

You Need That Man

2 Samuel

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Let me introduce myself for those I haven't met yet. My name is James Rouse. I am one of the elders here at Providence Church. Here at Providence we believe in and practice a plurality of elders and Ty has been encouraging us, encouraging me specifically to preach. I've been hesitant to do so. I just didn't think he would go to such lengths to get me to agree but here we are. So fortunately because he had been encouraging me, there had been some things that I've been working through and the Lord's been putting on our hearts so we're going to go through those today.

In coming before you today, I recognize that I only have the word of God. That's all we can bring and that's all we can share with one another, and I also want to encourage you a little bit. As I thought about preparing this as Ty asked and I did agree, you know, I thought about what Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3 and he says to always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who would ask for the defense of the hope that is within you. So you might not be asked to come up to a pulpit and give a sermon, but you might be asked by a neighbor, a coworker, a family member or friend, and so we are always ready, we should always be ready and we're entirely equipped to give a defense for the hope that is within you. So if I do nothing else today, hopefully it is that we hear and I can share what is the reason for the hope that is within me and hopefully what is within you as well.

Our passage this morning is going to be from 2 Samuel 12. So as you're turning there, sort of as a background. I was thinking about this passage and it was reminding me of a time back in the distant past, the 1990s, a strange era before internet, before cellphones, and at that time I was quite the sports fanatic, I won't even shorten it to the word fan, it was probably a more than healthy obsession in some ways. But at the time, you could hardly turn on a sporting event without hearing a particular phrase and that phrase was, "You da man," right? A golfer hits a tee shot and someone from the crowd shouts it out, or a basketball player throws down a monster jam and they shout out, "You da man!"

Well, I had a friend in college who had an idea and it came from this passage in 2 Samuel 12 which we will read, and it's a familiar passage to many of us, it's where the prophet Nathan confronts King David after his sin with Bathsheba, and after telling the story, the parable which we'll read, and David is just, you know, filled with anger and condemning this wickedness that Nathan has described, and how does Nathan respond to David? He

says, "You are that man." So my friend's idea was get a t-shirt, big bold letters, print out, "You da man!" and then say, "2 Samuel 12:7." Maybe that's the New Message translation or something. But think of the conversations that would start, right? Quite a different meaning from the mouth of the prophet versus a fan at a sporting event.

So I tell you that because one of the things I have observed is the importance in preaching of having a good title, right? A good title that when someone's checking out SermonAudio or visiting our website, it really catches their attention. So I had to come up with a good title but before I tell you the actual title, I'll tell you a few of the rejected titles we had. First, as you can imagine from my previous anecdote, I passed on "You Da Man." I thought maybe but just seemed a little dated, probably a little too casual for us so we won't be using that. I also thought about the importance, you know, the prophet Nathan who came and spoke truth to David, David needed to hear that. David did not ask for that. He didn't want to hear the truth but Nathan was bold. Nathan went. God sent Nathan and he was faithful to God to go speak that truth. So thinking about what we'll talk today, the importance of having people in our lives like Nathan who will come and be bold and speak truth. So another possible title was thinking of the importance of one Nathan under God, but I had to get one bad joke in for my kids here. So passing on that, we're going to take that phrase, "You are that man," and remember it's all of us. All of us, we are that man. We are that person who has railed against sin and outrage and been completely blind to the sin in our own hearts. We've all been there so that's very true but I'm going to tweak it a little bit and the title for today is, "You Need That Man," referring to Nathan. You need Nathan in your life. You need to have somebody in your life like the prophet Nathan. So if you like subtitles you could use, "Who is your Nathan?" You need that man. Who is your Nathan in your life? Who is the person who's speaking truth to you?

So as we come together, as we look over the word, let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask him to bless our time here together this morning. Let's pray.

Our Father, we thank You for this morning, we thank You for this opportunity to gather, to proclaim Your word, to proclaim Your goodness, and to point to Your truth. We pray that everything we do, all that we say, the words of our mouth, our songs, everything would be to bring You glory, and I pray that You would be with us as we look to Your word. Make our hearts fertile ground that as we hear from Your word, we would not simply receive it but we would become doers of Your word as You have called us. Father, I pray Your blessing on our time together and we thank You for Your many mercies which are new every morning You extend through Your Son Jesus Christ and it is in His name that we pray. Amen.

Okay, so let's look at 2 Samuel 12 but we're going to set the scene a little bit by going back to chapter 11. So if you look at chapter 11, the story is familiar to many but let's not pass over the details. So let's get the scene together. In chapter 11, it begins with telling us that, "Then it happened in the spring, 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 sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem." Now if you know the end

of the story, you know what's going to happen. You know what's coming because David fell into sin at this time, but right out of the gate do we see something here? Where was David? This was the time when kings were supposed to be, were going off to battle and David was home at his castle, home in his residence in Jerusalem. So while it's not a direct sin necessarily, he hadn't violated some specific command of Scripture, he was derelict in his duties. He was perhaps engaging in a little comfort and laziness rather than focusing on what God would have him to do and where he was to be.

Then in verse 2, "Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house." Stop there for a moment, what did it say? "When evening came David arose from his bed." Why is he getting out of bed in the evening, right? I enjoy a nap as much as any guy but, you know, the inference here is that he was not exhausted from great exertion but he was simply lounging, enjoying his time of peace while his army was off at war.

So he was walking around the roof of the king's house, "and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance." Now we're bombarded by images every day. We may see images, the image itself we may have no control over, it's what we do with that thought and that image, and it doesn't take much to infer that he lingered. He saw that she was beautiful and he lingered and he watched. But we know for sure the next verse tells us, "So David sent and inquired about the woman." So now he's gone from an observation when he was not where he was supposed to be, not doing the things he was supposed to be, not diligent about pursuing the things of the Lord. Now he's entertaining the idea of sin in his mind and in his heart. It hasn't happened yet but he's starting to entertain the idea. So you see this building.

So he inquired about the woman, "And one said, 'Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?'" Then, "David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house." This was almost inevitable sadly. Once he had entertained the idea, once he had thought about it, once he had, frankly, meditated, turned it over in his mind, the action was sadly an almost foregone conclusion because he didn't stop that momentum.

So he sent people, they bring her to him, he lay with her and then it says in verse 5, "The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, 'I am pregnant.'" So now David starts to panic. He recognizes that her husband is away at war. It will be obvious that something happened. Enough people probably saw her brought into the king's residence. There were those who brought her to him. It would be clear. Eventually it would be known whose child this is. So David was concerned.

So David sent for Uriah. He develops a plan. Bring Uriah home, then Uriah will go to his house, be with his wife and then everyone will just presume that the child that she would soon bear was his. So he was content with the deception. If that just smooths over everything, we'll go on living our lives. Unfortunately for David, fortunately for the truth, Uriah was a righteous man and he did not go along with that, in fact, he stayed at the

castle with David protecting the king who had just treated him so poorly that he didn't even realize.

So he tried to get Uriah to go home. Uriah would not do it. He said he would stay at the king's door. Then David had to up the ante even further and he says in verse 10, "Now when they told David," that Uriah had not gone home, saying, "'Uriah did not go down to his house,' David said to Uriah, 'Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?' Uriah said to David, 'The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing.' Then David said to Uriah, 'Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go.' So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house." So now David has gone so far as to try to get him inebriated so he would finally go home and maybe even not realize what happened. You see how David is just layering sin and deception one on top of another and he's being thwarted in his attempts to try to achieve this deception.

Well, then it gets even darker. Verse 14, "Now in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. He had written in the letter, saying, 'Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die.' So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there were valiant men. The men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died." So now he's gone so far as to take this man whose wife he had just taken unto himself, because the man was too honorable, too loyal to go along with David's schemes, he had him killed. And there's even a little detail in there, did you notice how he sent the message to Joab? He sent it by Uriah. Uriah was carrying his own death sentence as he went back to his commander, Joab. And David, think of the cynicism here, think of the wickedness. David knew how honorable Uriah was, that Uriah would not read that letter. He relied on the goodness and loyalty and honor of Uriah to execute the plan that would end up killing him, took such advantage. When we hear this story, we think about the sin, you know, it's described, it's not glossed over in any way but this is truly wicked. I mean, this is so disturbing when you really think about what David has done.

So it goes through all of the story and, of course, it also, as the Bible points out, Uriah was not alone. It wasn't just Uriah who was sacrificed to try to cover David's sin. The other men who died with him, there's a unit that went out with Uriah. They couldn't just all pull back from one man so other people died because David was trying to cover up his sin. So as we read through that and we go through the rest of that chapter and it describes what has happened from there, the chapter ends, rightly so, saying, "But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD." Clearly this was wickedness but David was still oblivious to it. Probably in his mind he had justified it somehow. He had some excuse, some way to think about it, and yet he was going on, carrying on in his deception and in his sin.

So at this point, Nathan comes into the story. Nathan, the prophet. This is not the first time David's met Nathan. He's probably seen him quite a bit. He's recorded in 2 Samuel 7, when David decided he wanted to build a house for the Lord and God said to him, "No, you will not build a house for me although your son will," and ultimately Solomon did build the great temple for the Lord, but God said, "No, I will build a house for you. I will establish your throne, your kingdom, and your descendant will sit on the throne forever," which, of course, was fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ who sits on the throne forever, a descendant of David. But that was Nathan who gave that message. David had that relationship with Nathan. They had been together. Nathan had shared with him in ruling Israel. He spoke as a counselor, as a prophet. So this is not a prophet who's hopping in out of nowhere. This is someone who is known to David and maybe that's why David, when he first hears the story, doesn't suspect that there's anything more than a relating of a story that he needs to respond to as the king.

So let's read 2 Samuel 12, beginning in verse 1 through verse 14.

1 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. 2 "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. 3 But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him. 4 Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." 5 Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. 6 He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." 7 Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8 I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! 9 Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 11 "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 12 Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'" 13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David,

"The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. 14 However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." 15 So Nathan went to his house.

So that's the background, that's the story, that's how we get to this point and we want to look at today, we want to look at, organize around three thoughts. The first point is going to be David's immediate response. What was David's immediate response? Well, his immediate response was anger and indignation followed by sorrow and repentance. Anger and indignation. He heard the story as any of us who would hear that story, we would be rightly upset. We would be indignant. Why did this rich man who had all the flocks and herds and everything he could need take from this poor man his one precious lamb? How cruel. How harsh.

David was angry and he was indignant and it's interesting to see his response. He gives an accurate assessment. David speaks correctly. And did you notice that he has a twofold judgment on the man? There's two judgments that David lays out. We'll do the second one first. The second one he says, "The man must pay restitution for the sheep that was taken fourfold." Now that's from the law. That's from Exodus 22 where it describes that if a man steals a neighbor's sheep, he must pay back four times. So David is upholding the law, saying, "Yes, the law is good. The law is right. The law requires a fourfold restitution. That's what should be paid." But in verse 5 before he says that, he says, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die." Well, which is it? Is it that he should fulfill the law and pay back four times, or is it that he should die? And the answer is actually both.

The law is good, the law is right, he should pay back in restitution, but he makes a point and this was interesting to read Matthew Henry's commentary dug into this and I'll read a little bit. It's a little older language so you'll stick with us here but he says, "By this parable he," that is, Nathan, "drew from David a sentence against himself." He got David to pronounce his own sentence that this man should surely die. "For David supposing it to be a case in fact, and not doubting the truth of it when he had it from Nathan himself, gave judgment immediately against the offender, and confirmed it with an oath. That, for his injustice in taking away the lamb, he should restore four-fold, according to the law, four sheep for a sheep. That for his tyranny and cruelty, and the pleasure he took in abusing a poor man, he should be put to death." Do you see that? The actual theft of the sheep is worthy, it should be repaid fourfold, but the heart underneath it that would steal, the cruelty that would take this lamb from the poor man deserved death. Matthew Henry goes on, "If a poor man steal from a rich man, to satisfy his soul when he is hungry, he shall make restitution, though it cost him all the substance of his house, but if a rich man steal for stealing sake, not for want but for wantonness, merely that he may be imperious and vexatious," imperious, he wants to lord it over somebody, and vexatious, he actually enjoys stirring up this response from the poor man that just because he can. If he does that, "he deserves to die for it, for to him the making of restitution is no punishment, or next to none." Do you understand that? The rich man, if the rich man got caught doing this and they said, "You need to pay back four sheep." "Okay, go ahead, take them." Is

that a real penalty? Not to the rich man. It's almost nothing. That's the whole point, it was almost nothing to take one, what would it be to take four? So David's getting to the heart of the matter, that the heart of the man was so wicked that he would take the sheep.

So David is correct in his assessment, however, he is experiencing what R. C. Sproul referred to as the misplaced locus of astonishment. He has a sermon, I encourage you to go out there and listen to it. It's on Ligonier. He talks about the misplaced locus of astonishment. Turn, if you will, to Luke 13 which is where R. C. Sproul talks about this, this story, and his point is that we are astonished and sometimes indignant about things that happen but we're really indignant about the wrong things.

In Luke 13, beginning in verse 1, Luke records, "Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him," that is, to Jesus," about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices." So Pilate had sent troops into the temple, they had killed the worshipers there, and the blood of the worshipers mingled with the blood from the sacrifice. It was wicked. It was evil. And these men coming to Jesus describing the situation are thinking they're going to get an "Amen, that was evil, that was wicked." "And Jesus said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.'"

You see, R. C. Sproul is pointing out and Jesus is pointing out that we are here indignant about what has happened out there when we should be focused about the evil that is in our own hearts, that's in here. We're so focused on what's out there. Whether it's a personal insult, whether it's a societal issue, whatever it may be, these things should be called out and we'll talk a little bit, especially on the personal level, about how you go about addressing sin because we do need to address sin, it's not to be ignored, but if our indignation is all focused out there, it's a dangerous place to be. The Bible has several examples where people were indignant like these men coming to Jesus, and even like David, when it's clear that God was wanting them to focus back on their own heart and not focus on what's out there. In fact, when we go to the very first book of the Bible, one of the earliest chapters in chapter 4, what do we see, right? God did not receive Cain's offering. Cain was indignant and you say, "Well, that's different. Cain was wrong. He was indignant toward God. He was upset with God. He was clearly wrong." When I'm upset with my circumstances, who am I upset with? Where is my indignation? Who brought about those circumstances? Am I really different or am I looking to the Lord?

So what does God say to Cain? He says starting in Genesis 4:6, "Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your face gloomy?'" Gloomy, isn't that a word for 2020? Do you see any gloomy faces walking around, going to the store, if we can go to the store, wherever we may be? A lot of people, right? Understandably, there's difficult circumstances. "If you do well, will not your face be cheerful?" And this is important, "if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; and its desire is for you, and you must

master it." If we're so focused on what was done wrong to us, then we are in danger of being like Cain and sin is lurking at the door and we have to be careful.

So I encourage you, when you read this story there's lots to take from it but one of the points is, like David, when we start to feel that indignation well up, stop and think, "Is God showing me something about myself that I need to examine?"

So at this point, Nathan has given David the image. He's told him the story of the man. David has expressed this anger, okay? He thinks it's righteous anger, of course. Don't we all? We all think it's righteous anger. Whenever we're angry, it's righteous anger. Someone else, no, that's not righteous anger. Don't you know the anger of man cannot accomplish the righteousness of God? So his anger can't do it. My anger, though, my anger is righteous. We tend to think that way. But at this point, he's pronounced his judgment, David has. He has said that the man should surely die. And again, he's stated it correctly. He's just failing to see that he is that man and that's the very point that Nathan has to say. Nathan says, "You are that man," and that's the inflection point, right? David's initial reaction, anger, indignation, turns on a dime because he says, "You are that man," and David recognizes it.

It's interesting to look at what the Lord says through Nathan as he proclaims what he has done. When God speaks through Nathan and Nathan turns and he says, "Thus says the Lord," and now God is speaking directly one-to-one personally to David and where does he begin? He doesn't begin with his holiness, to say, "I am holy therefore you should be holy." He doesn't focus on the law at first. He doesn't start with the law and say, "I've given you My law, you need to follow it." Where does God start? He starts with pointing out his own lovingkindness toward David, right?

Look back there in verse 7. Right after he says, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these!'" He starts with reminding David all he has done for him. Back in chapter 7 when he talks to David about building the temple and how he would not be the one to build the temple but God would build his house, his kingdom through his son, he pointed out, God pointed out to David, he says, "I brought you out of the pasture, from following the sheep, and set you as king over My people Israel." God is reminding him all that he has done. David was the last of the sons, he was a shepherd. He had no right, humanly speaking, to the throne. All that God had done for him.

So God's focus here, first and foremost to get David's attention, is about David's lack of gratitude. And in November when we were preparing for Thanksgiving, we did a Sunday school series on thanksgiving and thankfulness, and as I can tell you as the teacher, the teacher always tends to be the one who learns the most out of his own lessons, that was a really encouraging thing because it drove home the point that our sin often, most often begins in a lack of gratitude, a lack of thankfulness drives our sin. And that's clearly

what's happening here with David. If he had proper gratitude for all God had done for him, all that God had given him, would he have done these things?

So he starts with that and a reminder that we need to search our hearts and be thankful to God and not let a lack of thankfulness drive us into sin. Then in verse 9, God speaks to David and deals with him directly. It's interesting to see here. Verse 9 he says, "Why have you despised the word of the LORD," interesting, you despised the word of the Lord, "by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me." Do you see that? God says, "You've despised Me in what you did."

This is much like Saul on the road to Damascus. When the Lord Jesus appeared to Saul, he didn't say, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting My church? Why are you harassing My people?" He said, "Why are you persecuting Me?" When we sin, it's a personal affront, attack on God. I think that's part of why it was in David's mind when he wrote Psalm 51:4. What does he say in that Psalm? "Against You, You only, I have sinned." When I was a new Christian and I read that verse, I thought, "Um, uh, there's a pretty long list we could lay out of people that David had sinned against, starting with Uriah." But David understood and God told him directly, "Your sin is against God personally." And that's the heart that David had that he was convicted of his sin directly against God.

So at this point, David is confronted with his sin. Nathan gives the words of God and says, "You have despised Me. You have despised My word. You've despised Me. You have done this wicked thing." And in verse 13 of 2 Samuel 12, we have a very short statement from David, very simple. He says, "I have sinned against the LORD." No justifications. No context. No explaining it away. ""I have sinned against the LORD." That is the starting point of all repentance. There's no if. There's no but. There's no, "If you only knew." No, "I have sinned against the LORD." And even again not, "I have sinned against Uriah. I have sinned against Bathsheba or those other men who fell with Uriah." It starts with, "I have sinned against the LORD." And that is the beginning of repentance.

Now we'll see, as we go forward, that repentance was, in fact, genuine. Sometimes people can say the words and it's not, but in David's case it was truly genuine. This was his heart. He knew he had sinned against the Lord. He had nothing else to add to that simple statement. Then we already see there Nathan's response, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die." So there's already grace. The moment that we express sin, express repentance, there's already grace beginning and we see that.

So that's David's immediate response, now the second point we want to look at is David's lasting response. As I mentioned, it was genuine. This was not a one-time thing. This was not a simple, "I'm sorry. Forgive me." Move on, like we tend to do with one another, right? "I'm sorry, now can we move on?" He understood and he continued and that continuing really proves the genuineness of his repentance.

Let's turn to Psalm 51. That is the clearest example. Right there in the notes at the beginning before we get into the verses of the Psalm itself, it says, "For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba." Not exactly the kind of introduction you'd want to see on a song you'd written that's going to be sung for generations, right? What a reminder, a direct reminder of his sin every time this Psalm is read, and yet David wrote it. Let's read it. I'm going to read the entire Psalm because it's really what speaks to David's heart after he had realized what he had done and repented.

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;
According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my
transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me
from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before
me. 4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your
sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You
judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother
conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in
the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. 7 Purify me with
hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8
Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken
rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. 10
Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy
Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me
with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And
sinners will be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O
God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your
righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your
praise. 16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it;
You are not pleased with burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a
broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.
18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then
You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt
offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.

What a description. He says right there that God desires a broken and contrite heart, he will not despise, and he gives the exact example of a broken and contrite heart. He is genuinely broken as he writes this Psalm.

So we know that David was sincere. We know he truly repented. And it's interesting when you read this Psalm, you see that he didn't, although he starts with the recognition of repentance and that God has forgiven, he's pleading with God to have compassion upon him, but he recognizes that as he receives that forgiveness, he's no longer looking inward. What does he say? Verse 13, "Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You." Verse 15, "O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise." He's looking outward. He's looking to others. He's looking to how

he can bring others closer to God just as he's been brought closer to God because he truly repented and God truly forgave him.

So with that, let's turn back a few pages and look at Psalm 32 because this is probably written around the same time, and Psalm 32 may be one of the early moments of David actually doing what he just said he would do, teaching transgressors God's ways and praising him. Psalm 32, beginning in verse 1, "How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!" How about that? He's not speaking theoretically. This isn't a college or seminary professor talking about the doctrine of forgiveness or the doctrine of anything else. This is a man who is speaking from personal experience.

"How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!" He has recognized the principle that what we seek to cover, God will uncover because that's exactly what happened when Nathan came and uncovered his sin. But when we uncover before God and confess and acknowledge, God will cover. He will cover our sin and he has done that ultimately through his Son Jesus Christ.

"How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!" And then David describes how he felt, undoubtedly how he felt in those months between the time he did this and when Nathan came, which was probably right about the time the child was born.

He says, "When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. 6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance." Do you see how he's teaching transgressors already? He is describing what we feel. Have we felt that? Have we felt like verse 3 when we've kept silent about our sin? "My body wasted away, groaning all day long. My vitality was drained away as with the heat of summer." Ever had that experience? Have you ever had that feeling? That's what he's saying. David's saying, "I know that feeling. I've been there." Then he says the joy of repenting, confess to the Lord your sins and he is gracious. 1 John 1:9, when we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That's the promise. Why is it that when we sin, we tend to want to run away from God as if we can hide, we can hide what we did or perhaps think, "Well, if I wait then maybe His anger will subside and I'll be able to go to Him." Why do we think that? It's not rational. And yet we do, that's our human nature.

So David is teaching sinners the ways of God, teaching them how to experience what he's experienced, the full joy of relationship with the Lord through repentance and forgiveness that God extends.

Now there's one last thing I want to point out about David and how we know that his repentance was lasting and how he viewed what was happening, and for that I'd like you to turn to 1 Kings 1. In 1 Kings 1, we're seeing the story, it's relaying the account of the end of David's life. So verse 1 it says, "Now King David was old, advanced in age." David's an old man, his vitality has left him, he's no longer the warrior, his physical strength is gone. In the chapter we read, we find out that, sadly, much of his mental capacity is probably greatly diminished, not even aware of what's going on. There's a lot of intrigue about his sons are competing who will be the next king, who will rule after David is gone. Now David had promised that Solomon would succeed him, Bathsheba's son Solomon would be the next king. So while this is all going on, David's basically not even aware. He's in his palace, in his bed, and servants have to come in and just sort of tell him what's going on.

So in 1 Kings 1:11 it says, "Then Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, 'Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king?'" Nathan is telling Bathsheba that this intrigue is installing another one of David's sons as king in the place of Solomon. But did you see that, and Nathan said that. David's an old man, he's lived through a lot, and Nathan's still there with him. Instead of being upset, instead of being angry at the prophet who pointed out his sin, who challenged him, confronted him, he not only spared his life as the king, the king could do whatever he wants. If someone challenges the king, there's no guarantee the king won't say, "That's treason. Take him away." But David recognized what Nathan had done for him and so Nathan, as we see at the end of his life, is one of his most trusted advisors all the way to the end.

Skipping ahead to verse 22 after Bathsheba has said to David, you know, "Why is Solomon not becoming king? Behold, while she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. They told the king, saying, 'Here is Nathan the prophet.' And when he came in before the king, he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground. Then Nathan said, 'My lord the king,'" and he goes on to talk about what has happened.

So Nathan is there. Nathan is a trusted advisor. Nathan is a counselor to the king all the way to the end and that's just a beautiful picture. In fact, when in verse 32 it tells us, "Then King David said, 'Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.' And they came into the king's presence. The king said to them, 'Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel.'" And he goes on to that. So his most trusted advisor, the man he is going to entrust with ensuring that the proper son is going to reign as king when he is gone is Nathan. He kept Nathan close to him, close to his heart for the rest of his life.

And one other little detail that I sort of stumbled on by accident a year or two back at Christmas as we were going through the text of the Christmas story, the coming of the Messiah. We were reading through the genealogies and, of course, there are two genealogies in the gospels, Matthew gives his and Luke gives one, and they're not exactly the same and that's led some people to question, "Why do we have two different

genealogies?" And most scholars believe that Matthew's gospel was the line of Joseph; that that came from Abraham down through Judah and then the king would come from Judah, and then into David through Solomon, so it's the kingly line onto Joseph who was the legal father, in a sense, of Jesus. But Luke's genealogy is different and it doesn't go through that. Most scholars think that this is because Luke is giving the genealogy of Mary and Luke in chapter 3, if you look in Luke 3, beginning in verse 23, it says, "When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph." So Luke is pointing out that people assumed he was Joseph's son, though he was not actually the physical son of Joseph, and that sort of gives us the hint that perhaps that something is different about this genealogy. So most likely this is Mary. So when it says, "Joseph, the son of Eli," there's no difference in son or son-in-law. He may have been the son by marriage of Eli, and then if Eli was Mary's father, and then the genealogy goes back.

So you read all these names that we read and pass over and some are really hard to pronounce so I'm not going to try it, but he goes through and you get to verse 31, "the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse," and so on. Did you catch that? The son of Nathan, the son of David. How did David end up with a son named Nathan? What's the highest honor, one of the highest honors you can give to somebody just to name a child after that person. You can give trophies, you can give awards, but when you say, "I so appreciate you and your character that I want my child to grow up emulating you," that's a great honor. And we can infer from this that David gave that honor to Nathan. He could have given him great riches from the king's own storehouse, he could have given him great position, but he gave a very personal gift and that was to name his son Nathan.

That's the heart attitude that we should have for those people who are bold enough and loving enough to come and speak God's truth to us even when we don't wish to hear it. So that takes us to our third point which is how should we respond? We've talked about David's immediate response, anger and indignation, followed by sorrow and repentance. His lasting response was one of genuine repentance, outward focus, teaching others, and honoring the one who came to him to speak truth. So the third point is our reasonable response. I borrow the word "reasonable" from Romans 12:1, right, where Paul tells us that, I'm going to read it. Paul tells us, "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship." That word "spiritual" is actually related to the word "logikos," where we get our word "logic." The King James translates it "reasonable." That's why I've chosen the word "reasonable" here. It's related to logos, word, according to the word you work out. It's also related to the verb form logizomai which is "to reckon or consider," consider yourselves dead to sin. Think it through. Work it through in your mind. And what Paul is saying in Romans 12, this is the reasonable response. When you see God's mercy for you, what should you do? The only reasonable thing is to give all that you are back to God.

The wonderful hymn, that wonderful Isaac Watts hymn, "When I survey the wondrous cross," concludes the last verse says,

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

So that should be our heart. We should have the same heart, the reasonable service to give unto God all that we are. So how do we do that? What can we do? Well, I've entitled this sermon "You Need That Man," so my point is we need Nathans. You need a Nathan in your life. If you already have a Nathan, you should be so thankful for that person, so grateful for him or her, and you should really thank God for putting that person in your life. Even right now in your heart, consider how grateful you are. Think about the person who shared the gospel with you, whether that was a parent, a friend. Somebody shared the gospel with you. If you're a believer here today, someone had to do that. Be grateful for those people in your past, look for those people in your present. If you have them, be thankful and be thankful to them. That's kind of a lonely job, right? The job, the prophets were not a, you know, cheery group, right? They didn't have a lot of friends. That's what happens when you speak truth, a lot of times you don't draw friends to yourself. When you have that person, show appreciation. Show them how much you appreciate that God is working in your life through them.

The second thing I would say is seek out at least one Nathan. If you don't have one, you really need to go find somebody who is going to be that person for you. Who is going to be your Nathan? Consider this: how many people in the story we read from 2 Samuel 11 could have stepped in and said something to the king? How many people were involved, right? Now we don't know, it's not recorded whether anyone did or didn't say anything but there's no record that anyone did. No one pointed out to David, "Hey, shouldn't you be off at the battle?" When he asked about who is that woman, "That's interesting. Why are you asking?" When he told people to call her to him, "Well, this doesn't look right." All the way up to the message to Joab to step back and leave Uriah exposed. At any point someone could have stepped in and said, "Wait, this is not right. Why are you doing this? What can you do? You know, stop."

Apparently nobody did. Now why is that? Is that because they were so concerned for David's welfare they wanted him to have a happy life and, "Ah, you know, you be you. You do you." No. Almost certainly everyone who remained quiet was more concerned for their own welfare than David's because they knew if they confronted the king, they could be the ones guilty of treason, they could be the ones banished or even executed because they were perceived as disloyal to the king.

So these people, most likely, kept to themselves out of fear. So my question for you today, for all of us today: are we living our lives like David? Do you think David was very approachable as king? Is any king really approachable? But how do we live our lives? Do we live our lives like we're the kings and queens of our own little domains? That anyone who challenges what we have to say or what we're doing is like unto treason? Do we lash out at those who try to speak truth to us? I'm not talking about

people who just go around, who enjoy pointing out sin. There's plenty of people who enjoy that. I'm talking about people who lovingly care enough about you to say something you need to hear that you don't want to hear. But do we treat them as if, "As the king of my own kingdom, you are a treasonous traitor. I'm going to execute my punishment against you." Or do we say, as David eventually did, "Thank you. Thank you for speaking what I needed to hear." And honoring those who do it.

Now in our current culture, people are not likely to go uninvited and just walk into your room and say, "This is what you need to hear," right? Nathan was sent by God. He was a prophet. We're not likely to have that so we're probably going to have to ask maybe multiple times. You might hear someone say, "Hey, if, you know, tell me if I'm doing something wrong or if I'm not thinking right here. I'd really like to hear." Do we believe them? Should we believe them? They may not be sincere. But for us, we should be those who are genuinely looking for it. And again, you may need to ask multiple times. You may need to say, "No, really, I want to hear. I need to know." I'm telling you from today for myself, for James, if you see that, I do want to hear that.

I had a situation where I was teaching the teens several years ago and I made a point that I could probably defend theologically but it was not the right point to make and it was not the right time to make it, and one of the parents came and said something to me and said, "You know, I don't think that was right. I don't think that you should have said that." I am so thankful that he said that to me and it's made me reconsider every time I've taught since then, I have to think about what he told me. I'm grateful. In the moment, boy, did I want to defend myself but I'm grateful that he said these things. We should look for that.

Now the other thing to point out is that we know God works through all circumstances, right? God works all things together for good for those who love him and who are called according to his purpose. So if we look at this situation with David, if someone had stepped in and successfully stopped David before any of this happened, think how things would be different. Obviously, it was God's sovereign will that this came about but just in terms of cause and effect as we look at it, we have Psalm 51 because of this event, and Psalm 32. And Solomon would not have been born. And the pinnacle of the kingdom of Israel when he was king and the temple that Solomon built, and the wisdom books like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. All these things came about, God worked through the sin of David, this very wicked incident, the sinfulness, and he brought about good. So let's praise God for that but let's also not presume upon God that we can think that that will always happen, right? Romans 6, Paul asks us, "Shall we go on sinning that grace may abound? May it never be!"

So if David, although all those things are true, there were all those blessings, his son Solomon, the temple, all of that was good, but in that moment if David had understood what he was doing was wrong, should he have obeyed the revealed word of God, obeyed the revealed will of God through God's word? Yes. Would David have been happier had he done that? Yes. Now again, we rejoice in the forgiveness, we don't diminish that in the least, but we should look and say it would have been better had I not followed through on

this. That would have been honoring God. Praise God that he used it anyway but let's not lose sight of our need to follow him.

And so whatever point you are on, you may be in a situation, you may even be two or three steps down that same road that David was traveling, as long as you draw breath, you can turn around. God extends forgiveness through his Son Jesus. He took the penalty that sin that we all are guilty of, we've all committed, and he took it on himself for those who would trust in him, for those who are his people. So whatever point you're on, it is not too late to turn back and look for those people who will encourage you to do that, to turn back, to repent, to find forgiveness, and to go forward.

So our last point this morning. We've talked about how you need to appreciate the Nathans, you need to look for Nathans in your life, but also consider whether you need to be a Nathan for somebody else, and I would say that if you're a believer, you do need to be a Nathan for somebody else. There's times where we have to be bold. It may be difficult. It's going to be frightening. It's going to be like getting up and preaching a sermon when you didn't know you were going to do it. But those people that you speak to, they won't necessarily all respond like David did either. You might get some harsh rebukes. You might get some stonewalls and it might even cost you some, might have some breaks in your relationships. Pray that they're not permanent but they can come into play.

But it's what God has called us to and as much as it depends on you, be at peace with all men, do it lovingly, do it joyfully, do it with a heart that raises up the Lord and encourages others like David did in Psalm 32. That should be our heart. Our heart shouldn't be to go win an argument, it should be to win a brother, and if we're doing this, we can win a brother when we go forward in love and care.

Turn with me to Matthew 7. As Jesus is giving us the Sermon on the Mount, talking about all the various truths of the kingdom, chapter 7, verses 3 through 5, is a passage that sometimes I think is misunderstood. Jesus said, "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." Now I suspect that most people especially those, frankly, of the world who've heard of this verse, think this verse is a mind-your-own-business verse, right? "You hypocrite! You're pointing out his speck, you've got a log in your own eye. Mind your own business. You stay over there." But is that really what Jesus is saying? He is saying you need to take the log out of your own eye but is it so that you can then go on and live your life? He immediately says, "Take the log out of your own eye, then you'll see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

So he's saying we need to be ready to speak that truth, to point out that sin, to be like Nathan to go to David and speak truth where it's needed. This isn't a just live-and-let-live, go about your way. This is a reminder that we should be seeking to help one another. Did

Nathan love David? I think he did. All the way through, all the way to the end of his life when we read about how he treated David as king in his old age. He was still serving the king. He didn't do this because out of anger, he didn't confront David to prove a point. He confronted David because it was for David's best interest. Now God was gracious to bring him somebody like that and God may be gracious to bring you somebody like that, but my message to you today is don't wait for God to bring that person. David waited whether he knew it or not, David waited far too long. What if David had called Nathan in earlier and said, "Hey, I'm thinking about this." Think of all the pain and sorrow he would have saved. And so we, too, can save some of that pain and sorrow by inviting those people into our lives and asking them to help us to see clearly, that we can see Christ and follow him and live in the joy of his forgiveness with a right heart in a right relationship to God.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Our Father, we thank You for Your word, we thank You for the many ways that You show Your graciousness to us, Your lovingkindness. Lord, You do not leave us in our sin. You did not leave us in our sin when You called us, when You sent Your Son to take on the sins of all who would believe, and You do not leave us in our sin in our day-to-day lives. We pray that You will prepare our hearts that we would look for those who are speaking Your truth to us and receive them, and receive the word that they share because we know that we need to hear. We are blind just as David was blind so often to our own sin and those who would come and would speak truth are the most precious friends we could ever have. And Lord, help us to be that type of friend to others that would look to point all unto You, that they would follow You more closely and live according to Your word. May it be true of all of us. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.