

## HOLY SPIRIT: A CONTRITE SPIRIT

“The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit” (Psalm 34:18).

The Hebrew word for contrite means crushed or broken in pieces. Contrition is a deep feeling of remorse for sin. Psalm 34 is one of six penitential songs David wrote after his tryst with Bathsheba. David understood contrition by experience. His sin crushed him under a load of sorrow. If it were not for God’s grace, he couldn’t have written these comforting words. When we repent with deep sorrow, God repairs with deeper grace. David hid his sin for a year and experienced physical and emotional distress. It wasn’t until after David’s crushing that he experienced relief in his spirit. When his spirit revived, David revived. Contriteness caused David to write psalms that have ministered to others since his own repentance. Our spirit should be constantly in a state of contrition. We ought not to sin, but we do. A contrite spirit grieves over offenses to God. It does no good to confess over and over again if there is no sorrow and repentance. To confess (I John 1:9) means to agree with God. “Godly sorrow” is the Holy Spirit placing grief in your spirit that tells you something is not right. The “sorrow of the world” brings death (II Corinthians 7:10). Worldly sorrow is an emotional reaction of psychic to consequences, but does not grieve over offending God. A contrite spirit responds immediately with godly sorrow. People who cover their faults do not have a contrite spirit. As Watchman Nee says, “God cannot save them to the uttermost” (see Hebrews 7:25). That means Jesus, seated as our High Priest at the right hand of the Father, cannot lead beyond our unwillingness to be contrite. Listen to your spirit.