

new summer design!



connecting a personal and small group study with Sunday's sermon



part four of a five part sermon series

Psalm 51

"Clean"

August 12, 2007

personal and small group study

storyline *Author: Kevin Baker, small group area director*

King David was a man after God's own heart. He enjoyed an intimate relationship with God, deeply devoted to serving his Lord. Yet David blew it, big time! He committed sins that you would never consider a man of his character committing. These were not sins committed accidentally or ignorantly. They were intentional and well thought out. This slice of David's life plays out more like an R-rated movie than what you might expect from a Bible story. It is a story of adultery, murder and cover up. By the end, two people are dead and two families are destroyed.

Late one afternoon, a seemingly bored King David was walking around on the roof of his palace. As he looked over the city, he happened to see a beautiful woman bathing. David inquired as to the identity of this woman and learned her name was Bathsheba. He also learned she was married to his trusted soldier, Uriah, who was off fighting for Israel. In her husband's absence, David had the woman brought to his palace where he seduced her. Bathsheba became pregnant. In an attempt to cover his sin, David ordered Uriah home from the battlefield in hope that Uriah would desire to be intimate with his bride. Uriah refused to go home as he felt it would be dishonorable to his men to enjoy the company of his wife while others were still fighting.

When Uriah couldn't be persuaded to compromise, David sent him back to the battlefield carrying orders for his commanding officer. These orders would be Uriah's death sentence; the orders put him on the front line of battle. They also called for others to withdraw when the fighting became fierce. This would insure Uriah's death. David's plan worked. Uriah was killed and David soon married Bathsheba. In a great understatement the Bible states plainly, "...the LORD was displeased with what David had done."

However, David's cover up was short lived. God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David on all he had done. He was exposed. David could no longer hide his sins. Nathan informed David that the little boy he conceived with Bathsheba would die as a direct result of David's sins. Imagine how David must have felt. He had blown it in a huge way and now he was faced with painful consequences that would deeply affect others as well.

David wrote about his failure in a song we find in Psalm 51. David teaches us how to speak to God when we blow it. When we mess up in big ways, we often think that God will no longer love us or that we are no longer able to go before Him in prayer. Neither is true. Instead, God loves us deeply and longs to forgive and restore us in relationship with Him. There is nothing we can do to make God love us more and there is nothing we can do to make God love us less.

digdeep

This week's *ABC Links* is more of an exercise than a study. It is an application in how guilty people should talk to God. David laid out a moving and beautiful model for us in the song found in **Psalm 51**. As songs are broken down into measures, so is this exercise.

Measure One :: Realize

Spend time in contemplative prayer asking God to reveal to you sin that has remained unconfessed or a reoccurring sin that you seemingly cannot break free from.

Measure Two :: Cry for help

Read verses 1-2. Write an acknowledgement of your need for God. Acknowledge God's "great compassion" and remember no sin is too great to be forgiven!

Measure Three :: Confession

Read verses 3-6. Write a confession of sin to God. Confess not only your sin but your sinfulness. Define the consequences.

Measure Four :: Petition

Read verses 7-12. Write a request of God to clean the dirty parts of your heart; restore your joy; erase your sins; change you from the inside out; allow you in His presence; create a steadfast spirit of obedience within you.

Measure Five :: Vow

Read verses 13-17. Write a commitment to God to praise Him in worship and to share what He has done for you with others. What is the best next thing (not the next best thing) you will do?

Measure 6 :: Prayer

Prayer

"God, as is Your desire, make your church a people You delight in. Repair all that which is broken within us. And we will worship you with all that we have and all that we are!"

notes

smallgroups

Find a place where you can enjoy a campfire. As a group, discuss the measures listed on the inside. Spend some quiet time (or with worship music playing softly) individually working through each measure. When everyone in the group has finished, take turns placing the *ABC Links* into the fire as a symbol of God's purification and blotting out of our sins. Spend time in prayer. Follow up with each other in the coming weeks on doing the "best next thing."

coreverse

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

Psalm 51.17

