

Week 17: The King Who Wants God

2 Samuel 11, Psalm 51

April 27/28

SERIES: Hidden Qualities of a Godly Leader

Godly Leaders Admit Their Mistakes

Summary and Goal:

As we launch into the Kingdom Era, we will begin our study looking through the lens of our 5 week series *Hidden Qualities of a Godly Leader*. Although there are many useful leadership qualities, this series seeks to focus on the qualities that God looks for in a leader He calls to help build His kingdom. These “Hidden Qualities” are heart qualities. Man looks for leaders based upon outward appearance. But God searches much deeper within. He sees our hearts. In this lesson, we will look at King David. He was a man after God’s own heart and a leader that God used in a mighty way even though he made mistakes, because he admitted his mistakes and turned from them.

Main Passages: (April 26 reading, pg. 458-461)

2 Samuel 11

Psalm 51

Session Outline:

- 1. Godly Leaders Make Mistakes.**
- 2. Godly Leaders Admit Their Mistakes**
- 3. Godly Leaders Turn From Their Mistakes**

Session in a Sentence:

Godly Leaders are not defined by their mistakes, but how they respond to them.

Kingdom Connection:

The Kingdom of God is built through people who are sensitive to their sin. King David brought Israel to a momentous place in history. The Israelites experienced tremendous growth under his leadership. But the Kingdom of God is ruled by one who is greater than David. Jesus is the Greater David. He sits on an unending throne. His Kingship rules over broken-hearted sinners who admit their sins and mistakes while trusting His love, forgiveness, and grace.

Missional Application:

Whether you consider yourself a leader or not, the hidden qualities of David’s leadership show us a strong godly quality we each should desire. David’s repentance challenges us to bring our unconfessed sin before the Lord. We can come to God broken and contrite, assured that He will meet us with His loving-kindness, tender mercy, and unfailing love.

Godly Leaders Admit Their Mistakes

Growing up *Remember The Titans* was my all time favorite movie! I loved the unity the movie exemplified, the hard-hitting tackles on the big screen, and the story of friendship that was shared throughout the movie. When the movie was released, I was just getting into football. Our football team even tried to mimic the Titans' warm-up routine! The thing that made the Titans' a great football team was that they had incredible leadership. Early in the movie, the two captains of the team have a dispute. In a famous line, the defensive captain, Julius Campbell tells the offensive captain, Gerry Bertier, "Attitude reflects leadership, Captain!" The movie is inspirational and will move you to tears all at the same time! Dr. Lee Roberson famously said, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." The success of a company, marriage, charity, school, church, planning committee and athletic teams rise and fall on leadership.

All of us have a desire to be better leaders. If you search *Amazon* there are over 30,000 books in the leadership category! People are curious about how they can lead and lead well. Typically, when we think of the qualities of a good leader we think of the following:

- Good Decision Maker
- Respected
- Flexible
- Culturally Intelligent
- Confident
- Delegates
- Innovative
- Communicates well

While all of these visible qualities are important when it comes to leadership in general, as God is building His Kingdom there are hidden leadership qualities that we see in Godly Leaders. These leadership qualities won't necessarily be a topic in the Wall Street Journal nor the featured article in Forbes magazine, yet to God, they matter. God looks below the surface and requires something deeper from His leaders. "For *the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*" (1 Samuel 16:7b—April 13th reading, pg. 404)) It is the hidden qualities of the heart that define Godly Leaders.

Over the next 5 weeks, we will be venturing into the Kingdom Era in our Chronological Bible Study discovering *The Hidden Qualities of a Godly Leader*. We have already seen God call and utilize leaders that from outward appearance were not the obvious choice.

In the Creation Era, God used Noah to build an ark when no one had ever done that before; but Noah was willing, teachable, obedient and led his family onto the ark. No one else survived.

In the Patriarch Era, God used Abraham to build an entire nation which started off with a not so simple pregnancy. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. Even though Abraham was born the son of an idol maker and on more than one occasion messed up by taking matters into his own hands; Abraham was teachable, obedient and as a leader gave birth to a nation.

Also, in the Patriarch Era, Joseph was left for dead in a well and what his brothers intended for harm, God intended for good. Despite overwhelming circumstances, Joseph was teachable, obedient and became a Godly Leader that showed grace and forgiveness.

In the Exodus Era, when Moses was called by God he had spent the previous 40 years herding sheep for his father-in-law out in what many would consider the wilderness. That happened to be great preparation for the next 40 years of his life as a Godly Leader doing something no one else in history has ever done; moving an entire nation over the course of 2 generations to fulfill a prophecy that had been made to Abraham and started with the birth of Isaac.

God has always used leaders who were teachable and ultimately obedient. It is also important to note that God has always used leaders who were regular human beings, which means they had flaws.

In case you missed our last lesson the week before Easter, we looked at the very first King of Israel, Saul. On the surface, he had it all going for him and was by outward appearance the people's choice as the perfect leader. And that was the problem, it was the people's choice, not God's choice.

God had another choice in mind, which was not obvious to anyone. God wanted a young man named David to be King; *(teachers, you may want to look at this passage just for your own contextual refreshing---April 13th in 1 Samuel 16)* When God made this known, David was probably in his teenage years, the youngest boy in his family and was tending sheep in the field. If you think in terms of a sports team draft...David would not have even been considered as a walk-on; he would not have been on anyone's radar. Yet, David was definitely on God's radar.

God didn't look at his outward appearance or resume. Though for us in 2019 looking back, David had a really good resume. David stood up to the Philistine Giant, named Goliath when no one else would. David was the underdog, who happened to have God on his side. In fact, 1 Samuel introduces us to David, letting us know that God wants David to be King even though Saul was Israel's King. David gained momentum as a leader and people followed him, which did not sit well with the present King at the time, Saul.

Saul became very jealous of David and even tried to kill him on more than one occasion. David chose to run rather than do harm to Saul or get killed by Saul. He was on the run for several years, some say up to 13 years of living his life on the run. There was even one occasion when David saw Saul in a cave in a vulnerable position with no one else around; it was the perfect place to kill Saul and be done with him once and for all.

David showed mercy by not killing Saul, though he did cut off a portion of his robe to prove that he was close enough with a sword to kill him, yet spared the King's life. (teachers, this is in 1 Samuel 24).

Throughout David's life, he had hidden qualities that became foundational in his life as a Godly Leader.

Today we pick up the story of his life in 2 Samuel 11-12. Saul is dead, though not by the hand of David. David is King and up to this point can basically do no wrong. The people love him. He is unique in that he has an artistic side as a poet and song writer. David is responsible for writing approximately 75 of the 150 chapters of the book of Psalms. He could also slay giants, build armies and even fight with bears and lions with ease. He worshipped passionately. He loved deeply. He fought with courage.

Yet what stands out with David as a Godly leader is not necessarily how he dealt with the successes of his life, but how he responded to failure. The "Hidden Quality" that we are going to be looking at today is this: Godly Leaders Admit Their Mistakes. We will be in 2 Samuel 11-12 and Psalm 51. In our Chronological Bible, they are on April 26 or page 458.

1. Godly Leaders Make Mistakes

2 Samuel 11: 1 *It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.*

² *Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.* ³ *So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"* ⁴ *Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her..."* (April 26th, pg. 458)

King David sinned in a big way! Reading the rest of the story in this chapter, we see David breaks at least half of the Ten Commandments in this episode of his life. If we are honest, we don't really like to think of David this way. Truthfully, we would rather this story not be in the Bible because it ruins the image that we have of David. But the Bible is real and real life is messy. The Bible doesn't hide the weaknesses, mistakes, and sins of its heroes. Instead, it exposes them so that we can learn from them and see the greater hero who never made mistakes: Jesus.

David's season of covetousness, adultery, lying and murder started with what he thought was benign laziness. He stayed home when he should have been at war. He was taking an evening nap when he should have been on the battlefield. David's small seeds of disobedience grew into large deeds of wickedness.

We look at this episode in David's life and we become outraged! I mean how could he! He's supposed to be the leader that desires God above all things! He's supposed to be better than Saul and he's supposed to have it all together. As Alistair Begg says, "Even the best men are men at best." The sinfulness of David is no different than the sinfulness of our own hearts. All of us sin and wrestle with our sin every day. We are all capable of sin just like David. We have the same capability and capacity to lie, manipulate, justify, and to hide our sin.

The Bible tells us, "**If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**" (1 John 1:8) Let's not be deceived. Each of us makes poor decisions, mistakes, and sin against the Lord every day. We are not qualified to be Godly Leaders because we don't have sin. We are qualified to be Godly Leaders based upon what we do with our sin, for the measure of a man is not the mistakes he makes but the steps he takes to make it right.

2. Godly Leaders Admit Their Mistakes

Author Napoleon Hill in 1937 wrote one of the top ten best selling self-help/ leadership books of all time called, *Think and Grow Rich*. Hill famously said, "Most great people have attained their greatest success just one step beyond their greatest failure." It is not our mistakes and failures that define us. It's how we respond to them. The Godly Leader does not try to conceal his/her sin, instead, he brings it to the one person who can do something about it: God.

The first thing Godly leaders need to do with their sin is to admit their mistake.

After David's episode with Bathsheba, he was confronted by Nathan the Prophet. In an incredibly poetic way, Nathan called David on the carpet about the sin in his life. David was brought to the end of himself, and he admitted his mistake.

So, David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." (2 Sam 12:13—April 26, pg. 460)

One of the benefits of studying the Chronological Bible Study is seeing historically how the Bible was written and flowed chronologically. In our daily reading of April 26 where we read the story of David, Bathsheba, and the Prophet Nathan in 1 Samuel, we also have Psalm 51.

Psalm 51 is David's journal entry after Nathan exposed David's sin. It gives us a glimpse into David's heart. Psalm 51 shows us what true repentance in the life of a Godly Leader looks like. Repentance is much more than just shame, and guilt. Martin Luther, as he nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenburg, Germany penned this opening line: "*Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ... willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.*" Repentance begins with conviction and confession. Repentance is necessary for us to have a right relationship with God.

Psalm 51: 1 *Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.*

²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.

³For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin is always before me. (April 26 reading, pg. 460)

David approaches God humbly, beseeching Him based upon His character of mercy, loving-kindness, and tender mercy; and he acknowledges his own sin before God. He openly tells the Lord that he has transgressed against God. The word “transgression” is a unique word for sin in the Old Testament. The word “transgress” means to “willingly/willfully sin or to rebel.” It is a picture of a man who knowingly trespasses across the property line. David is admitting to God, that his sin was not by accident, but it was purposeful and rebellious. Godly Leaders are securely vulnerable in their confession before God. They admit and own their mistakes as they seek God’s forgiveness.

The type of leaders God is interested in to build His Kingdom are not defined by their power, but their posture. David was broken before the Lord.

If we want to be the Godly Leaders that God uses, it starts with confessing our sins and mistakes. Remember man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. God requires a broken and contrite heart in His leaders. (Psalm 51:16-17a)

Psalm 51: 16 *For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart.* (April 26 reading, pg. 460)

3. Godly Leaders Turn from their Mistakes

Alexander the Great, one of the greatest military generals and rulers to ever live, conquered the known world with his army and military genius. One night while on a military campaign he couldn’t sleep so he went for a walk.

During His midnight stroll, he saw a guard falling asleep on his watch. The penalty for guards to fall asleep on duty was death. In some cases, commanding officers would pour kerosene on the guards and light them on fire. Alexander approached the guard and jarred him awake.

Alexander shook the soldier and screamed, “Soldier, what is your name?”

“Alexander, sir.” The Soldier replied with a shuddering voice.

Once more, Alexander shook the soldier and screamed, “Soldier, what is your name?”

“Alexander, sir.” The soldier replied once more with trembling.

Alexander asked again, "Soldier, what is your name?"

"My name is... Alexander, sir"

Alexander the Great peered into the young soldier's eyes and said, "Either change your name or change your conduct!"

It's not just good enough for Godly Leaders to admit their mistakes, they must turn from their mistakes and change their conduct. As a Christ follower, we need to be mindful of what that term truly means. There are people all over the world who are sorry for something they did that was wrong. There are people who will never again do what they were caught doing, admitted doing, and were wrong in doing; that does not mean they are repentant.

The process of repentance is as follows: 1) We are convicted of our sin. 2) We confess our sin. 3) We correct our sin. 4) We commit to closely follow Jesus.

1. Conviction of sin can come through someone else pointing it out, as it was initiated by Nathan's story to David. But conviction can also come simply through the working of the Holy Spirit. It's the gnawing feeling you have in your gut when you know that you did wrong not just on a physical level, but also on a spiritual level.
2. Confession of sin is simply admitting it to all involved, which means every single time there should be a confession to God. God is involved in every aspect of our lives; we are deceiving ourselves if we believe we can sin in secret.

1 John 1: 8 *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

3. Correcting our sin means we change direction. Sometimes we need to change a particular habit, like driving a different way to work or home so not to be tempted. The ball is in our court as we have choices to make; sin is a choice. It is also our choice to correct the sin by taking appropriate actions that lead us in the other direction.

Colossians 3:1 *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*

4. Committing to closely follow Jesus is the next step. Every sin, no matter how big or small reveals that we have taken our eyes off Christ, even if for only a moment. Turning away from sin takes you halfway there. True repentance is not only turning away from sin, but it is also turning toward Jesus Christ. It is only in His power that we can overcome sin.

Romans 6 12-14: ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

David realized that with true repentance came true restoration. David wrote in Psalm 51:12

Psalm 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.
¹³ Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,
And sinners shall be converted to You. (April 26 reading, pg. 460)

David's aim in his prayer was to redirect his life. He was once walking in lies, but now he wants to walk in truth. He once wanted to cover up his sin, now he wants to share the grace and mercy of God with others. Sin turns us inward to care only about ourselves. But when we repent of our sins, our desires are aimed outward. Those who experience the forgiveness of God, can't help but want to tell others about Him in all His fullness.

David was considered a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), because David gave his heart over to God. The Hidden Qualities of a Godly Leader start with admitting our mistakes. Godly Leaders are sensitive toward sin in their lives. They are quick to trade the misery of sin for the mercy of God.

- *God Speaks* sometimes through the confrontation of others, as with the prophet Nathan.
- *God Acts* redemptively toward those who admit and acknowledge their sin for what it is and come broken to God for forgiveness and cleansing.
- *God Reveals* that no sin is so secret that it can be hidden and that no sin is so great that it cannot be forgiven.

Resources: *NOTE: Teachers, don't forget to utilize the resources at second.org/teach*

Tim Keller – All of Life is Repentance

https://download.redeemer.com/pdf/learn/resources/All_of_Life_Is_Repentance-Keller.pdf

Charles H. Spurgeon – The Treasury of David – Exposition of Psalm 51

<https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary.php?com=spur&b=19&c=51>

Thomas Constable's Commentary on Psalms

<https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf>