



KEY STEPS TO BIBLICAL RESTORATION

By Jay Allbright

The Prerequisites for RESTORATION

As preachers we often entertain the subject of restoration. As preachers we deal with individuals on a weekly if not daily basis who are in need of restoration. Sometimes that restoration is due to a premeditated decision to sin and sometimes it is because the individual was overcome by the lust of the flesh. There are those also who have become broken or bitter based on the decisions made by someone other than himself or herself. Regardless of the reason for which restoration is necessary we all as preachers recognize that restoration is needed if we are to salvage those sitting in our pews who have been wounded in the real battle by a real enemy.

What about the preacher? I was preaching in a rural town in Southern Indiana and the preacher asked me to visit a man that had never visited the church but his wife came on a regular basis. He gave me the address and told me to be careful but he really didn't give me much more information. When I entered the man's home I saw a man sitting in a chair in the family room. He was a big man and his countenance was rough and bitter. He had a long ponytail, long beard and he looked as if he were in a biker gang of some sort. I discovered later that he had indeed been asked or commanded to join a biker gang and had actually had some try to kill him for rejecting their invitation. I learned later that in the last church service that he attended he actually ran down the aisle and tried to choke the preacher to death. As I sat and shared the gospel with him he never said a word he only grunted occasionally. The only words I remember him saying he uttered as I was leaving. He said, "You're alright with me man" and boy was I glad to hear that. To my surprise the next Sunday morning he came to hear me preach. He stared at me the whole service but he didn't respond in the invitation. I did notice tears running down his cheeks while the invitation was being given but he didn't respond. At the end of the service while I was standing in the front of the church building greeting people with the pastor I shook his hand and said "Doc, I noticed some tears was the Lord dealing with your heart. I'll never forget what he said. He looked me strait in the eyes and said; "son the tears were not because the Lord was dealing with my heart the tears were because he was not" he then turned and walked away. I stood speechless for a moment and then I asked the preacher to explain the background of this man. The pastor told me that there was an evangelist years ago that preached all over Indiana. He was actually one of the most sought after evangelist in the area. He had been asked to preach in a church pastured by his dear friend. The church was experiencing some issues and the church began attacking their preacher and his family in this particular service. The attacks were severe and heartless. The attacks were more hurtful than you would have expected even from a group of lost people. The evangelist "Doc" walked up to the communion table, turned and looked at the people and laid his bible down on the table and said, "if this is the way Christians treat the one who loves them more than anyone else in the world I'll never preach this book again". He walked out of the building that day and never picked



up that bible or any other bible ever again. That evangelist was the man shedding tears in the service because the Lord did not speak to him. Are we truly living in a day of throwaway preachers? I had a preacher tell me a few months ago that preachers in need of restoration need to be discarded. I am sure that David and Peter would disagree. I'm sure they are glad that God doesn't feel that way. After all didn't Christ leave the ninety-nine and go find the one lamb that was lost. God still has a plan for the ones he calls. The plan may not be exactly the same as it was but he will make *"it again another vessel"*.

I. Realize that you are only clay to begin with.

Jeremiah 18:4 "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it".

God calls men and women to serve in special but different capacities. Every real preacher has a special calling from God. The reality is that although God specifically calls individuals those individuals are still just plain old ordinary clay. The preacher who loses perspective of who he really is and lets pride begin its destructive work in his life is certainly headed for disappointment and discouragement.

A. Success will often cause us to forget we are "just clay".

Not all people handle success gracefully. As a matter of fact I am learning that most do not handle success gracefully. Those who do usually do not view themselves as successful but they normally view themselves as blessed but undeserving. *Joshua 1:8 "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success"*. The self-made man will only be that, a self made man.

B. Praise of people will often cause us to forget we are "just clay".

1 Timothy 3:6 "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil". The pastor should be a man that will not become puffed up with pride while receiving the praise of the people. This is what would happen to a novice. It is not just the pastor that experiences this negative process. Singers do, missionaries do, evangelist do, teachers do, employees do, anyone who receives the praise of men is vulnerable.

C. Talent will often cause us to forget we are "just clay".

1 Peter 4:11 "if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth". It is so easy for us to forget that our service to God is only exemplified through the ability that God gives not because we are extremely talented. Some of the most talented men I know, men who were great orators, men with great leadership abilities, men who had commanding personalities are no longer serving God. They are ship wrecked and their life has no purpose. Men who once pastured great churches whom now never even darken the door of the house of God.



D. Position will often cause us to forget we are “just clay”.

Daniel 4:30 *“The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power”, Daniel 4:33 “The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws”.*

As preachers we sometimes get caught up in ourselves. We become more interested in building empires than building people. If we are not careful we will continually view life from the perspective of what the church owes us as its pastor rather than the honor we have to pastor our people. The bible does say in *Matthew 23:12 “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted”*. Serving God is a great honor and worthy of admiration and praise but the man of God should let God lift him up and not he himself. The man or woman who lifts themselves up is certainly going to require restoration at some point in their life.

II. Realize that you never left the hand of the Potter.

It doesn’t matter what the reason is for your need of restoration, if you are a born again child of God you never fell from the hand of the potter. The moment you were saved a process of conformation started that is out of your control. You can’t stop it you can only change the severity of it. Rom. 8:29 *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son,”* You can allow God to accomplish this process with less pain or more pain that is up to you, but you can’t stop the process. You will be conformed to the image of his Son. Now if that is true, whatever brought about your need for restoration didn’t pull you out of the hand of God?

There are many who are wounded while in the battle.

A. Sometimes it is their sin that mars the vessel.

A lot of Christians enter the battle unprepared because they do not pay attention in Basic Training. They take lightly the training and insight they receive from their parents while growing up or maybe they do not make personal application of the warnings delivered by their pastor or college professor. It is true that there would be little need for counsel from men like me if people would heed and apply the words of their pastor. Hebrews 13:17 *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls,”*

B. Sometimes it is the actions of others that mar the vessel

I know preachers right now that struggle with serving God because they were marred at the hand of someone else. I am not saying there was not fault on his part but much of the damage was done at the hand of someone else. One man was not the husband he should be as is the case with most men. He became frustrated because his wife didn’t want to follow his conviction and guidance. He became harsh with her



and would preach at her even from the pulpit. No one was aware but she was. He desired greatly to be used of God and loved his church deeply. He loved pasturing and there was no doubt he had been called to do so. God richly blessed his church but his wife developed a bad spirit toward Christian service and the church. She decided that she didn't want to be in the ministry anymore and she certainly didn't want to be with him. She knew her parents would not approve of her leaving so in an attempt to gain the approval of her family she accused him of having affairs with women in the church. He had indeed been unwise in counseling some without his wife present but his wife had continually refused to sit in on the counseling. Although he had not used wisdom in the situation he had certainly not had an affair with anyone and desperately wanted the power of God on his ministry. The accusations of his wife spread like wildfire. Her family now viewed her leaving as justified, and his ministry was destroyed despite the fact that his wife had been his one and only sexual experience.

C. Sometimes the marring of the vessel is simply allowed by God as his way of preparing us for a particular ministry.

How can we forget the story of Hosea found in the book of Hosea? We find in Hosea 1:2 through Hosea 3:5 that Israel had turned her back on God and had gone whoring after other nations. God loved Israel and wanted her to return. He needed a prophet to deliver His message of love to Israel but it couldn't just be any prophet. It had to be a messenger that knew how God felt about Israel, a man who knew the heart of God. So God allowed Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer. She refrained from her life of prostitution until they had three children. After her third child Gomer decided to leave Hosea and enter back into a life of prostitution. Hosea loved Gomer as God loved Israel and his heart was broken. Let's fast forward to the end of the story. After Gomer was used up and unwanted by her lovers, when her life was in shambles she once again goes on the auction block as a prostitute. No one would bid on this used up prostitute and the bidding was dropped from thirty pieces of silver to fifteen pieces of silver but still no takers, in the back of the crowd a hand goes up. The bidder came forward to take his prize, that bidder was Hosea. He took Gomer home as if she had never sinned. Then and only then was Hosea prepared to deliver the message sent from God to Israel. He now knew the heart of God. Did it hurt, absolutely? Was it hard, no doubt? But it brought Israel back to God. It's like going into the Special Forces in the military. There are some areas of service that only heartache can prepare us for.

If you will only allow the restoration process to proceed in your life the Potter can "*make it again another vessel*" to accomplish something greater than you might have expected. Since you are eternally secure and God is obligated to conform you to the image of his Son, you are still in the hand of the Potter. Let him do what needs to be done in your life for restoration.



III. Realize no one can pull you out of Gods will for your life but you.

God will never allow circumstance or the actions of other people to destroy the purpose for which you were created and molded. I often hear people say “I would be able to serve God if ...”. No the fact is that if you are not serving God it is because you have made a decision not to serve God. You have pulled yourself out of the ranks. Sure the circumstances of life may have made it difficult. Certainly the journey may be more painful than it would have been. Without a doubt your success in the ministry will now be hard fought but the fact remains that if you are not serving God right now it is because you made a conscious decision not to serve God.

A. The difficult nature of service after restoration sometimes discourages people from serving God.

Restoration can be painful but it's process yields great fruit. In working to restore preachers we are finding that restoration is not the most difficult part of the process, the most difficult part is getting preachers and preachers wives to realize they are worth restoring. The Bible does say in Galatians 6:1 *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”*.

David's defeat of Goliath was great in its example but it was an event that occurred one time. David's rule as king was great in Israel's history but he is no longer king in Israel. The beautiful Psalms are read every day by hundreds of thousands of people. For hundreds of years those Psalms have been preacher with power and have changed countless lives but they were pinned by the hand of David **after** his fall into sin with Bathsheba. Peter was continually up and down in his Christian service but his ministry was most effective **after** he denied Christ three times. Restoration is hard but could it be that the greatest days of your serving Christ are yet to come if you will but yield to the hand of the Potter as he makes *“it again another vessel”*.

B. The fear of not being accepted after restoration discourages people from serving God.

It is part of our human nature to want and seek the approval of those we love and respect. That process began when we were infants and will continue to some degree until the day we die. The problem develops when we begin to be more concerned with the approval of man than the approval of God. As Fundamentalist we preach long and hard concerning the seeking of approval of man through sinful activity and denying the commandment of God yet as fundamentalist we violate the same principle in regard to God's forgiveness. We want to hold people under the bondage of past sins that have been forgiven. The fear of not gaining the approval of our brothers in Christ overshadows the fact that Christ has forgiven us and desires to remold our lives and use us. Jeremiah 18:4 *“so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it”*.



C. The focus of the conscience after restoration discourages people from serving God.

How many times have you been awakened in the night by a thought involving something that had happened in you past that you were ashamed of? Not everyone can say *"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men,"* Acts 24:16. It may have been something that no one is aware of but you. It may have been something that happened before you were saved. For the one being restored it is often much worse because it is public knowledge. I Timothy 1:19 *"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"*

The conscience is a very important tool in helping us to remain pure. John 8:9 *"being convicted by their own conscience"*. It is when our conscience is seared that we are truly in trouble. I Timothy 4:2 *"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron"*.

Satan also uses the conscience as well to continue to pull us under the bondage of sins that have been confessed thus keeping us fruitless in our endeavor to serve God as *"another vessel"*.

Galatians 6:1, *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."*

RESTORATION is a process that almost every Christian will say they believe to be a vital, essential biblical truth. It is considered by most one of the key elements in practicing biblical love. The problem is that the idea held by the Christian concerning restoration varies dramatically from one group to the next. The view presented in this article is not from a particular denomination's point of view but from a biblical point of view.

There are a few things that of necessity must be established if we are to have a biblical view of restoration. First, is there any sin from which a person cannot be restored? Well what does God say, *Romans 8:39 "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! I do believe murder would certainly be in the "worst sin's ever" category.*

People tend to categorize sin based on a particular sins affect on them personally. For one the sin of homosexuality could be that sin that crosses the line for which restoration is drawn. For someone else it could be the sin of murder. For another it could be the sin of adultery or fornication. A prime example is in the list of guidelines for the bishop. Titus 1:7 *"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre";* 1 Timothy 3:2 *"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband*



of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;” If you were to ask the average preacher, bishop, elder or deacon what are the qualifications of the pastor or bishop almost in angelic harmony they would say, he must be “the husband of one wife”. On the other hand most preachers, bishops, elders or deacons could not name the other 11 things listed in these two verses. The truth is that God in many cases used people in the Word of God that were guilty of sexual sins and there were many that he did not use that were guilty of one of the other 11 sins mentioned in these two verses. Please do not misunderstand what I am saying. Sexual sins are wicked, ungodly, harmful beguiling sins but are they unforgivable , no. Nothing, I mean nothing can separate us from the love of God.

STEP 1 – A Biblical understanding of *forgiveness* must be integrated into the Restoration process.

The key to understanding God’s perspective on forgiveness is through application of his own words.

Ephesians 4:32 *“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”*

Jeremiah 31:34 *“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”*

Isaiah 43:25 *“I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”*

Hebrews 8:12 *“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”*

1. Forgiveness is important because it prepares the way for restoration.

Matthew 5:23-24 *“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”*

Forgiveness is usually necessary for many in the process of just one restoration. The person being restored will need God forgiveness, they will need forgiveness on the part of others, the person in sin will need to forgive themselves and accusers with the wrong spiritual attitude will need forgiveness. There are other parties that may require forgiveness.

2. Forgiveness is important because the Lord gave us a solemn warning concerning forgiveness.



Matthew 18:34-35 *“And his lord was wrath, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”*

We are obligated to forgive each other if we are to expect God to forgive us. At Recovery Ministries we deal with a lot of situations where multiple wrongs led to sinful situations. One may have had an affair but the other may have been unloving or abusive. One sin is no excuse for the other nor can any sin be condoned based on the sinful activity of the other. I have watched many over the years in need of restoration plead for forgiveness while at the same time refusing to forgive the one who sinned against them. If you are seeking forgiveness in the restoration process you must be willing to forgive those who wronged you in the process.

3. Forgiveness must be requested specifically.

1) State clearly what you did wrong.

You cannot generalize or your request for forgiveness will be viewed as insincere.

2) Request forgiveness emphatically.

Put them on the spot, (will you forgive me?) When a general request is made you never know if you are forgiven. I was in a situation personally that required me to ask forgiveness. I generalized assuming that I would be forgiven. Ten years later a preacher friend of mine was approached by one of those of whom I had requested forgiveness pointing out my sin of the past. My preacher friend said, “wait a minute didn’t he ask for your forgiveness.” The gentleman’s response was “yes he did but it was obvious he didn’t mean it.” For ten years I lived under the assumption that I had been forgiven to find it necessary ten years later to request forgiveness again.

3) Use simple, factual terms when asking forgiveness.

Proverbs 10:19 *“In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.”*

Be specific and to the point with few words. When there are a lot of words, transgression is unavoidable. The more you talk the more likely you are to offend the one of who you are requesting forgiveness

4) Don’t destroy good words with a wrong attitude.

Proverbs 25:11 *“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”*

If you ask forgiveness with anything but a broken heart and humble spirit your request is sure to go unheeded.

5) When you ask forgiveness don’t confess your sin accusingly.



You are seeking forgiveness not offering forgiveness. Keep the right perspective of the situation. If you request forgiveness and then blame another you have voided the whole process. It doesn't matter if the other person was wrong or not they must deal with that in their own restoration process.

Almost always when Stephanie and I are dealing with someone concerning their error and sin in their marriage relationship, once they have admitted their sin they immediately point out some sin in their partner as if that gave them some rite of passage into a sin of their own.

4. When you ask forgiveness from a repentant, sincere heart don't let Satan hold you in bondage to the offense.

Psalms 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Satan is in hope that you will not ask forgiveness and live in defeat for the rest of your life rendering your life and testimony of no benefit to the cause of Christ. When you ask forgiveness and are restored to a right relationship with God, Satan's only hope is to keep you defeated by continually running your past before you.

When you complete the restoration steps live as a new vessel prepared for a new purpose in honoring and glorifying God.

Jeremiah 18:4 "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it."

STEP 2 – See yourself as God see's you, not so easy for someone in the ministry.

It is amazing how human we are and all the same. As you know, Paul clearly said we all delight in the law of God after the inward man (Romans 7:22). The problem is we also have the law of sin in our members as well. Let's take a look at what the Apostle Paul said about his (and our) struggles against sin.

Romans 7:14-25 "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring



against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

We all sin but when we commit a sin which is **our** worst sin we can't forgive ourselves (Romans 7:23).

Even though God doesn't grade sin, we humans tend to do so. Christ said He forgives *all* manner of sin and the answer to Paul's question "**who shall deliver me from the body of this death** (sin)?" is Jesus Christ our Savior (Romans 7:25)!

Overcoming guilt is a matter of faith in Christ. The very fact you said you confessed your sin to God, your wife, pastors and the congregation and you said God forgives you. The reality is since you feel guilt means you doubt God forgives you. Intellectually, you know God forgives you from a Biblical point of view. Your problem is that in your heart you believe the sin was TOO evil. You are discriminating sin. You are grading sin which God doesn't do.

You are also saying aside from this sin, you haven't sinned. You and I both know better. We all sin! If you believe we all continue to sin (besides the one you mention) then you should feel guilty about them all! Since only **this** sin makes you guilty you evidently are having a very human problem of **self-righteousness**.

Since God doesn't grade sin, we should feel guilty about all our sins. *But this is the only sin you feel guilty about.* That, my friend, is being self-righteous!

Paul said the law of God was given that we might realize how much sin we commit (Romans 5:20). Either this is your only sin bad enough for you to feel guilty or you don't understand how sinful you really are. That is self-righteousness. All sin is equal, and therefore, we should continually see our guilt and sinful nature and know we look to Christ to forgive us. My suggestion is you need to pray for deeper repentance and have the faith that God forgives us regardless of the type of sin.

Until you forgive yourself for your sin (sins), you really do not believe Christ's blood has paid for that sin. My friend, deeper repentance and faith will remove the guilt!

It is very important to cover this at this point because the steps we take from here are useless unless you realize that God forgives the sin of adultery just as readily as he does any other sin.

LET'S THINK ABOUT DAVID FOR A MINUTE

David has committed adultery, and then ordered the murder of several innocent men, trying to cover up his sin. God has sent Nathan the Prophet to confront David, and David has sought God's forgiveness and expressed an attitude of genuine repentance.



Now, there are many who want the story to end here, with 2 Samuel 12:13:

2 Samuel 12:13 *“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.”*

We love stories with perfect, happy endings, and we want sin forgiven without consequence. In reality, **we can be forgiven for breaking the window, but we still have to sweep up the broken glass and repair the window.** There are consequences to our actions, and like it or not, we must coexist with those consequences, just as David did:

2 Samuel 12:14-23 *“Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”*

The death of David's newborn son seems, at first look, to be a cruel and unfair punishment of an innocent child. There are many commentaries that see this from other perspectives, including that the child would have lived a painful and disgraceful life, as an illegitimate son, and his death as an infant was merciful. Others have commented on the possible ramifications of this illegitimate child becoming king. Still others see the example of atonement, an innocent life being given to redeem the life of the guilty. Frankly, I don't have a definitive answer. The child's death does, however, underscore an important truth; our sin affects not only ourselves, but also those around us. The long-reaching effect of a moment of sinful self-indulgence can be disastrous. We seldom pause to consider that factor in a moment of temptation. If we could see the results of our actions clearly, we'd say "no" more often.

There were other consequences, too. The judgment proclaimed in verses 11 and 12 came to pass, when in 2 Samuel 16:20-22 David's rebellious son Absalom publicly went in to his father's wives and concubines to demonstrate his rebellion to the nation. In verse 12, Nathan told David that what he tried to keep as a secret affair would be made public, and he would face public disgrace and humiliation. Bathsheba, though a part of the king's household, had to live with humiliation and disgrace in the midst of the king's other wives and concubines. In the terms of



their society, the loss of a son was a sign of God's judgement upon them that was a matter of deep, scarring disgrace.

I don't intend to leave you with the impression that God is going to do something dramatic like he did in David's case. He might and he might not. The point here is that there are always consequences for sin but the best news of all is that the story does not end with the consequences of sin. Where there is sin, there are consequences, but where there is grace, there is restoration and healing:

2 Samuel 12:24-25 "And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him. And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD."

I would have expected the embarrassed and disgraced Bathsheba to tell David that he could just stay on his side of the palace, and that she never wanted to lay eyes on him again. Perhaps she even did. Scripture does not record Bathsheba's journey of healing as it does David's, but there is sound evidence that she did, indeed, make the trip.

Who would think that a relationship with such a sin-drenched foundation could even survive, much less prosper? God demonstrated His grace in the sanctification of a relationship that had once brought the condemnation of death. This is not a "healed but always deficient" relationship, but a "healed and holy household," a union that brought forth Solomon, a child regarded by both sacred and secular authority as one of the wisest men ever born. He succeeded his father as King, and his name appears in the direct bloodline of Christ in the New Testament genealogies.

Do you see it, Bathsheba actually became the Great Grandmother of the Lord Jesus Christ and she was guilty of adultery.

The restored, healed, sanctified marriage of David and Bathsheba bears both God's hand and His blessing. It is purely poetic that the same prophet chosen to bring God's condemnation of sin was also chosen to deliver God's blessing on the fruits of this healed, holy relationship. The LORD sent word through Nathan that He had a special name for this special child: Jedidiah -- which means "beloved of God." It is important to note that the healing and reconstruction of this relationship did not happen immediately. Based on historical accounts and comparative scriptural studies, it is apparent that several years passed between the death of the first son and the birth of Solomon. It is also apparent that, although David had many wives, Bathsheba became his favorite. A marriage built on the healing grace of God always produces very special, intimate, bonded relationships.

God never brings us condemnation without offering us grace and healing. This is a recurring theme throughout the Bible -- *God wants to have an intimate relationship with each of us, and goes out of His way to invite us into that relationship.* **The whole point of Nathan's charge against David was not to punish him, but to restore him.**

There have been many parallels between this chapter of David's life and the lives of men who have fallen into sin. Whether the man is a well-known figure like Jim Bakker or Bill Clinton, or a common "man in the street," we all stand on level ground at the foot of the cross. It doesn't matter



what you've done, or where you've been -- God's healing, restoring grace is available for you, just like it was for David. **All you have to do is be willing to face God -- and yourself -- with the same painful honesty that was David's first step toward rebuilding his life.**

Are you ready for a fresh start? **Your life can be healed, restored, and rebuilt, just like David's was.** I can tell you from experience that it will not be an easy journey, but **it will be the most worthwhile venture of your entire lifetime.**

Like David, you will have to be **honest with God**, and with yourself.

- **Stop trying to hide** your sin behind cheap excuses and lies
- Be willing to **deal with and accept the consequences of your sin**
- Totally **surrender yourself to God**

This STEP 2 must be realized before we can go any further.

Get alone with God right now and pray, ask God to forgive you and give you the ability to forgive yourself. Knowing that the consequences your sin may bring are not the end but you must realize God still has a plan for your life. Get alone with God right now and confess your sin, not just the sin of adultery but any other sin, realizing they are equally wrong and hurtful.

When you are satisfied this has been accomplished then it's time for the next step.

STEP 3 – The proper order of confession and repentance.

1 John 3:4, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." **anomia**, Greek 458, Strong's **anomia**, *an-om-ee'-ah*; from Greek 459 (anomos); *illegality*, i.e. *violation of law* or (genitive) *wickedness* :- iniquity, x transgress (-ion of) the law, unrighteousness. The scriptures repeatedly emphasize two acts of volition in connection with sin:

1. That man must repent. God calls upon all that transgress His law to repent (Acts 17:30; Acts 2:38). There is no such thing in God's Word as allowing man to "repent" before he commits the act. By definition repentance is an exercise of the mind; the feeling of compunction follows after the dirty deed or deeds. Definition: »Strong's Help **metanoeo**, Greek 3340, Strong's **metanoeo**, *met-an-o-eh'-o*; from Greek 3326 (meta) and Greek 3539 (noieo); to think differently or afterwards, i.e. *reconsider* (moral *feel compunction*) :- repent. Christ warns those whom He loves to be zealous and repent. Rev. 3:19, As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. When you wash dirty hands, the results are immediately visible. *Repent* means "to turn," implying a change in behavior. It is turning from sin toward God. When one repents of sin in their life, then others see the difference it makes in them. Repentance is marked by a changed life with new and different behavior that makes your repentance real and visible.
2. The other act of volition, of course, is that man must confess. This can be collateral with and corroborative of one's repentance.

I. Confessing is the outward evidence of inward Repentance

Collateral or "accompanying" in the sense that confessing sins without repentance avails



nothing. “Corroborative” in the sense that the words come from a heart that has truly repented. The very willingness to confess that one has been bad can be part of that “difference” in behavior that repentance makes and that others see.

1. To illustrate turn to Acts 19:18. Here we have an example of many that came confessing and telling their deeds. Many of the converts in Ephesus had practiced the occult before their conversions. Ephesus was a center for black magic and other occult practices. The people practiced magic for wealth, happiness, and success in love and marriage. Superstition and sorcery were commonplace. Notice the “fear” mentioned in verse 17. (read 16-17) This was a deadly game some were involved in! People saw that this practice exposed them to physical harm from evil spirits. When the fear comes obedience and confession often follows.
2. Whether this was a public or private confession is disputed. Some appeal to the confessions made to John the Baptist as an example that this was public, Matt. 3:6.
3. These took another step to break away from their former sin. They disclosed in detail, fully, their practices. They did this to “show” others the deceit and fraud, and to spread the knowledge abroad so others would not be beguiled. Their desire to do this in detail, fully, shows their repentance. Many who had the books that taught how to do these sinful things brought them and burned them. They had books then just like today.
4. What did these actions show? To answer that let’s look at the definition of “confessing”:
»Strong’s Help **exomologeō**, Greek 1843, Strong’s **exomologeō**, *ex-om-ol-og-eh'-o*; from Greek 1537 (ek) and Greek 3670 (homologeō); to *acknowledge* or (by implication of assent) **agree fully** :- confess, profess, promise. a. Let me tell you young people something you should never do. I mean never do this! When someone does confess don’t say, “Ah, that’s Ok.” As if all the BAD they did doesn’t matter. The thing that makes this worthwhile is that the person does understand that it is not OK. We might consider this point again before we’re through.

II. The Description of Biblical Confession

- A. Compare the words in James 5:16 (Matt. 3:6) and I John 1:9.
 1. By the way there are not many passages in the New Testament where you find the words confess, confession, and confessing in the sense we are studying. This is not be confused with what it means to confess Christ as the Son of God.
 2. In Matt. 3:6, James 5:16 the word “confess”: »Strong’s Help **exomologeō**, Greek 1843, Strong’s **exomologeō**, *ex-om-ol-og-eh'-o*; from Greek 1537 (ek) and Greek 3670 (homologeō); to *acknowledge* or (by implication of assent) **agree fully** :- confess, profess, promise.
 - a. This would apply to situations where someone says that I’m doing something wrong and I’m asked, “Did you do that?” If I did then I should confess, i.e. acknowledge that I did. If I confess I won’t say I did “part” of it if I did it “all.” And I’ll stick with the “I” in order that “I” might clear what “I” have done without trying to blame someone else.
 3. In I John 1:9 the word “confess”: »NASB Dictionary Help **homologeō**, Greek 3670,



NASB homologueo; from homologos (*of one mind*); **to speak the same, to agree** : a. Homo is from the base "homou (hom-oo') which means "at the same place or time" -- "together." Logeo is from Logos which means "something said."

What it means is "to be of one mind; to speak the same; to agree."

B. The Substance of Confession is I agree with what God knows.

1. Fundamentally, I know that God knows; when I confess I simply "agree" with what He knows I've done that is sinful. Before one repents and confesses they tend to push the fact that God knows to the back of their mind somewhere, until the truth and full realization of the damage they have and are doing brings it out.
2. Prodigal, Lk. 15:17-19, 21. Notice that one who has repented has no problem confessing (saying) their sin.

III. Some Situations Concerning Confessing Sin:

A. Sometimes forced upon one by another:

1. Judah, Gen. 38:24-26.
2. Sometimes when you just think you got by with it, up it pops!

B. Often without repentance:

1. Saul, I Sam. 24:16-17; But there were tears.

C. Sometimes produced upon awareness of the same in others:

1. David, 2 Sam. 12:1-13.
2. Shows us how callous David had become to his own sins. The only way he could cover up his first sin was to sin again. Confess your sin before you place it in the back of your mind and continue to repeat it and add to it.

D. Due to investigation, Achan. Joshua 7:18-20.

IV. Revealed Truth Concerning Confession:

A. "I" am told to do this, I John 1:9.

1. What motive? The motive should be in order that I might have forgiveness. 2. A Condition that must be met ~ "IF".

B. When I tell others about MY sins:

1. I describe them "generally" in public prayer: Luke 11:4. (There's a sense of propriety here.)
2. I acknowledge that such scriptures as Rom. 3:23 and Eccl. 7:20 are right.
3. When am I specific? As in Acts when acknowledging I did it.

V. The Order In Which Sin Is Confessed:

A. The Order of Confession should be based on relationship

1. God



2. Family (wife, husband, children, parents)
3. Second Party (Those who were party to the sin) Those lied to, had affair with, their families.
4. Peers of influence (Those who know you, look up to you, those who you influence and those who influence you.
5. The Church (Some confess to group 1,2,3,4 but neglect the church). This is a great mistake because it is the church and the cause of Christ that has been the most damaged.

B. Forgive based upon the same repentance practiced in your own life, Lk. 17:3.

Let's do what God tells us to do and confess our sins. When we are aware of sin in another Christian's life, then don't be afraid to tell them that you expect to hear them say that they have repented of that sin. And that you expect to see that repentance in the life they live. Then be willing to forgive as you were forgiven.