

**How Can We Say “Sorry”?**  
**Sermon Based Discussion (August 4, 2013)**  
**Sermon Series: Forgiveness**

**WARM UP**

1. Describe a recent experience you had where someone (you or another party) made an apology. What happened?

Many of us say the words “I’m sorry” every day. Perhaps we say it when we bump into someone. Or maybe we say it when we arrive late for an appointment. But how many of us have considered what wisdom the Bible offers for this all-important practice in our relationships? In this session, we look at a famous passage to learn what we can about how to have an effective and sincere apology.

**INTO THE BIBLE**  
**(Read Psalm 51)**

2. Many psalms have a superscript, that is, some notes before verse 1. What can we learn about the occasion of this psalm based upon the superscript? (Cf. 2 Samuel 11:1-12:25)
3. Why would knowing the occasion of this psalm help us to understand and apply it better?
4. How does this psalm describe David’s emotional and mental state?

**UNDERSTANDING**

5. According to this psalm, does God want us to make reparations (i.e., sacrifices) for our sins or not? In one section we read God does not want sacrifices (v.16) but then later on, it says he does (v.19)

6. In the sermon, Enoch said that we can learn three features of a biblical apology from this psalm:
  - First, ACKNOWLEDGE our wrong—that is, make no excuses.
  - Second, TAKE full responsibility – that is, accept whatever punishment I deserve.
  - Third, express REMORSE—that is, I understand I have wronged another, and that making restitution is right, but does not absolve me of my mistake.

Do you think a proper apology needs all three of these? Why or why not?

**DIFFERENCE**

7. Of the three features of a biblical apology, which do you regularly include or fail to include when you apologize?
8. In your work or social life, how common do people apologize for their mistakes? When they do apologize, how do those apologies compare with a biblical apology?

**APPLICATION**

9. Would you describe yourself as someone who is ready to apologize or has a harder time apologizing for being wrong or sinning?
10. The gospel teaches that God accepts our sincere apology for our sin when we place our faith in Christ. How might this knowledge and experience help you when you need to apologize to God or others?
11. Who is someone that you feel you need to make a proper, biblical apology to? Will you make a commitment to pray, plan, and then communicate with that party?