

## PSALM 51 NIV

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Surely, I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my mother  
conceived me.

<sup>6</sup> Yet you desired faithfulness even in the  
womb;  
you taught me wisdom in that secret  
place.

<sup>7</sup> Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be  
clean;  
wash me, and I will be whiter than  
snow.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

<sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins  
and blot out all my iniquity.

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

<sup>11</sup> Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain  
me.

<sup>13</sup> Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
so that sinners will turn back to you.

<sup>14</sup> Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O  
God,

you who are God my Savior,  
and my tongue will sing of your  
righteousness.

<sup>15</sup> Open my lips, Lord,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.

<sup>16</sup> You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would  
bring it;  
you do not take pleasure in burnt  
offerings.

<sup>17</sup> My sacrifice, O God, is<sup>[b]</sup> a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart  
you, God, will not despise.

<sup>18</sup> May it please you to prosper Zion,  
to build up the walls of Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> Then you will delight in the sacrifices of  
the righteous,  
in burnt offerings offered whole;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Every time I read or hear this psalm, I can't help but remember a pastor friend of mine whose son through many years of rebellion ended up in an institution in Iowa for several years. When he was discharged, he and several friends went for a swim. His son drowned. While going through his belongings, they found a real tattered bible. When he picked it up the book flopped open to this Psalm 51. His son had drawn circles around and around this Psalm with notes on the side. That information gave his family much comfort, even with their loss.

