

Sermon Guide for May 24, 2026

Title: The Anatomy of Real Repentance | Psalm 51

Series: Highs, Lows, & Hallelujahs: Psalms for Every Season

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Big Idea

Real repentance is more than feeling bad about sin. It is a broken-hearted turning back to God that seeks forgiveness, transformation, and restored fellowship with him.

The 8 Core Truths of Real Repentance

1. Real repentance throws itself on the _____ of God (vv. 1-2)

When David asks for forgiveness, he doesn't build a case for why he deserves it. He appeals entirely to **God's character**—His faithful love and abundant compassion.

2. Real repentance feels the _____ of sin (vv. 3, 8)

David describes his sin as a consuming presence, comparing God's discipline to having his very bones crushed. When we are truly repentant, we aren't just sad we got caught; we are devastated by how our sin has disrupted our relationship with God.

3. Real repentance stops _____ sin and sides with God against it (v. 4)

David offers zero excuses. He doesn't say, *"I've been stressed,"* or *"At least I'm not as bad as others."* Instead, he says, *"Against you... I have sinned."* Repentance means dropping the defense attorney act, agreeing with God's judgment, and admitting, *"You are right, and I am wrong."*

4. Real repentance sees the deeper _____ beneath the deed (vv. 5-7)

David acknowledges that his actions sprouted from a deeper, spiritual sickness that has corrupted him from the start. We don't just need minor behavior adjustments; we need a complete internal cleansing because we are spiritually sick and require the Great Physician.

5. Real repentance seeks _____, not mere absolution (vv. 10-12)

David doesn't just want a "get out of jail free" card; he asks God to give him a clean heart. If we only ask for forgiveness without asking for a new heart, we will just repeat the same cycles.

6. Real repentance longs to _____ other sinners (v. 13)

Once David experiences the sweetness of God's grace, his response is to help other fellow sinners: *"Then I will teach the rebellious your ways."* When we realize sin is a deadly cancer and that we have found the cure, we cannot help but want to lead other trapped people to freedom.

7. Real repentance longs for restored _____ (vv. 14-15)

Real repentance doesn't just want relief from punishment; it wants closeness with God. David's ultimate goal is to have his lips opened so he can joyfully praise and commune with his Creator again.

