

IT STARTS AT HOME

THE PASSAGE

Exodus 4:18-31 Genesis 17:1-17 Isaiah 55:8-9 & Deuteronomy 29:29 2 Timothy 3:16-17

LIFE LESSONS:

It Always Starts At Home

- (1) The **JUDGMENT** of God always begins with the **PEOPLE** of God.
1 Peter 4:17 Hebrews 12:4-12

- (2) Sin isn't just **DOING BAD THINGS**.
It's also **FAILING TO DO THE RIGHT THINGS**.
Exodus 4:24-26 James 4:17

- (3) If we want to be **USED** by God, we need to **OBEY** God.
Hebrews 11:6 John 13:17 James 3:1 1 Timothy 3:1-7

- (4) We need to worry a lot more about **OUR OWN SINS** and a lot less about the **SINS OF NON-BELIEVERS**.
Matthew 7:1-5 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 James 1:22-25 Psalm 139:23-24

Food for Thought for the week of December 13, 2015

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Being willing to look at our shortcomings, sin and failure can be no small challenge when it comes to owning up to our stuff. Yet remembering our need for forgiveness and God's incredible provision is actually what frees us to live as he designed us to. How do the following verses help motivate us to be open and honest about our sin or lack of doing the right thing?

Isaiah 53:6

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all. *[NIV]*

Isaiah 59:1-3

Sin, Confession and Redemption

^{59:1} Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.

² But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear.

³ For your hands are stained with blood,
your fingers with guilt.
Your lips have spoken falsely,
and your tongue mutters wicked things. *[NIV]*

Isaiah 55:6-7

⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.

⁷ Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the unrighteous their thoughts.

Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will freely pardon. *[NIV]*

2. King David is a good example of someone who faced failure and sin in his life. Jot down the steps you see David taking in Psalm 51:1-17 to look seriously at his own issues?

Psalm 51:1-17

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.

² Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.

- ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.
- ⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- ⁶ Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
- ⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
so that sinners will turn back to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
you who are God my Savior,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.
- ¹⁵ Open my lips, Lord,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
- ¹⁷ My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise. *[NIV]*

When it comes to dealing with your own failure and sin, is there any part of David's prayer that would be helpful for you to use?

3. None of us want to fall back into sin and failure after realizing the harm to God, ourselves and/or others. But we all have seen others, or experienced ourselves, the reality of moving back into godless living. Fortunately, God has given us some spiritual practices that can help decrease the temptation to presume upon God's second chances and at the same time strengthen us for consistent obedience in doing the right thing. How might the following passages speak to this?

Psalm 119:9-11

- ⁹ How can a young person stay on the path of purity?
By living according to your word.

¹⁰ I seek you with all my heart;
do not let me stray from your commands.

¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you. *[NIV]*

1 Corinthians 15:33

³³ Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." *[NIV]*

Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things *[NIV]*

2 Timothy 2:22

²² Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. *[NIV]*

Are there any of these practices you need to refocus on in your own life?