

(2 Samuel) Repentance and Restoration

by David Guzik

David's sin and God's conviction are highlighted in 2 Samuel chapter 12, emphasizing the importance of repentance, restoration, and specific confession of sin.

Duration: 1:08:41

Scripture: Psalm 19:8, Psalm 51:1, 1 Corinthians 7:17

Topics: "Repentance", "Restoration"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of condemning sin in oneself. He emphasizes the importance of being real before God and not hiding or covering up one's sins. The speaker uses the story of David and Nathan from the Bible to illustrate this point. David, upon hearing Nathan's story, immediately passes judgment on the guilty man, revealing his own guilt and inability to see his own sin. The sermon highlights the need for self-reflection and repentance before God.

Transcript

2 Samuel chapter 12 follows upon a year of intense conviction of sin of David. We left off the last time we were in 2 Samuel at the end of chapter 11 where it says, but the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. Well, indeed it did.

David was a man who had lived after his passions for many, many years without restraining them in any way in self-control before God. David was a man who ignored warnings that God gave him. He did not take the way of escape that God put right in front of him on several occasions.

David entertained temptation until it turned into lust, and lust until it turned into opportunity, and opportunity until it turned into adultery. And when the bitter fruit of that threatened to become evident, he embarked on a large cover-up campaign. We're all like that.

Each and every one of us have the instinct to want to cover our sin. We're more afraid of being found out by man than in being guilty before God. Isn't that crazy? It really points to a streak of spiritual insanity within us.

And David was in this place that you might call spiritually just insane beside himself. He wasn't thinking. Now, in 2 Samuel chapter 12, we find God's loving hand on David, confronting him with his sin.

Chapter 12, verse 1. Then the Lord sent Nathan to David, and he came to him and said to him, There were two poor men in one city, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb, which he had brought and nourished, and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his own bosom, and it was like a daughter to him.

And a traveler came to the rich man who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him. But he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him. Well, the story is simple.

The prophet Nathan explains it to David as if it were just a fact, as if he's bringing a court case before David. David, this is for your consideration. We have two people in Israel, one a wealthy man, one a poor man, and the rich man who had many sheep to choose from, when it came time for him to serve a great feast for a visitor, he took the one little pet lamb that the poor man had and he butchered it and served it to his visiting friend.

In that day and age, it was not unusual for people to keep lambs as pets. I just got back not too long ago from a trip to Australia and New Zealand, and on one afternoon that we had free, we had the opportunity to go horseback riding up in some hills, and it was pretty spectacular. A little bit frightening for me, I'm not all that comfortable around horses.

They seem kind of big and scary to me. So I got on, and the horse I rode on was good enough, and there was somebody in the lead of our group that we would follow, and there was someone in the back of the group making sure nobody got lost or hurt or anything. And the girl that was in the back of the group, her name was Claire, and she asked one of the people in our group, Would you like to see our pit lamb? And the girl in our group thought, that's strange.

Pit lamb? What's a pit lamb? Well, it was just her curious New Zealand pronunciation for pet lamb. And so afterwards we went over and we saw the pit lamb over, and it was a little lamb, just a week or two old, whose mother had died giving birth. What an adorable little lamb.

And of course, one of the women in our party went over and picked up the little lamb, and they're having pictures, very picturesque, holding a little lamb just like that. It looked very pastorly. All up until the point where the little lamb went to the bathroom on the person holding it right there.

That pretty much ended everybody's desire to hold the pit lamb. Well, in Nathan's story, there's a pet lamb. And there's a rich man who takes the pit lamb.

You know, David's sin displeased the Lord, but David wasn't listening to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He was under the conviction of the Holy Spirit because he tells us that he was in Psalm 32. David was doing the best that he could to push away that convicting voice, to push away his own conscience that was telling him that he was guilty of sin before God, and he had to repent and get it clean before the Lord.

David wouldn't listen to the Holy Spirit speaking directly to his heart. David wouldn't listen to the voice of his own conscience. Therefore, God sent someone else to speak to David.

And why did God do this? Because He hated David? No, because He loved him. Because David's unconfessed sin, this sin that he was trying to cover and hide, it was an obstacle, it was a hindrance to David's fellowship with God. And that's why God spoke to David in this way, through the prophet Nathan,

with this remarkably simple but powerful story.

God was merciful to keep speaking to David even when David wouldn't listen. Aren't you happy for that mercy of the Lord? You've done that to the Lord, haven't you? I know I have. There's been times in my life where it's as if I was closing my ears to God with everything I could.

And yet God was faithful enough to find some way to speak to me that I would listen. And that's just the mercy of God. Have you ever tried to show somebody that they're wrong? They're usually not very open to it, right? And you might try once or twice, and then after that you say, well, forget it.

Now, doesn't God have every right to say the same thing to us? Well, forget it. Let them perish in their sins. Let them just never settle it, and always have this impediment.

Even if it doesn't drag them down to hell, it'll drag them down to despair. God has every right to do that. But how often does He persistently keep with us? Now, we should never presume that God would speak forever to the unrepentant sinner.

God said in Genesis 6-3, My spirit will not strive with man forever. In other words, that conviction of the Holy Spirit that you feel today, that you're resisting, don't assume that you're going to feel it tomorrow. It's a gift from God that you feel it today.

You say, well, you know, I'll just turn back to the Lord tomorrow. Well, maybe not. The Holy Spirit may not be leaving you tomorrow.

You need to respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit today. Now, while you feel it. Because it might not always be there.

So, that's what God did through this great story of Nathan the prophet. I think it's interesting that the previous time that we saw Nathan in the book of 2 Samuel, that was in chapter 7. He delivered a remarkable message of blessing to David. It was that whole occasion when David wanted to build God a temple.

You know, he said, man, I live in a great fancy house, but God lives in a tent. Lord, let me build you a temple. And he runs it by his friend, the prophet Nathan.

And Nathan says, oh, go for it, David. The Lord will be pleased with that. But then later, the Lord taps Nathan on the shoulder and says, hey, whoa, prophet, you spoke a little too harshly here.

Or rashly, I should say. You didn't consider me in this. And the Lord told Nathan to go tell David, you're not to build me a house.

I'm going to build you a house. And what a great blessing that was delivered from the mouth of Nathan. And might I say that this is something that made David more attentive to Nathan.

If David knew Nathan as a man who was always criticizing him, who was always pointing out his flaws, who was always picking at him, do you think David would have listened to this story? He would have said, Nathan, well, I don't have time for Nathan today. Tell him I'll see him next week. And he would have just kept putting him off and putting him off.

You see, David knew that Nathan was a fair man, that Nathan was a man who sometimes spoke blessing, but when it was necessary, he would speak that honest word of conviction to David. Now, what was the crime of the man, the rich man in Nathan's little story or parable? I would say that the sin that Nathan describes is theft. That the rich man stole the lamb from the poor man, as blessed as he was.

I mean, that makes the rich man's crime all the more horrific, doesn't it? Here he is, he's rich, he's wealthy. Look at all that he has. Look at all he's been blessed with, yet he still steals from another man.

Now, you might say, well, this is funny. Why doesn't Nathan use a parable more appropriate? Because David didn't really steal. He committed adultery.

I want you to understand something, friends. Adultery and sexual immorality, it is theft. There is a sense, a very strong sense, in which David stole something from Uriah.

You know, the Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, that in the marriage relationship, that the husband has authority over the wife's body. And it says the same thing for the wife regarding the husband. That in the marital relationship, the spouses each have authority over the body of their spouse.

Now, obviously, David did not have this authority over the body of Bathsheba. And he stole that from Uriah. There was one man on the face of the earth that God gave the authority over Bathsheba.

And it was Uriah. David stole that from him. Adultery, sexual immorality, they are theft.

It's taking something that does not belong to you. Now, do you go to the department store and walk down the aisles and just start filling your pockets with whatever you want? Of course you don't. Why don't you? Because you say, that's stealing.

It doesn't belong to me. It belongs to somebody else. It's stealing if I take it.

Friends, adultery and sexual immorality are just the same. It's theft. Do you really think that you have the right to go around stealing anyone's body that you choose? It's theft.

And this principle is also true regarding pornography and lust. I find one of the more interesting chapters of the Old Testament to be Leviticus chapter 18. Honestly, it's kind of a tedious chapter.

But in Leviticus chapter 18, it describes the sin of uncovering the nakedness of someone other than our spouse. Now, in the context, it means to have some kind of sexual relationship with. But it's interesting that it uses that phrase to uncover the nakedness of somebody other than your spouse.

And the idea is that the nakedness of that other person, it doesn't belong to you. The nakedness of your spouse, that belongs to you. The nakedness of someone else, it's not your property.

It doesn't belong to you. And it's theft if you take it. Do you see then how pornography is theft? That woman in the pornographic image who takes off her clothes for you, you're stealing something that either belongs to her husband or to the man who will become her husband.

It most certainly does not belong to you. And you say, well, now, you know, wait a minute. She's giving it away.

You know, it doesn't seem like stealing if she wants to give this away. Well, that's a lot of nonsense. If somebody is giving away, you know, Walmart's property, do you just take it? Because you say, well, look, they're giving it away.

No, you know that it's wrong. And so actually it's with great subtlety. Indeed, we might even say brilliance that God inspired Nathan to use this principle of theft in addressing David regarding his sin of adultery.

Now, look at David's reaction in verse 5. So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man. And he said to Nathan, as the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die and he shall restore fourfold for the lamb because he did this thing and because he had no pity. You know, Nathan never asked David for a judicial decision, did he? Matter of fact, he never really said that this really happened.

It's like he's just telling a story. But David can't help himself. He's so overcome with passion and indignation that he immediately passes sentence on the guilty man of Nathan's story.

You almost expect Nathan to say, David's just making it up. David doesn't care. You see how this works, friends? We often try to rid our guilty consciences by passing judgment upon somebody else.

Oh, look at that highly critical, highly judgmental person. It would not be unusual to see them hiding or covering over sin themselves. It's just our instinct.

You could call it a defense mechanism. But it was very true in David's case. Look at what he says there.

He says, as the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die. David's sense of righteous indignation was so affected by his own sense of guilt that he commanded a death sentence for the rich man in this hypothetical case brought by Nathan, even though this was not a capital crime. Where are you going to find in the pages of the Old Testament a death sentence for lamb stealers? You're not going to find it.

Friends, don't you see? And we're going to see this very pointedly in just a moment. But David was condemning his own sin there, wasn't he? It was David's own conscience. Now, we know in a few moments in verse 7 that Nathan is going to say to David, and you can't beat how the Old King James Version puts it.

The New King James Version says, you are the man. The Old King James says, thou art the man. But it's almost as if Nathan didn't even need to tell David that.

By pronouncing the death sentence, it's as if David knew that that's what he deserved because that's what the law commanded in regard to his adultery with Bathsheba. You see, David had to condemn his own sin before he could find forgiveness. We're all too rarely willing to do that.

Oh, how we want to excuse our sin. Oh, how we want to minimize it or deflect the blame of our sin. And we won't condemn sin in ourself.

We won't say, I'm guilty. I deserve to die for what I've done. I'm guilty, guilty, guilty before God.

No excuses. Oh, aren't we good at the excuses? You know, I mean, look at how beautiful she was. Man, I'm just a man.

Come on now. Or look at the way she was parading herself for all the excuses that David could have imagined. Well, you know, hey, I'm the king of a big country.

I just can't let things pass. I mean, what if it got exposed? It would have been a scandal. I had to cover it up.

Come on, there's just necessity here. All the excuses, all the rationalizations, all the ways to minimize it. Come on.

It's just one thing. Or to deflect the blame. When David condemned the man in the story, he was condemning himself.

Friends, have you ever condemned sin in yourself? You might be really good at pointing the finger at others and condemning sin in them. But how about condemning it in yourself? I find another thing very interesting in verse 6, where it says, He shall restore fourfold for the Lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity. If you were to turn, and I'm not asking you to turn there, but you can just make it a reference.

Exodus chapter 22, verse 1. The Mosaic law gives the prescription for what restoration is required when livestock is stolen. And it says, If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, that's exactly the situation here, right? He shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep. It's as if David quoted Exodus 22, verse 1, right back at Nathan.

Well, Exodus 22, verse 1 says that a fourfold restitution is required. I know my Bible, Nathan. I'll quote it right back to you.

A fourfold restoration. I want you to see that David's sin, that David's hardness of heart didn't diminish his knowledge of the Bible. Oh, he still knew it.

Oh, he could still quote you Exodus 22, verse 1. He knew all about the Bible. He knew the words of the Bible, but he was distant from the author. It's easy for you all to make that mistake.

You look at someone like me, and I seem to know perhaps what I'm talking about when it comes to the Bible. Well, he knows the Bible. He knows the words of the Bible.

He knows what it says. Friends, you can't assume that I know the author just because I know the words, that just because I know the meaning. You can't assume that.

So David demands that the man make restitution. David knew very well that true repentance means restitution. Then we come to verse 7. Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? You've killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword.

You've taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. What powerful simplicity. You are the man.

And did David think for a moment that he was the poor man in the story? No. He knew exactly what it meant. Well, which man do you mean there, Nathan? No.

You're the rich man. You're the man who stole the lamb and you're the one who was a murderer. With this alarming simplicity, Nathan shocked David into seeing his sin for what it was.

Friends, we have to see our sin for what it is. You understand it, folks, that we have to deal with a personal conviction of sin. A personal salvation requires a personal conviction of sin.

Don't give it to me that, well, you know, I'm a sinner. Nobody's perfect, you know, so I guess I'm a sinner. That's not much of a salvation that you have.

It wasn't enough for David to confess that he was a sinner in a general sense. David had to confess his sin at this very point. Many times this is our great problem with our own conviction of sin.

We start feeling a sense of conviction of sin and we slough it off very quickly with a general confession of, well, you know, nobody's perfect. I'm a sinner too. Instead of saying what David could have said right here, I'm an adulterer.

I'm a liar. I'm a murderer. See, in this sense, the confession of our sin needs to be specific.

The great, late Dr. J. Edwin Orr tells of a time of revival in Brazil when a lady stood in a crowded church when people were making open confession of sin. By the way, did you know that that's one of the common phenomenons of revival? The people of God make open confession of sin. Not open confession of secret sin.

Sins committed secretly should be confessed in private. But open confession of sins that had hindered the church. And so, this lady stood up in the midst of this church in Brazil and she said, please pray for me.

I need to love people more. And Dr. Orr said to the lady, gently, that is not confession, sister. Anyone could have said it.

Well, isn't it true? Which one of us could not stand up and say, oh, please pray for me. I need to love more. Every one of us need to love more.

That's not confessing anything. It sounds kind of spiritual, doesn't it? But it's not confessing a single thing. So later in the service, the woman stood again and said, please pray for me.

What I should have said is that my tongue has caused a lot of trouble in this church. The pastor leaned over to Dr. Orr and whispered, now she's talking. Now that's confession of sin.

Not just this general sense. Friends, it costs us nothing to say, well, I'm not everything I should be. I ought to be a better Christian.

Hello? Of course. It does cost something to say, I've been a troublemaker in this church. It does cost something to say, I've had bitterness towards certain people or towards certain leaders, and I'm apologizing to them right now.

That's confession. Did you notice how it was all phrased here in verses 7-9? Let me read it again and I'll emphasize certain words to kind of give you a feel for this. Then Nathan said to David, you are the man.

Thus says the Lord God of Israel, I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul, and I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah, and if that were too little, I would have given you much more. Just like the rich man in the story David's sin was made all the more horrific because it was a base expression of ingratitude. When God gave all this to David and had so much more to give him, David sought out sin

instead.

It's like, come on, David. Wasn't it enough? Didn't I give you enough? And so he tries to bore the point home when he says, and if you notice it there, it's very dramatic there in verse 9, where he says, why have you despised the commandment of the Lord? Do you recall some of those sweet psalms that David sang before about how he loved God's commandment? How about Psalm 19.8? The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. Yes, David loves the commandment of God.

Not at this point in his life. He despised it. By his sin, he despised the commandment of the Lord.

He acted as if God's command was wrong. He acted as if God made a mistake when He said you shall not commit adultery. He acted as if it was to be despised.

He did that when he did evil in the sight of the Lord. Did you notice what he said there at the end of verse 9? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword. You have taken his wife to be your wife.

You, David, you. God won't allow David to blame anyone or anything else. I say this often because it's a very common observation I have about human nature.

And my wife and I see it most pointedly in marriage counseling. When we're counseling a couple that's having trouble in their marriage, right away, Ingalil and I can tell whether or not we can be of any help to them. When they are blaming each other for the problems in their marriage, either with their attitude or with their words, they express this.

But when you see it in the wife that she really believes that the real problem in her marriage is that man she's married to, and the husband's convinced of it too, the real problem in his marriage is that woman that he's married to. As long as they're blaming somebody else, you know what? You can't do a thing for them in their marriage. Honestly.

When we discern that that's where people are at and they won't catch on to the principle that they have to take responsibility for their own actions in their marriage, we won't see them anymore. Because then all they want you to do is referee at their fights. And I tell you, at this point, after 20 years of pastoral ministry, I've had enough of that.

I've had enough of trying to get angry spouses to get me to side with them against their spouse. I don't want to be a referee in your fight. Your marriage will not change until you say, I have to be a better husband.

Until the wife says, I have to be a better wife. That's when you see things changing. It's the same principle with David.

As long as he put the blame on someone else, on Bathsheba, on, you know, lust somewhere out there, on anything, but admitting, I killed Uriah. I committed adultery. It was only when he would take the blame upon himself that his sin could be cleared away.

So look at the punishment that's described here in verse 10. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house because you've despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. God promised that from this day forward, David would know violence and bloodshed among his own family members.

Isn't it interesting that David commanded a fourfold restitution for that little lamb in Nathan's story? Did you know that God exacted a fourfold restitution from among David's sons? Four sons of David met a violent end. And it was because of what David did here. And it was a heavy promise.

The sword will never depart from your house because you've despised me. I find it interesting that the Lord said to David first in verse 9, you've despised the commandment of the Lord, right? Now, in verse 10, God says to David, you've despised me. You can't despise God's commandments without despising Him.

Somehow in our minds, we kind of want to separate the two. Oh, God. Man, I love God.

Way to go, God. It's just your commandments I despise. No, no, no, God says.

You despise my commandments. You despise me. And many who live in either open or hidden sin, they seem to believe that it has no effect or little effect on their relationship with God.

Folks, isn't it shocking how many people live in either open sin or in hidden sin, and in their heads they think that they're walking fine with God. They really do. They don't realize that God would say to them exactly what He said to David.

Why do you despise me? As soon as the person would answer back, despise? Oh, no, I love you, Lord. No, you don't. You're despising my commandment.

You despise me. That commandment is a reflection of my character. It's a reflection of my nature.

You cannot despise my commandment without despising me. We can't have fellowship with God and despise Him at the same time. That sounds like a rather elementary principle, doesn't it? It's almost embarrassing for me to have to say that to a room full of adults.

But I have to say, it seems to me that there's been times in my life where I've almost forgotten that. You can't despise God and have fellowship with Him at the same time. 1 John 1.6 says that if we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

If in this period of a year when David was hiding his unconfessed sin, if you were to ask David, well, David, are you in fellowship with God? He might have said yes, but the truth of the matter was no. At best, his fellowship was cold. At best, his fellowship was distant.

Did he have the Bible knowledge? Well, sure he did. Did he have the vital link of fellowship with God? No, he did not. The sin that was the obstacle had to be cleared away.

And might I say that one of the things that just amazes me, it frightens me when I see it in myself, it amazes me in a bad way when I see it in other people, is that there seems to be so little concern over a loss of fellowship with God. It's almost like, who cares? What's the big deal? Friends, that's why we were created. Honestly.

That's the reason why you draw breath on this earth. So that you can have a loving, living relationship with your Creator. It wasn't so you could punch an attendance ticket at church.

It was so that you could have a real fellowship with God. Hopefully what happens here assists you in that. But that's the reason for it.

When we're out of fellowship with God, it should grieve us. We should feel just morose and depressed. I have to get back right with God.

I have to feel His smile upon me once again. I have to enjoy the friendship and the sharing of life that I have with Him when there is no obstacle of hidden or open sin in the way. Lord, I confess my sins.

Clear it away. I want that fellowship with You. That's how it should be.

One more thing about verse 10 before we go to verse 11. Did you notice the name for the woman that David committed adultery with? The wife of Uriah the Hittite. God won't even use her given name.

As far as God is concerned, that woman has one identity. The wife of Uriah the Hittite. God has not used the name Bathsheba yet.

It has only appeared once, and that was in chapter 11, when David's messengers reported to him the name of the woman that he saw from the balcony. That's the only time it's been used. Every time God refers to this woman, it's the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

Isn't that interesting? That's the one identity David forgot. He thought of her as Bathsheba, the exceedingly beautiful woman. Bathsheba, the woman with whom there's a spark of attraction with.

Bathsheba, the woman who is willing to commit adultery with me. But he did not think of her according to that name, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Verse 12, Thus says the Lord, Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house, and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this son.

For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the Son. Wow! David, do you know the way that you secretly disgraced this woman, her husband, and her family? I'm going to publicly disgrace you that way. I'm going to raise up adversity.

The Living Bible translates that word adversity as rebellion. God warns David that because he troubled another man's house, God will allow trouble to come upon his own house from within the house. And this, of course, was fulfilled in Absalom's rebellion, which we will come to in succeeding chapters of 2 Samuel, where Absalom, in a horrible way, took the concubines of David, set up a tent on David's roof, and made it very public to all Israel that he violated every one of his father's wives, or concubines at least.

This was exactly fulfilled in the rebellion of Absalom. Now, as dark as it has been, we come to a great, great beacon of light in verse 13. Look at it there.

So David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. If you like to mark in your Bible underline that. It's a marvelous expression of confession and repentance.

David's confession is an example for every one of us. He placed the blame squarely on his own shoulders. He didn't minimize his offense, and he realized that he had especially sinned against God.

Do you realize that in the original Hebrew, that phrase, I have sinned against the Lord, it's only two words. Hatah al-yaveh. That's it.

Two words. But those two words, and the heart that they reflect, show the fundamental difference between David and Saul. You see, Saul knew how to spin out a long confession.

Some of Saul's confessions of sin are very eloquent. You almost want to stand back and say, my, what an eloquent confession, Saul. But it wasn't of the heart.

David's great confession of sin was two words, but it was from the heart. You know, sometimes few words is a good sign of a thoroughly broken spirit. No excuse.

No hiding. No concealment of the sin. Not, well, you know God.

Or, yeah, but. Or, God, man, this was really a hard one. Or, Lord, man, you understand, Lord.

I have sinned against the Lord. Lord, you know how weak I am. You know.

No. It was candid. It was open.

He didn't deny the truth in any way. And might I say, this was an exceptionally good response from David, considering his station in life. In that part of the world, what happened when a prophet would come before the king? There's the king on his throne.

The royal court is all around. And the prophet tells this story. And he says, you're the man.

You committed secret sin, but it was open before God. And God's going to correct you for it openly, David. What's the response of a king in that part of the world at that time? Off with your head.

Take him out. I never want to hear from this man again. And kill his whole family too.

I mean, that's just the standard reply. They probably had a form for it, you know, in a filing cabinet right next to David. No, no, no.

David says, I have sinned against the Lord. I love to tear it apart word by word. What's the first word there? I. I, I, I. David speaks of himself.

It isn't we. Though it was true he was not the only sinner. Couldn't David have said in truth, thinking of himself and Bathsheba, we sinned? And it would have been true, but it wouldn't have been wholly true.

David's of the right attitude. Lord, let Bathsheba deal before you on her own. I have sinned against the Lord.

And then he says, I have sinned. He doesn't use an elaborate or soft vocabulary. He sinned.

It wasn't a mistake. It wasn't an error. It wasn't a mess up.

It wasn't an indiscretion. It wasn't a problem. It wasn't a boo boo.

It wasn't a weakness. It was sin. Friends, one of the greatest errors we make is just we were so hesitant to identify ourselves as sinners when we sin.

It's the most foolish thing we can do. You know why? Because the Bible says that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners. Well, I want to be one of the ones of whom Jesus saves.

It doesn't mean I have to have to go out and make myself a sinner. I do plenty well on my own. I don't have to be deliberate about it.

I just have to see myself for what I am. I have sinned against the Lord. That expressed the enormity of David's sin.

Did he sin against Bathsheba? Yes. Did he sin against Uriah? Yes. Did he sin against Ahithophel, Bathsheba's grandfather? Yes.

Did he sin against his own wives? Yes. Did he sin against his own children? Yes. Did he sin against the whole nation? You better believe it.

But David knew that more than any of those, he sinned against the Lord. There are no small sins against a great God. And great sins are even greater against a great God.

And that's why David can say, I have sinned against the Lord. You know, after he meditated on it, David more eloquently expressed his repentance in Psalm 51. Can I read you a couple of verses from that psalm? Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving-kindnesses.

According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight, that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.

For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it. You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, and a broken and contrite heart.

These, O God, You will not despise. That's confession. That's brokenness before God.

You see, David's awareness of sin, his desire for cleansing, his recognition of God's righteous judgment, his understanding of what God wants, it's all very clear in Psalm 51. You know, my friends, there's nothing like it to be real about yourself before God. We live in such an image-conscious age.

We live in perhaps the most image-conscious area of the whole country, southern California. It's just all about image, right? I think people are crying out for reality. If you want to get real before God, you can't hide your sin.

You can't try to cover it up before Him. Well, let's go back to the beginning here at verse 13. Then David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

And Nathan said to David, The Lord also has put away your sin. You shall not die. However, because by this deed you've given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.

Isn't that great? The first words that David hears from the mouth of the prophet Nathan after David confessed, I have sinned against the Lord. The first words he hears is, The Lord has put away your sin. You shall not die.

God's forgiveness was immediate. He didn't demand a time of probation. Well, you know, David, change your ways and maybe in ten years God will forgive you.

It wasn't like that at all. You shall not die. It means that David would be spared the penalty for adultery commanded by the law of Moses.

And might I say, it was because David believed the word, You are the man, that he could also believe the word, The Lord has put away your sin. You shall not die. You have to believe one to believe the other.

But yet at the same time, God says you've given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. You know, David, you've acted just like all the other kings in the neighboring nations. I can't have that.

And so the child who was born to you shall surely die. Now, friends, there is judgment for sin. And there is judgment by sin.

Sin can carry in itself its own judgment. You know, you think of the alcoholic whose liver wastes away and then one day stops functioning. And they repent, you know, when they find out they have liver disease.

And then there they are in the hospital, fading away, crying out to God, God, I thought you forgave me. Why am I being penalized for my sin? God would say to that person, there's judgment for sin. I've wiped that off the books.

You're just being judged by your sin. You know, should we remind ourself that sin is not just a bunch of arbitrary rules that God made up? Well, this one, but not this one. This one, but not this one.

It's because God knows what's bad for us. And he says, don't do the bad things. It's really pretty much that simple.

You see, God forgave David's sin, but he would not shield him from every consequence of the sin. And David must face the consequences of his sin, beginning with the death of the child born by Bathsheba. And I want you to notice something by this.

It shows that God didn't only want to heal David of the guilt of his sin, but he also wanted to heal David of the presence of this sin. I want you to notice that we never read again of David committing adultery again. We just don't.

You know why? Because God used these chastisements to drive these impurities far from David. Do you think he ever looked upon another woman like he looked at Bathsheba? I don't think so. Why? Because of these chastisements.

You see, God wasn't saying, well, let's just get rid of the guilt of David's sin and that's enough. No, he said, I love David so much, I want to drive the sin from him. And let's face it, friends, oftentimes it is only the chastisements of God that drives sin from us.

Oh, we might wish it was another way, but that's just not the way we are. If we're smart enough, if we're obedient enough, we can learn without chastisement. But oftentimes we're not.

Charles Spurgeon said, long before his sin with Bathsheba, there were various indications of David's special liability to temptation. That sin only threw out on the surface the evil that was always within him. And now God, having him see that deadly cancer is there, now begins to use the knife to cut it out of him.

That's what these chastisements were for. The knife to cut the sin out of David. Verse 15.

Then Nathan departed to his house, and the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became ill. David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. So the elders of his house arose and went to him to raise him up from the ground, but he

would not, nor did he eat food with him.

And it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died. You see it, friends, it's hard for many of us to accept. Lord, why would you strike the child dead? Well, can we draw from this a principle that sadly often the innocent are made to suffer because of the sins of the guilty? I wish it wasn't that way.

You tell me, how many innocent children have been made to suffer for the sin of adultery committed by one of their parents? Because daddy doesn't come home anymore. Or mommy lives somewhere else. It's painful, isn't it? It's terribly painful.

And since the sickness came immediately after the words of Nathan the prophet, it was received as from the hand of God upon this child. But I want you to notice that it was far more tragic for David and Bathsheba than it was for the child himself. The young son suffered for several days, and we may trust that God's comfort was extended to the child, even in the midst of its suffering, but at the end of those several days of suffering, that child went to eternal glory.

Though the child died, the chastisement was really upon David and Bathsheba. It was not upon the child. Do you see the difference there? This was far more excruciating for David and Bathsheba than it was for the child.

And might I say that it illustrates an important principle that even when sin is forgiven, a price must be paid. God does not simply pass over or excuse our sin. You know, sometimes Christians get to thinking that way.

That forgiveness is God's just saying, well, let's let bygones be bygones. Or that's a mulligan. Do over.

No, it isn't like that at all. God says you're guilty, guilty, guilty, and a price must be paid for your sin. I'll put that penalty upon my son.

Will you trust in him to pay your penalty? That's what forgiveness is all about. We also see that it's often the case that an innocent party pays the price for forgiveness. What did this child do? Nothing.

What did Jesus do? Nothing. And might I say, when you extend forgiveness toward somebody else, oftentimes you, the innocent party, will pay the price. Well, that's often why we won't forgive others.

Well, I'm not forgiving them. They did it wrong. They have to pay the price.

Aren't you glad God doesn't treat you like that? You'd go to hell if God treated you like that. And so often we see that it's the innocent party that pays the penalty when forgiveness is extended. Now again, we noticed that God called this woman Uriah's wife.

She's married to David. They've had a child together. God still calls her Uriah's wife.

It was God's way of saying, listen, Uriah's death and his subsequent marriage, it doesn't make everything right, David. And so what did David do when the child was taken sick? David pleaded with God for the child. Did you see that there in verse 16? David pleaded with God for the child.

Was David wrong in doing that? Not at all. Listen, even when God is chastising or even if He is bringing judgment, it's always right and appropriate to plead for mercy. It's always right to take God's chastising hand as an invitation to plead for mercy.

Do it. That's what David did. And David fasted, yet the child still died.

This kind of shows us that extraordinary prayer and fasting, it does not change God's mind. It didn't make God do what David wanted Him to do. Extraordinary prayer and fasting are not tools to get whatever we want from God.

They're demonstrations of radical submission and surrender to God's power and to God's will. So finally, as we saw in verse 18, then on the seventh day, it came to pass that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead.

For they said, indeed, while the child was still alive, we spoke to him and he would not heed our voice. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He may do some harm. When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead.

Therefore, David said to his servants, is the child dead? And they said, he is dead. So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself and changed his clothes. He went into the house of the Lord and worshipped.

Then he went to his own house and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate. And his servants said to him, what is this that you've done? You fasted and wept for the child and he was alive, but when the child died, he arose and ate food. So he said, while the child was still alive, I fasted and wept.

For I said, who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me that the child may live? But now he's dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. Isn't that great? What did David do when the child died? He went into the house of the Lord and he worshipped.

You see, that shows that David's extraordinary prayer and fasting did have a great effect on him. It put his heart in the right place. He had a sense of peace when the child died.

He knew that he did all that he could to seek God's mercy in a time of chastisement. What a great demonstration of spiritual confidence that you can worship God in a time of trial, in a time of crisis. And then David says very wonderfully at the end of verse 23, I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

David was confident that his son would meet him in heaven. Friends, isn't that going to be one of the greatest things about heaven? It's the people we'll be reunited with. I forget who it was.

Perhaps it was John Wesley. Or maybe it was George Whitefield. He said three things are going to surprise me in heaven.

First of all, I'm going to be surprised by who's there. Secondly, I'm going to be surprised by who's not there. And he said third, I'm going to be surprised to really see that I'm there.

Well, one of the great blessings of being there in heaven will be to be reunited with those that we love who have passed on before. And in a way, every loved one that passes to the next world beyond, it just makes heaven dearer to us. There's a sadness that we can't get away from in this life. You can just imagine David and Bathsheba very old, towards the end of their days, sitting around a fire and thinking about their little son.

Saying, won't it be great for us to see him in heaven? I wonder how big he'll be. I wonder, you know, if God will let us play with him. What a great blessing for David and for each of us.

Look at the mercy of God, verse 24. Then David comforted Bathsheba, his wife, and went into her and lay with her. So she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon.

Now the Lord loved him, and he sent word by the hand of Nathan the prophet, so he called his name Jedidiah because of the Lord. Did you notice something there? It's the first time God calls this woman Bathsheba. It's the first time God calls this woman the wife of David.

They've been married for more than a year, but because David hadn't confessed his sin and cleared up what he needed to clear up before God regarding this whole thing of the adultery and the murder, as far as God was concerned, that woman was still Uriah the Hittite's wife. So what did David do? He went into her and lay with her. This shows that God did not command that David forsake or leave Bathsheba, even though his marriage to her was originally sinful.

Can't you see some Bible teachers telling David today? Well, David, what you have to do is you have to forsake Bathsheba. This was an ungodly marriage, an impure marriage. Get rid of her! You know, David was wiser than that.

He was wise to honor God in the marriage commitment that he made, even though it began in sin. You know, sometimes people have a marriage that begins in sin. And they think that because of that, God was never in their marriage.

And that's what the devil will whisper to them when there's a conflict. You should dump this spouse because this marriage began in sin. No, no, a thousand times no.

David and Bathsheba's marriage began in sin, yet God wanted him to honor that marriage commitment and to make it good. You know, Paul commands the same principle in 1 Corinthians 7.17 where he's talking about marriage and divorce and singleness and all the rest. He says, as the Lord has called each one, so let them walk.

I mean, right now today, if you're married and you're married to your third husband or wife, don't try to undo all the past. Well, was the first one God's will for me? Or maybe it was the second. Maybe I've got to leave the third to go back to the first.

But then maybe the second. No, no, listen. As God has called you today, today, walk in that.

Don't try to, you know, untie the knots of the past. Repent of whatever sin there is and then move on. If you're married to your second wife after wrongfully divorcing your first wife and then you become a Christian, don't think you have to leave your first wife and go back to your second or whatever it is that you think you might have to do.

No. Wherever God's called you right now, you walk in that. David knew that principle and God blessed it because look at it there in verse 24 and 25.

So she bore a son and the Lord loved him. You know, God didn't hold a grudge against David and Bathsheba. Do you ever think God's holding a grudge against you? I know he forgave me, but he's still sore at me.

Gosh, who wouldn't be? It's not like that with God. He doesn't do that. No man is great at offering that lame forgiveness.

You know, yeah, I forgive you, but I'm never going to forget it. That's a pretty weak forgiveness. It's not the kind of forgiveness God does.

And did you see what the name of the son was? Solomon. Whoa, whoa, wait a minute. You're telling me that Solomon, heir to the throne of David, ancestor of the Messiah, you're telling me that this Solomon was born out of this marriage that began in sin? Yes, it was.

Friends, don't you see the great truth here? Can't you see it written in huge letters across the pages of your Bible? God forgives repentant sinners. He does. And it's not this mealy mouth forgiveness that many people try to offer today.

No, he forgives. I mean, is that radical? It's extreme. It's crazy for God to do this.

I'm going to take the child of David and Bathsheba, make him the heir to David's throne, make him the ancestor of the Messiah. Well, let's wrap up the chapter here. Verse 26.

Now, Joab fought against Rabba of the people of Ammon and took the royal city. Now, remember this? This is where we started a few chapters ago. Do you remember that the king of the Ammonites died and David felt bad for the son who took the place of his father, the new king? David felt bad for the new king and he sent ambassadors to the king of the Ammonites to give an expression of sympathy.

And what did the advisers to the king of the Ammonites say? Well, these men are nothing but spies, humiliate them and send them back. And they humiliated these ambassadors of David and sent them back. And David knew, and the Ammonites knew it was a declaration of war.

And so David sent out the troops, but it wasn't a decisive battle. So they had to send out the troops again. And that's when David stayed home when he should have gone out to battle.

And so now, after all this, a year later, Joab is still fighting the Ammonites. That doesn't sound like David. That doesn't sound like the army of the mighty men, does it? Do you see what's going on here? Do you see that Joab struggled for more than a year to conquer Rabbah and the victory only came when David got things right with God? There was an unseen spiritual reason behind the lack of victory at Rabbah.

Can you imagine how frustrated Joab is with the battle? Look, this city should be easy for us to take. Why isn't it falling? What's going on here? It's been month after month. And all along, it's because David was in sin and wouldn't confess it and get it right with God.

Verse 27, Joab sent messengers to David and said, I fought against Rabbah and I've taken the city's water supply. Now, therefore, gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called after my name. Joab's being almost playful here with David.

David, the city's almost about to fall. You better come and finish the job or I'm going to take all the credit. Verse 29, so David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, fought against it and took it, and he took the king's crown from his head.

Its weight was a talent of gold with precious stones and it was set on David's head and he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance and he brought out the people who were in it and he put them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes and made them cross over to the brickworks. So he did with all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

We've come full circle. David slipped into this sin when he didn't go out to battle. Where is he at the end of chapter 12? Back at battle leading Israel to victory just like he should have been.

This is David in victory once again. Don't you love it that God did not condemn him to a life of failure and defeat? Well, you blew it, David. Tough luck.

Nothing but failure and defeat from here on out. Now, believe me, David's going to have plenty of trouble. We'll see it in succeeding chapters.

But it's not like God took his hand off him. It's not like God said, OK, David, cursed forever. No, no, no.

There was chastisement for David's sin, but it didn't mean that his life was ruined. As a matter of fact, there was still a crown for David. Don't you love that at the end of the chapter? They put the crown and they put it on David's head.

I wonder when they put that big heavy crown, the king of the Ammonites, on David's head, he said, Lord, I thought I might have disqualified myself from this. I would never wear a crown like this again. I guess you still have a crown for me.

Friends, God still has a crown for you. It doesn't matter how you've sinned. Won't you confess? Won't you repent? Won't you get it right with him? Do you see the hand of God's mercy towards you? Maybe tonight I can be a Nathan unto you and speak a word to you that will break through the hardness and draw you to a glorious brokenness before God.

And God will give you victory and put a crown on your head once again. Father, that's my prayer for your dear people. It's my prayer for myself, Lord.

Lord, won't you pour out your spirit of grace and truth upon us. Lord, there's an element of tonight's study that only your Holy Spirit can supply. And it's that deep conviction and restoration of sin.

It's that deep inner knowledge that we are great sinners who have blessed the Lord an even greater Savior. Pour out your spirit upon us, Lord. I pray especially for those who have sinned most grievously among us, Lord.

Not that I know who they are, but you do. And I pray for them, Lord, that they would be led to true confession and true repentance and that they would once again know victory and a crown upon their head. Do it now, Lord, for your glory.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10704.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-guzik/2-samuel-repentance-and-restoration/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net