



Parkway Fellowship

2 Samuel: From the Height of Power, to the Depths of Dysfunction •

Sin and Restoration in the Life of David • 2 Samuel 24:1-25 • 04/21/2019

Main Point

Sin separates us from God who desires for us to experience His mercy by repenting of particular sins. David's life is a model for us of the human struggle with sin and God's incredible grace and mercy.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What are some things that cause people to forget God and His work in their lives?

Do you see any patterns in your own life, like seasons of comfort or health, that distract you from remaining dependent on God? What patterns stand out to you?

Throughout David's life we pick up on a cycle in his relationship with God that makes it look a lot like ours: David moved from a place of worship to sin, repentance, and back to worship. Like David, we sometimes forget what God has done for us, and it's in those moments of forgetting that we slip back into sin.

Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 24:1-9.

What was the point of David's census? Why was his action sinful?

Describe a time when one of your legitimate pursuits or accomplishments led you to depend more on yourself than God. What was the turning point that led you away from Him? When did you realize you had sinned?

David's census was equivalent to a draft, even though the nation of Israel was at peace. This action points to a dangerous shift in his faith. As David evaluated his available military power, he may have begun to trust more in human resources than in the Lord. We, too, can depend more on our job security, retirement plans, influence, business abilities, and friends than we do on God. We all seek to provide for our loved ones and ourselves, but we need to recognize the source of our human and material resources. When we begin to depend on our talents, possessions, and other people to see us through life, we have set up idols in the place of God.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 24:10-17.

What factors drew David to conviction and repentance?

All sin has negative consequences. What were the consequences of David's sin? Why do we sometimes have to deal with the consequences of sin even after repentance?

Why is it important for us to take personal responsibility for our sins and their consequences?

Before the Lord confronted David or punished him, David realized his sin and confessed it to God. Still, sin always creates negative consequences. Often our disobedience to God directly hurts others. To refuse to acknowledge, confess, and turn from our sins is to slip ever farther into spiritual darkness. We become insensitive to God's convicting and are prone to further sin. Sometimes the consequences of our sins cannot be stopped even when we repent, but we can receive forgiveness and a restored relationship with the Lord.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 24:18-25.

What two types of sacrifices did David offer to God?

What did the sacrifices that David offered symbolize?

David's realization of his sin led him to repent. His repentance led him to seek God and intercede for his people. God's answer led David to worship, and his worship brought forgiveness and deliverance to his people. David knew God as forgiving and merciful, and that those who approached Him in humble repentance could depend on the Lord's grace and mercy. The reality of God's grace and mercy is shown most clearly in Jesus' sacrifice for our sake.

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How have you seen your sin affect others in the past? How might God use this experience as a deterrent from future sin in your life?

How is a life of ongoing confession and repentance counter to the ways of the world? How might God use the humble confession of sin in your life to draw others to Himself?

Pray

Thank God for His grace, shown most clearly in the death of Jesus for His people. Ask God to reveal to you areas that you currently need to repent. Pray for a life of ongoing faithfulness to God and a renewed fight against sin.

Commentary

| 2 Samuel 24:1-25

24:1 The particular sin that brought about God's wrath is not given. First Chronicles 21:1 credits Satan with enticing David, but no contradiction exists. Both verses are correct; God is able to use even Satan to accomplish His purposes (Job 1:12; 2:6). Here, God allowed Satan to entice David to count the people, an act that, while acceptable under certain circumstances (Ex 30:12), here probably revealed that David was putting trust in his military power rather than in the Lord's protection and guidance. Another possibility is that David failed to instruct his commanders to collect the half-shekel poll tax, bringing on the plague (Ex 30:12-13). In either case, God did not force David to make the wrong decision.

24:3 Joab appears to have been concerned about his king's motives, though he veiled his concern with words of blessing.

24:4 The king's order prevailed is probably a reference to David telling Joab he wanted the census conducted—period.

24:5 Aroer was the southernmost part of Israel's territory east of the Jordan River. Gad and Jazer lay between the Jordan Valley and Ammon.

24:6 Some manuscripts read "Dan, Ijon" instead of Dan-jaan, referring to a second city near Dan at Israel's northern border. Sidon, a Phoenician city, nonetheless may have had an Israelite garrison there (5:11).

24:7 Tyre was also a Phoenician city. The expression cities of the Hivites and Canaanites probably designates areas that David had controlled. Joab may have counted the foreign population as well, or merely the Israelite soldiers maintaining order in those regions. The Negev of Judah at Beer-sheba completed their counterclockwise loop through the land, and Joab's delegation probably headed up the patriarchal highway through Hebron and back to Jerusalem with its census numbers.

24:9 The numbers given in the parallel passage in 1Ch 21:5 differ significantly, but both authors appear to have rounded their numbers, and the Chronicler may have included Judah's number in Israel's number as well.

24:10 David's conscience troubled him, revealing again the work of God in his heart was not in vain. He confessed his sin and waited on the Lord's response.

24:11 The Lord's response came in the morning. The prophet Gad ministered during David's reign and committed certain events of David's life to writing (1Ch 29:29), though these writings have not been discovered.

24:13 David received three choices from the Lord through Gad— famine, military defeat, or plague. The seriousness of these punishments revealed the gravity of David's sin.

24:14 Again, David revealed his heart. He knew mercies might come from the Lord, but not from the human hands of his enemies. Who knew whether God's grace might avert disaster?

24:16 When the angel whom God had sent to bring the plague extended his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, David's thinking proved correct. The Lord relented and spared the city. The Jebusites, part of the original Canaanite population during the days of Joshua (Jos 24:11), held Jerusalem until David conquered them (2Sam 5:6-8). Araunah apparently had continued to live in the area following David's conquest.

24:17 David asked the Lord, these sheep, what have they done? He pleaded with God to strike only him and his family, but sin often has consequences that affect others besides the person who has sinned.

24:18 This altar to the Lord would mark the point where the plague had stopped.

24:20 Araunah's threshing floor sat above Jerusalem to the north, in the area where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice and where Solomon would later build the temple (2Ch 3:1). Since threshing utilized the wind, threshing floors probably were often in high parts of cities.

24:22 Araunah made David a generous offer: My lord the king may take whatever he wants. Probably his offer was sincere; besides, especially as a foreigner, he was not in a position to bargain with Israel's king. Or Araunah may have anticipated the king would respond with a price (Gen 23:7-16).

24:24 David, however, knew that all genuine sacrifice came at a price. To offer to the Lord burnt offerings that cost... nothing would have been to David a sign of the deepest ingratitude. In light of this, 20 ounces of silver was probably more than a fair price.

24:25 Burnt offerings typically signified the general dedication of the worshiper (Lv 1). Fellowship offerings involved a meal shared by priest and worshiper, and they could be offered to express thankfulness—in this case thankfulness that the plague on Israel, while severe, had not destroyed Jerusalem.