter-cultural (think about the desire for earning our way to something)?
- Look at verses 8 and 12. What follows on from repentance? Can you think of any times in your life when you have felt the 'joy of God's salvation'?
- Hyssop (verse 7) is a plant used at times in the Old Testament when people were asking for forgiveness and cleansing. Look at these two references to hyssop, and consider its significance and what it tells us about Jesus and the role of his death in forgiveness.





BIBLE READING NOTES

Exodus 12 vv 22, 23: '22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the door-frame. 23 When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the door-frame and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down'.

John 19 vv 29,30 '29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.'

RESPOND

Use verse 10 as a response to what you read in this Psalm. Write down your thoughts if it is helpful.

Consider: It is God who creates a pure heart in us – through justification in Jesus (his death puts us right with God), and through sanctification (an ongoing process of being made holy in God's eyes). Why are both necessary?

How can we seek God's help in renewing a steadfast spirit as we go through this period of lockdown?

PRAYER

Amazing Father God, we praise you that you meet us where we are at, and that you accept us just as we are because of Jesus' saving death on the cross. Thank you that we can bring our brokenness before you in order to ultimately flourish. Thank you for the joy that comes through knowing that you fully forgive us. Amen.

