

Discussion Guide: Hall of Fame of Faith - Part 9

*Let us examine the Scriptures like the Bereans who "received the message with the great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."
Acts 17:11 (NIV)*

August 3, 2003: "Living Out the Life of Faith" by Pastor Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor of College Park Church. Pastor Kimber began today's sermon by encouraging believers to have confidence in the truthfulness and trustworthiness of the Bible. He looked at a frequently disputed event—Noah's flood as recorded in Genesis. He stated that Graham Hancock, a non-Christian authority on "world myths," has determined that 90% of the tribes of the world have an oral history of a great flood. Pastor read a flood account of one aboriginal tribe in Australia that predates their contact with Christianity which demonstrated amazing parallels with the "Biblical account." Pastor called upon the young people to stand resolute in their faith in the face of the theories and statements put forth by secular organizations or teachers.

Pastor Kimber then gave a brief recap of the previous sermons on Faith:

- A. It is impossible to please God without Faith, Hebrews 11:6, because faith demands: (1) that we believe God is, and (2) that we believe His Word of Promise.
- B. Faith looks back, when we examine the faith lived out in the lives of the Old Testament believers or when we take the Lord's Supper.
- C. Faith also looks forward in that we should make our day-to-day decisions in the light of eternity. This daily faith lived out tells us that sin is not worth the risk, because God would never command us to do what is not in our best interest, which demands that we live by faith and not by the lusts of the flesh.

Pastor also reminded us that the Holy Spirit discusses faith in Hebrews 11:1-3 by first setting forth the Nature of Faith (that is, Faith defined) and then recounting the manifestation of Faith in the lives of the Old Testament believers in verses 4 – 40, as examples for us today to understand faith as it is worked out.

Pastor Kimber then focused today on 2 Samuel 11:1 – 12:14, which tells of the failure of David to live out his faith. David chose his own way rather than following God's seventh commandment (do not commit adultery) and the sixth (do not commit murder). After failing to follow God's way, David engaged in increasingly desperate acts in his attempt to keep his sin covered. His attempts proved futile, however, because God sent Nathan to point his finger at David saying, "Thou art the man." This should remind us that "Be sure your sin will find you out," either here or on the day of judgment.

Discussion and Application Questions

As you begin your discussion with prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to illumine the hearts and minds of the gathered Flock and to protect your thoughts from Satan's interference as you study and apply God's Word together.

Open your Bibles and read together as much of 2 Samuel 11:1 – 12:14 as you plan to use in your discussion.

Begin with several content related questions to stimulate your group's thoughts into action.

1. Does anyone have some word or illustration from Kimber's sermon that especially stood out in your mind that you will share with us?
2. What spiritual or moral benefit do you think we can gain from looking at the failures of past believers like David?
3. Rebuking the sin of others is often a hard and thankless task. Nathan rebuked King David for his sins of adultery and murder. Jeremiah rebuked the entire Jewish nation and was thrown into prison for his effort (Jeremiah 38:1-6). Peter rebuked Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). Paul then had to rebuke Peter's sin (Galatians 2:11-14). From these examples, discuss the faith and courage it must take for a man of God to boldly declare to another brother that he has sinned. Yet, is it sometimes necessary for leaders to take these steps? Would this be an easy thing for you to do? You might want to read Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 4:2; and Revelation 3:19.
4. Why do you think it is important for the spiritual climate of College Park to have a pastor who stands boldly against the current immoral climate in the world especially as it impinges upon the lives of believers?
5. Do you appreciate or dislike the fact that our church practices church discipline among its members?

Continue the Group Discussion with your focus on applying God's Word specifically.

1. Consider Nathan's confrontation and rebuke of David the King, 12:1-14. Is it hard but necessary for the church at times to confront erring members? For a spouse to confront and stop enabling a sinning husband? For parents to set and enforce parameters for their children's behavior? Could the church-at-large stand to have a few more Nathans?
2. As long as David was in denial about his unconfessed sin it was easy for him to be overly judgmental about the sin of another, that is, "The man deserves to die," 12:5. Has this ever happened in your life? In the life of another that you know?
3. Discuss how David's unconfessed sin continued, like Pinocchio's nose, to grow. First, David tried repeatedly to get Uriah to go home to be with his wife—by simply telling him to go home and relax; by dining with him (11:6-11) and then by getting him drunk (11:12-13). Then David ordered Joab to send Uriah on a suicidal mission and withdraw support from him (11:14-17). Upon receiving Joab's report of Uriah's death, David piously said, "Don't let this upset you, the sword devours one as well as another," (11:18-25). David then took Bathsheba to be his own wife, apparently thinking that this would cover up his sin and folly

(11:26-27). Now emphasize, “But the thing David had done displeased the Lord,” (11:27b).

- a. Discuss how unconfessed sin has a tendency to fester and grow.
- b. Then discuss 1 John 5-9 as the remedy.
- c. Also, discuss how forgiveness of sin does not necessarily remove the damaging consequences of sin.

Helping your Flock members to Apply and Act

Whatever we think of polls, a large segment of Christian men undoubtedly have trouble resisting the sensual allure of pornography. After emphasizing that offenders should destroy the source of temptation (such as, trash the computer completely), discuss how men might set up moral and spiritual safeguards and accountability to successfully battle a major spiritual problem for many.

What is seldom mentioned is that some Christian wives have taken to finding and conversing with a supposed ideal soul mate on the internet whom they fantasize can and will sweep into their lives, relieving all tedium and boredom and elevating them to emotional bliss. (A pastor in a good Bible-preaching church in another city assures me this is true even in his own congregation, which is much like our church.) How might Christian ladies protect themselves and their marriage from this?

Discuss what husbands and wives might do in their marriages to make their marriages adultery-proof and fantasy-free.

For meditation and private application: List what you believe to be your three most serious shortcomings. Turn these limitations over to God in prayer.

For more information on David's sin and its consequences go to www.tarrytownumc.org/sermons/sr20010706.htm.