



WEEKLY STUDY

Week Five

In week five of our series The Comeback, Pastor Mark asked us to consider how our own personal stories are defined. Are they defined by our greatest mistake, or by God's grace? Learning from David's worst moments, we can see how important it is to face our failings and give ourselves to God's design for our lives.

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture. Follow the daily prayer prompt and then pray this or your own prayer.

God,
I have sinned against you and my neighbor.
Thank you for your grace,
For the forgiveness I do not deserve.
My life is yours, Jesus. I give it to you. I turn it over to you. All of it.
The messiness, the things I can't say out loud—I give them to you now.
Bring me all the way back to you Jesus.
Amen

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: 2 SAMUEL 11.1-5

In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.

² One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, ³ and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite."⁴ Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home.⁵ The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

- This well known story of King David's sin began when he stayed behind as his army headed off to war. It was uncharacteristic of David to pass on the opportunity to lead. This decision left him in a position of weakness. If we contrast this account with Uriah's dedication to the cause (2 Samuel 11.11), we can see how far David was from the best version of himself. Surely there were warning signs of danger that David chose to ignore. What are the signs that you experience when you are not in the best place and at risk of sin?
- *Pray for a heightened sensitivity to the ways God alerts you to the danger of sin.*

TUESDAY: 2 SAMUEL 11.14-17

In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. ¹⁵ In it he wrote, "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."

¹⁶ *So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were.*

¹⁷ *When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.*

- How quickly sin escalates! What started as a stroll on the roof of the palace turns into murder. David knew what the front line of the battle looked like. He had been there himself. His days of courage and bravery allowed him to manipulate the scene from a distance--it allowed him to commit murder without getting his hands dirty. Have your attempts to cover up your mistakes ever led to worse mistakes? This is what David's story reveals for us: managing our own sin is a losing battle.
- *Slow down in prayer and ask God to show you the places where you might be positioned to amplify sin.*

WEDNESDAY: 2 SAMUEL 12.1-4

The 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. ² The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, ³ but 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.

⁴ *"Now 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."*

- Nathan's story-telling is a kindness to David. When we see someone else's mistakes, we might be tempted to talk about them with someone else or confront the person with harsh words and accusations. This approach almost never leads to a change of heart. By telling the story of injustice, Nathan sets up David for a fresh revelation.
- *Thank God for the people who share truth with you in ways that allow you to take it into your heart.*

THURSDAY: 2 SAMUEL 12.7-9

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?’

- Have you ever found yourself judging the actions of another person (i.e., another driver on the road) only to realize that you are doing the exact same thing? David’s words of indignation quickly become words of conviction. He experiences a whiplash change of perspective. God points out all of the gifts David has been given and yet he has chosen what is evil. That drive for “just one more thing” goes all the way back to Adam and Eve in the garden.
- *Pray through a list of blessings in your life and compare them with the things you are pursuing right now.*

FRIDAY: 2 SAMUEL 12.13

Then 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.”

- This is the shortest reading this week, but perhaps the most profound. David’s heart had begun to return to his first love. It’s as if scales are falling from his eyes—the fog is lifting—and now he is beginning to see clearly his position before God. God’s forgiveness may be difficult to understand—especially in light of the weight of David’s sin. When was the last time you confessed to God? When was the last time you felt God’s forgiveness?
- Pray for clear eyes to see the places where you are missing the mark in your life, pray a prayer of confession before God. Thank God for the forgiveness God extends to you.

SATURDAY: PSALM 51.10-12

*Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

¹¹*Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.*

¹²*Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

- David's prayer was written in response to the events of 2 Samuel 11 and 12. He seems to have learned from this experience and does not want to repeat it. He is seeking restoration to joy.
- *Pray this prayer of David throughout your day.*

- See reverse for Small Group Discussion -

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Mark tracked the sin of David backwards from the murder of Urriah. Consider what this practice would look like for you or for your understanding of someone else's sin. Then move forward towards repentance and acceptance of God's grace.