

Forgiveness

David Asks for Forgiveness

Foundation

Bible passage : Psalm 51

The focus of this unit is not so much on the sin of David, nor how he tried to cover it up, both of which are described in 2 Samuel chapter 11, but on David's prayer for forgiveness. Sometimes people do wrong things against us, and we should try to forgive them, although that doesn't mean letting them get away with very bad things, or continuing to do them. But sometimes we are the person who does wrong and therefore should want to say sorry, ask for forgiveness, try not to do it again, and if possible put right the wrong we have done.

David sinned by doing wrong against God and others. He and Bathsheba had a relationship together even though both were already married. Then to try and cover up his sin David arranged for her husband, Uriah, to be killed. Although some must have known something was going on David had thought to hide wrongdoing from others, but he could not hide it from God.

God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David and Nathan told a story about injustice (2 Samuel chapter 12). David immediately saw that the rich man in the story had done wrong, but he did not realise that the story was about him. He

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions." Ps 51:1

must have known deep down that what he had done with Bathsheba and to Uriah was wrong, but he had apparently shut his mind to the fact.

When Nathan said, "you are the man" and declared God's judgement David was devastated. There are many other times in the Old Testament where this does not happen and people even become very angry with the person sent by God to warn them. It is hard to admit we are wrong and we often even people know they have done wrong they try to blame other people or that what they did was not really wrong. To his credit once David heard the condemnation, he no longer tried to conceal the sin but admitted his sin.

David repented, but his sin was so serious that there were consequences; his new son died and his family was divided leading the fracturing of the Kingdom of Israel. It is possible for people to think that because they will be forgiven then sin doesn't really matter. But often there are deep and lasting consequences from the wrong we do as is seen in the life of David, and even more at the start of the Bible with Adam and Eve.

Psalm 51 was written by David at this time and is still used by people today to confess their sins to God.



David sinned and tried to hide it but when he was confronted he confessed and asked God for forgiveness.