

PRAYING PSALM 143

This is the last of David's penitential psalms. 1. A CRY OF DESPAIR (1-4). My heart within me is distressed. 2. A CONTEMPLATION (5-6). I remember. I meditate. I muse. I spread out my hands. 3. A CALL FOR HELP (7-12). Answer me. Cause me to hear Your kindness. Cause me to know the way. Deliver me from my enemies. Teach me to do Your will. Lead me in uprightness. Revive me. Destroy those who afflict my soul.

David's fall into sin haunted him. He needed to talk about it, so he wrote poetry and put his thoughts and feelings to music. Then he shared the music with the congregation through psalms. David did this six times over his sins regarding Bathsheba and Uriah. That takes humility, which is what repentance is about. It reveals David's unworthiness to be a child of God. The six penitential psalms demonstrate a process from despair to peace that would not allow David to forget his terrible crimes before God. Here is the process: Ruminates on the sin until it is entirely laid bare before God. Reason through the sins until you understand the steps that led you to violate God's holy law. Raise your hands in surrender to God. Seek God's kindness, God's way, and God's deliverance. Seek God's will to move forward in your Christian life. Set new goals for your life. Ask God to revive you. Turn your detractors over to the Lord. When you think you have ruined your life because of a serious fall in grace, it will take a long time to move past it. You may never get over it entirely. The worse the sin, the longer it takes. Take the time necessary for God to correct your ways. There is a reason David wrote seven psalms about his moral fall. He needed to be reminded of God's mercy, and he wanted others to be reminded of God's forgiveness of their egregious sins. David is no better or worse than any person. However, Jesus is. It is no longer about our sins, but what Jesus did for our sins – "Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us of all sins." It is not about our badness; it is about Jesus' blood. "And all the people said..."