

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, March 6, 2013 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

DAVID... A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART
“Rebuke, Reconciliation and Repentance”
2 Samuel 12:1-25, Psalm 32 & 51

What is a Christian's responsibility to another Christian who sins? What is your responsibility?

Listen as the following case studies are read and discuss your thoughts concerning each situation. What was done wrong? What would be the right way to handle the situation? Is there a Biblical standard for dealing with this situation?

Case Study #1: Jack has been a member of the church for almost a year. He is well liked and has become very faithfully involved in the life of the church. What most people don't know about Jack is that, away from his church life, he has a serious drinking problem. Recently he was stopped for driving while intoxicated and given a ticket. His name appeared the next week in the court records in one of the local newspapers. Now everyone at church has begun to treat him differently, often avoiding him. One woman in the church even pulled him aside and told him how disappointed she was in him. Jack is feeling so low now about himself and how he messed up that he is considering leaving the church altogether!

Case Study #2: When Rebecca and Jim first started attending the church, they were just looking for a place to worship each Sunday and reenter church life. Both had been raised in the church and although neither had attended church for many years now, they wanted to get back into church especially now that they were starting their life together. They liked this particular church because it reminded them of the church they each had grown up in. They were comfortable with the people there, who made them feel very welcome and at home. As they approached their Sunday School teacher about the possibility of them joining the church they were quickly put off by the teacher. The teacher knew Rebecca and Jim were not married, but were just living together so his response to them was, “As long as you are living in ‘sin’ you can't join this church! Now once you get married we can talk!” Rebecca and Jim were so hurt by the abruptness of the teacher's response that they have just decided that church just isn't for them.

Case Study #3: Sam and Roxanne have been in the church for many years now. They have three kids, who have been raised in the church. All three are still actively involved in the church. The youngest is in the Youth Group. The middle child is attending a local college and is still

actively involved in the church and the oldest is married and has one child. Her and her husband and child also still attend the church. The whole family is very connected to the life of this church. Sam and Roxanne, the parents, have been secretly having marital problems for some time. The church knows nothing about it and their own children are totally oblivious to what is going on. All of the sudden they announce to their children and closest friends, who are all in the church, that they have decided to divorce after 36 years of marriage. The word quickly spreads throughout the church. Although no one knows the reason, many rumors began to spread about what has happened to Sam and Roxanne. Roxanne is becoming more and more dejected and Sam has dropped out altogether. The kids have tried to hang on, but the questions and stares from secret conversations are making it really hard. Most assume that Sam must have done something wrong since he is the one not coming anymore, but what they don't know is that Roxanne has been secretly involved with someone else for over a year now and Sam just recently found out. The family is hurting so badly, and it seems that for each of them going to church just makes it worse because of all the stares and whispers about their situation.

Listen as the following Scriptures are read and see if these Scriptural admonitions help to provide an answer at how to respond to each of the above cases.

- (1) **Matthew 18:15-18**, ¹⁵ "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."
- (2) **Luke 17:3**, ³ "So watch yourselves.' If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them."
- (3) **Romans 15:1-2**, ¹ "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. ² Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up."
- (4) **2 Corinthians 5:16-21**, ¹⁶ "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin^[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
- (5) **Galatians 6:1-3**, ¹ "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves."
- (6) **James 5:19-20**, ¹ "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves."

Biblical Principles of Restoration: These truths emerge from the passage above that we just read regarding confrontation and reconciliation.

1. **Absolute truth in a matter must be established –**
2. **God’s right timing must be firmly established in your heart as you bathe the situation in prayer and go in the Spirit –**
3. **Only wise words used in gentleness, humility and in a spirit of reconciliation must be employed –**
4. **Fearless courage and non-defensive spirit must be put into action as you seek the reconciliation –**

Okay! The deed was done. Whispers of a scandalous nature buzzed around David’s palace, but no one dared say a word to the king. His bride of a few months was now obviously pregnant... bringing a mute reminder of that fateful spring night when adultery and ultimately murder stained the record of the king’s reign. It was further stained by the hypocrisy, murder, continued deception, and a silent cover-up. A glance at Psalm 32:1-4 will reveal that the guilt took its toll on the aging monarch, even though he “kept silent” about his sin and refused to repent – until... until a man of incredible courage and bold honesty stood eyeball-to-eyeball with David and exposed the truth of his deed and the months of deception. In this study we will focus on that man who confronted David with his sin and how to find forgiveness when we, like David, have sinned.

I. THE REVIEW

Adultery, Murder, and Hypocrisy – These acts were lived out secretly (that is, away from man’s observation and scrutiny – see 2 Samuel 11) and willfully (James 1:13-15), but God saw it all and viewed David’s acts as “evil” (2 Samuel 11:27).

Guilt, Illness, and Silence (Psalm 32:1-4, Psalm 51:1-13) – These were tough wages David received for his sin. His life lost all enjoyment... he hadn’t escaped a thing. He lived in constant awareness of his sin, and his body wasted away. The joy of his salvation was lost... as was his physical vitality. He became unstable and unsure of himself. This explains why he pleaded with God in Psalm 51:10, *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*

3 Important Reminders About Our Sin:

1. **We can hide our sin(s) from a lot of people, but we can’t hide our sin from God –**
The truth is others may never know of our secret sin, but God always... always knows.
2. **Sin may be fun or pleasurable for a season, but it never lasts and is in fact short lived –** Sin appeals to our senses and our appetites, so it is going to temporarily feel good or quench that appetite... scratch that itch, but the truth is it only feed that appetite and the appetite grows and comes calling again and again for payment.
3. **We many think that we got away with it and no one was hurt by my sin, but sin always has consequences on our own lives and the lives of others –** Remember Paul’s strong words of warning in Galatians 6:7-8, *“Do not be deceived: God cannot*

be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction...”

II. THE REBUKE & RESTORATION (2 Samuel 12:1-15)

Sent by God (v.1a) – *“^{1a}The LORD sent Nathan to David...”-2 Samuel 1a* God directed His prophet Nathan to step into a life of the king who, for perhaps 12 months, had glossed over a string of “evil” acts. Nathan’s mission... to face a man with the truth. It’s of interest that God didn’t move in on David at the moment of his initial compromising sin, although He could have. Bathsheba’s baby was possibly three months old when David encountered his moment of truth. As He always does... God moved in at the right time.

Encounter with the King (vv.1b-4) – *“¹The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, ‘There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, ³but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.’ ⁵David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this must die! ⁶ He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.’ ⁷ Then Nathan said to David, ‘You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ I gave your master’s house to you, and your master’s wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. ⁹ Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰ Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’ ¹¹ ‘This is what the LORD says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. ¹² You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’” – 2 Samuel 12:1-12* Nathan’s job was probably the toughest a prophet ever had. No one else had faced David with the truth.

1. The Parable... from Nathan – The prophet’s manner of confrontation revealed that he had done his homework; he was well prepared. He chose to disarm David by taking an indirect approach. He told a parable as if it was an actual incident which had just occurred between two Jerusalemites. David became quite interested. The situation (parable) described involved two men... one rich and the other poor. The rich man had many flocks. The poor man had only one lamb, *“like a daughter to him.” (v.3)* A traveler came to the rich man seeking hospitality, but the rich man

- refused to feed him from his own herd. Instead, he stole the poor man's only ewe, prepared it, and fed the traveler.
2. **The Reaction... by David** – In an outburst of anger... thinking he was passing judgment on the crime described... David said of the rich man, *"⁵As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this must die! ⁶He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity."* (vv5-6). Without realizing it, David passed his own sentence.
 3. **The Message... from God** – The message reported through Nathan was simple, *"...You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel,..."* (v7) ... *"¹²You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel."* (v.12) What thing? It is in verse 11, *"¹¹This is what the LORD says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight.'"*

Repentance and Restoration (vv13-15) – *"¹³Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. ¹⁴But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the LORD, the son born to you will die." ¹⁵After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill."* – 2 Samuel 12:13-15 The secret of his sin was not in the open. David said, *"I have sinned against the LORD."* (v.13a). Psalm 51 leaves us no room to question his sincerity. His life was repairable. Nathan responded, *"The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die."* (v.13b). However, God took the life of the child born of the illicit relationship so that the enemies of the Lord would have not occasion for blasphemy. The conversation concluded and Nathan went home.

6 Valuable Personal Lessons Learned from This Story of Rebuke and Reconciliation of David: Let's look at some very important lessons for us to learn from David's sin and Nathan's rebuke and reconciliation of David.

- (1) **Nathan is a prophet, but he is also an example of a faithful friend** – Proverbs 26:6 puts it this way, *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy..."* (Proverbs 27:6). I do not know how many people I have known who refused to rebuke or even caution someone close to them, thinking that they are being a friend by being non-condemning. A good friend does not let us continue on the path to our own destruction. Nathan was acting as a prophet, but he was also acting like a friend. Would that we had more prophet-friends. Would that we were a prophet-friend to one on the path of destruction
- (2) **God sees our sin, even when men do not** - Our sins never slip past God unnoticed. The wicked refuse to believe that God sees their sin, or that if He does, that He will deal with it... and they say with the Psalmist in Psalm 73:11, *"How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?"* God may delay judgment or discipline, but He will never ignore our sin. Listen to Numbers 32:20-23, *"²⁰So Moses said to them, 'If you will do this, if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for the war, ²¹and all of you armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven His enemies out from before Him, ²²and the land is subdued before the LORD, then*

afterward you shall return and be free of obligation toward the LORD and toward Israel, and this land shall be yours for a possession before the LORD. ²³But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out (Numbers 32:20-23)."

- (3) **God is under no obligation to stop us from sinning** - Sometimes people justify their sin by saying something like, "I've prayed about it and asked God to stop me if it is wrong. . . ." When God does not stop them, they somehow assume it must be right. God could have stopped David after he chose to stay home from the war, or after he began to covet Uriah's wife, or after he committed adultery, but instead He allowed David to persist in his sin for some time. God even allowed David to get away with murder, for a time. God's Word forbade David's sins of coveting, adultery, and murder. God's Word commanded David to stop, and he did not. God allowed David to persist in his sin for a season, but not indefinitely. God allowed David's sin to go full circle, to reach full bloom, so that he (and we) could see how sin grows (compare Genesis 15:12-16). And it always does... and it always will!
- (4) **David's sin was not intended as an excuse for us to sin, but as a warning to all of us how capable we are of sin** - I have heard it said more times than I wish to recall, "Well, even David sinned. . . ." What they mean is, "How can you expect me not to sin? If David, as spiritual as he was, sinned as he did, then how can you expect me to do any better?" If we look very carefully at the Bible, we will see why stories like that of our text were written. They were not written to encourage us to sin, but to warn us of the danger of sin, and thus to encourage us to avoid sin at all costs. After outlining the major sins of the nation Israel in the wilderness in 1 Corinthians 10:1-10, Paul then applies the lesson of history to the Corinthians, and thus to us. Listen to what he says in verses 11-13 of 1 Corinthians 10, "¹¹ *These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. ¹² So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*"
- (5) **David's sin, like all sin, is never worth the price** - I have actually had people ask me what the penalty for a certain sin would be, planning to do it and then be forgiven. There are those who toy with sin, thinking that if they sin, they may suffer some consequences, but that God is obliged to forgive them, and thus their eternal future is certain and secure, no matter what they do, even if intentionally. I know of one situation in which a church leader left his wife and ran off with the wife of another, planning to later repent, and then expecting to be welcomed back into the fellowship of that church. This is presumptuous sin, sin of the most serious and dangerous kind. I have never met a Christian who chose to sin, and after it was all over felt that it was worth the price. David's sin and its consequences should not encourage us to sin, but should motivate us to avoid sin at all costs. The negative consequences of sin far outweigh the momentary pleasures of sin. Sin is never worth the price, even for those whose sin is forgiven.
- (6) **It was the story of the slaughter of a lamb which exposed the immensity of David's sin. It is the story of the slaughter of The Lamb of God which exposes the immensity of our sins** - Isn't it amazing that David was so blinded by his own sin

that he could not see it? It was by means of the story of the slaughter of a poor man's pet lamb that David was gripped with the immensity of the sin which was his own. David could see his own sin when he heard the story of what appeared to be the sin of another. That is precisely what the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ does for us. We were dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1-3). We were blinded to the immensity of our sins (2 Corinthians 4:4). The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, His perfect life, His innocent and sacrificial death, His literal and physical resurrection are all historical events. But the gospel is also a story, a true story. When we read the New Testament Gospels, we read a story that is even more dramatic, more amazing, more disturbing than the story Nathan told David. When we see the way unbelieving men treated our Lord, we should be shocked, horrified, and angered. We should cry out, "They deserve to die!" And that they do. But the Gospel is not written only to show us their sins -- those who actually heard Jesus and cried, "**Crucify Him, Crucify Him**" -- it is written so that the Spirit of God can cry out in our hearts, "**Thou art the man!**"

III. THE REPENTANCE

Two short sentences sum up much of chapter 12. The first is that spoken by Nathan, "*You are the man!*" (verse 7). The second is spoken by David, "*I have sinned against the Lord*" (verse 13). It is this second statement and its outworking which I wish to explore. Consider the following characteristics of David's repentance, simply stated here, and more fully expounded in Psalms 32 and 51, and evidenced in David's life.

8 Traits of Genuine Repentance as Seen Through David:

(1) **David's repentance was the culmination of a painful process, climaxing in the confrontation of David by Nathan** - In our text, David's confession follows shortly after the account of his sin. But the text itself indicates that David's sin took place over a considerable period of time, slightly more than nine months by normal estimates. While our text only informs us of the time and events that have elapsed, Psalm 32 gives us some very pertinent insight into God's work in David's heart during this time. Notice Psalm 32:3-5, "*When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.' And you forgave the guilt of my sin.*" In this psalm, David informs us that he was silent about his sin. David knew what he did was wrong, but he chose to persist for a time. He did not confess his sin, and the result was "pure anguish." It is an amazing thing, but while sin has its momentary pleasures (see Hebrews 11:25), they are not as pleasurable for the saint as they are for the heathen. The reason is that God's Spirit indwells the saint. As sin grieves the Spirit who indwells us, our spirit cannot take great pleasure in the sin either. I am not saying there is no pleasure; I am saying that the pleasure is minimized by that which gives us joy in obeying God and enjoying fellowship with Him. The agony David describes finally brought him to cease his silence and confess his sins. His repentance was the result of a painful process, most of which took place privately.

- (2) **David's repentance was expressed by an unqualified confession of His guilt before God** – See Psalm 51...The brevity and simplicity of David's confession is most impressive. David takes full responsibility for his sins. David confesses his sin as sin, without any excuses, without any finger pointing toward others. He sees his sin as against God.
- (3) **David took his sin very seriously** - Psalms 32 and 51 indicate to us that David gave his sin a great deal of thought, and the more he reflected on it, the more heinous it was. Since these psalms were preserved for worship and for posterity, David's sin and his confession became public knowledge. Ultimately, his sin was against God, God alone. This is not to diminish the evil he had done to Uriah and Bathsheba. Sin is the breaking of God's law, and in this sense, all sin is against God, for it breaks His laws. Crimes are offenses against people, but sin (in this highly specific sense) is only against God, in that it breaks His laws. David had broken at least three laws. He coveted his neighbor's wife, he committed adultery, and he committed murder (Exodus 20:13, 14, 17).
- (4) **David did not expect any of his good works to offset or reduce the guilt of his sin** - We come now to one of the great errors of all time -- the false assumption that God grades on the curve. It is commonly thought (or, more accurately assumed) that men need only outnumber their sins with their good deeds. If they do more "good" than "evil," then they believe that, on the whole, they are more good than bad, and thus qualified to be accepted by God. They do not understand that the kind of righteousness God requires of men is perfect obedience to His Word. One failure is all it takes to make us unrighteous, and thus worthy of death, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all." (James 2:10; see also Matthew 5:19; Galatians 5:3).

David was a man after God's own heart. He loved God's law. The hand of God was upon him in nearly all he did. Overall, David's life was an example for us to follow, setting a standard for which we should strive. His sin regarding Uriah and Bathsheba was clearly the exception, rather than the rule. Listen to 1 Kings 15:5, "Because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15:5). If there was ever a man who could have pointed out that his good deeds outweighed his sins, it would have to be David. But instead, we find David confessing his sin, avoiding all reference to anything good he had done, knowing he deserved God's wrath. David prayed in Psalm 51:3-4, "For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge"

- (5) **David did not presume upon God's grace, expecting to be forgiven and to have his life spared** - There are those who plan and purpose to sin, believing that God is obligated to forgive them, no matter what. They think that going through some ritual, through repeating some formula, they will then automatically be forgiven, and that life can go on, just as it was. Those who presume upon God's grace in forgiveness confess their sins on the one hand, while planning to repeat them on the other. David

confesses his sin against God, and then asks for nothing. He knows what he deserves, and he does not ask to escape it.

- (6) **David's repentance resulted in a renewed joy in the presence and service of God, and a commitment to teach others to turn from sin** - From Psalm 51, we know that David prayed for a renewal of his joy in the Lord (51:8, 12). We have every reason to believe that he was granted this request. In addition, David now desired to teach others, “Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You” (Psalm 51:13). David will now be teaching sinners as a repentant sinner. His teaching will seek to turn sinners from their sin. How different this is from the wicked, who seek to entice others to follow them in their sin.
- (7) **David's divinely produced repentance produced fruit worthy of repentance** - God responded to David's repentance with grace, and thus David responded graciously to those who wronged him and repented. When Absalom rebelled against his father and was about to take over the kingdom, David fled from Jerusalem with those who followed him. As he was leaving the city, a man named Shimei came out to curse David and to throw stones at him (2 Samuel 16:5-8). Abishai wanted to cut off his head, but David would not allow him to do so. When David returned to Jerusalem, one of those there to meet and welcome him was Shimei, who confessed to David that he had sinned in what he had done earlier (2 Samuel 19:16-20). Abishai once again wanted to execute Shimei, and this time he had a biblical reason. He called attention to the fact that Shimei had cursed David, the King of Israel. The Law of Moses forbade cursing a ruler of the people (Exodus 22:28). Technically -- or should I say legally -- Shimei should have been put to death, but David forgave him and granted him his life. In so doing, David dealt with Shimei in the same gracious manner God had dealt with him. This incident reminds us of the story our Lord told about the unforgiving slave (see Matthew 18:23-35), whose great debt had been forgiven by the king but who refused to forgive the smaller debt of his fellow-slave. Those who have truly experienced God's grace manifest this same grace toward others. The grace David received as a result of his repentance he showed to a “repentant” Shimei.⁴⁸
- (8) **David's repentance produced enduring fruit... David forsook his sin and did not repeat it** - David manifested “adult repentance.” He saw his sin for what it was, and he was genuinely regretful. As a result, he did not repeat the sin.

IV. WHAT IS THERE TO LEARN FROM THIS

4 Important Pieces of Equipment when Confronting Another with Their Sin: For confrontation to be effective, the confronter must be armed with four pieces of equipment. These 4 pieces of equipment are unquestionably essential before confrontation should ever take place, otherwise you may do more harm than good and cause alienation rather than reconciliation.

1. **Absolute truth** –
2. **Right timing** –
3. **Wise words** –
4. **Fearless courage** –

4 Characteristics of Genuine Repentance: For repentance to be recognized as genuine, four characteristics must be evident.

1. **An open, unguarded admission of everything –**
2. **A desire to make a complete break –**
3. **A spirit that is broken and humble –**
4. **The claiming of forgiveness and reinstatement –**