

Learning to Pray From the Psalms

The **P.S.A.L.M.S.** Acronym (3)
Acknowledgement

Lesson 5
May 7

We're learning, discussing, and memorizing a simple acronym - **P.S.A.L.M.S.** - that can provide a framework for prayer:

- **Praise:** "God, I praise you for..."
- **Satisfaction:** "God, if I have you, it is enough; I am satisfied because..."
- **Acknowledgement:** "God, please be merciful and gracious; I..."

Let's focus on the third letter: **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**. In your own words, what does it mean to "acknowledge" something? If God already knows everything, why does it even matter whether or not we "acknowledge" certain things about him and ourselves?

"God, please be merciful and gracious (Psa 86:15); I..."

Psalm 32:1-7 is a great example of acknowledgement.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not reach him...

You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

- Why is it sometimes really tough for us to acknowledge what we ought to acknowledge about our choices and their consequences? How did both Adam and Eve struggle with that all the way back in Genesis 3? And what about us? If we never acknowledge...

David's prayer in Psalm 51 is another great example of acknowledgement.

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

- Scanning the rest of Psalm 51, what can we learn from David's prayer? After his terrible choices in 2 Samuel 11, how do his words in Psalm 51 reveal a different sort of heart?
- In James 5:16, we're also encouraged to acknowledge—not just to God, but to one another. Why? Why is acknowledgement good for us?
- Beyond our sin and foolish choices, can you think of other things it's really good for us to acknowledge? Why is this such a good practice to weave into our prayers?