

## The Broken Heart.

Do you remember the lead up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, when they were trying to decide who should represent New Zealand in the single sculls rowing? After some tense pre match races between Rob Waddell and Mahe Drysdale, Drysdale was selected. He was the single sculls world champion and was expected to win gold. But a week before the final he got a severe case of vomiting and diarrhoea that caused him to lose 5kg in weight. He dehydrated so much they had him on an intravenous drip, and only took the drip out just before the race. He was so competitive that he gave it everything, leading the field until the last 250 metres when he faded. He won a bronze medal, but he was almost unconscious when they got him out of the boat. Some people would rather die than lose.

How many of you here today are the personality type that hate to lose? Put you on a golf course, and you just can't stand to be beaten. Have a friendly game of trivial pursuit, and it turns into a serious competition. At the traffic lights, where there are two lanes, you just have to be the first away. Some of you have got this competitive gene so badly that it ruins your day if the person in the queue next to yours at the supermarket gets through the checkout before you.

### David – The Winner.

If there was one outstanding characteristic of David's life, it was that he was a winner. He wasn't one to be beaten. All his life he had taken on big challenges, and every time he had come out a winner. When looking after the sheep, if a lion or a bear came and attacked, he didn't run for cover. He would go after it and kill it. No animal was going to get the better of him. It was David the winner who went out to meet Goliath the Philistine. There was nothing David liked more than a challenge. And once he was King, David won over all his enemies. He beat the Philistines, the Amelikitites, the Jebusites, Moabites, Syrians, Edomites, Ammonites, and the Hittites. If there had been any more "ites" around he would have cleaned them up too. At the height of his power David was the king of a vast empire, and was riding on a wave of achievement. Every nation he conquered provided him with huge quantities of gold, silver and bronze. He had more possessions than he knew what to do with. For example, when he defeated the Syrians, he crippled one thousand seven hundred of their horses because he had no use for them. David's kingdom was so big and so strong, even the Egyptians had a healthy respect for him. David always got what he wanted. He didn't take "no" for an answer.

2 Samuel 11 contains the story of David's sin with Bathsheba. It's so well known, I won't read it today. But to refresh your memory, at the time David was about 50 years old. He was at the height of his power as King. While his army was away fighting, he spied Bathsheba and he wanted her. What David wanted, he got. Never mind that Bathsheba was married to someone else. Never mind that he was already married to several women, and had concubines as well. Bathsheba was a challenge, she was beautiful, and he wanted her. In order to have her, he had to kill her husband. But David always got what he wanted, so he had her husband Uriah killed. David's sin with Bathsheba wasn't so much about lust, as about power.

### David Ignores God.

When David spied beautiful Bathsheba he could have said to himself, "God has already given me everything I need. This is not right. I need to turn away from this desire. I need to get on my horse and get out there with the army. If I hang around here I'm going to get into trouble." But David's desire to win, his desire have what he wanted, resulted in him destroying almost everything he had achieved in life. Up until this point, the biggest thing in David's life was God. God was on every page of his story. David prayed. David trusted God when he faced his giants. David told Saul that God prevented him from killing him. But in the account of David and Bathsheba there is no mention of God. There is a warning from God, but David doesn't listen. It's tucked away in verse 3 of 2 Samuel 11. ***"The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." (2 Samuel 11:3 NIV)*** The man reports back to David with a warning "This woman is off limits. She not just a nobody. She is Eliam's daughter. She is Uriah's wife." David knows who Eliam is. He knows who Uriah is. God is warning him to back off. But David is the King. David is a winner. And David gets what David wants. It's all about David. The only mention of God in this whole story is in the last part of the last verse of the chapter. It's so small, you could easily miss it. The story seems to end like a happily ever after story. Uriah died. David and Bathsheba got married and had a baby. Awww, isn't that nice? But don't miss the last bit. ***"But the thing David had done displeased the Lord." (2 Samuel 11:27 NIV)*** There is so much packed into that little

phrase. When God is displeased, there are big consequences. In case you don't get how big the consequences were for David, let me spell them out for you.

### **David's Sin - The Consequences.**

God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David about his sin. That's a big deal. That's like having the Pope or the Archbishop of Canterbury show up to see you. Through Nathan the prophet God spelled out what was going to happen to David.

***"This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'*" "This is what the Lord says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.'"** (2 Samuel 12:7-12 NIV)

From that day onwards, turmoil and tragedy struck David's family. The baby born to David and Bathsheba died. The surrounding nations no longer believed Israel's God was holy. David's son Amnon raped his half sister Tamar, and afterwards discarded her like a rag doll. Tamar was so messed up by what had been done to her she was never the same again. Her brother Absalom took revenge on her behalf and killed Amnon, before going on the run. For two years, David and Absalom avoided each other, even though they lived in the same city. Later on Absalom staged a coup that resulted in David losing the throne and running from Jerusalem. Then Absalom was chased down by some of David's loyal soldiers and was killed. Another of David's sons, Adonijah, proclaimed himself king as his father was dying. If we could sit David down and interview him, there would be some key questions to ask. "How is your marriage?" The reply would be in the form of a question. "Which one?" He had eight wives. He couldn't even spend a day a week with each one. Whatever happened to Genesis 2:24 David? ***"A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife".*** (Genesis 2:24 NIV) One man. One woman. One marriage. "And how are your children David?" As a Father, David was a disaster. David was the Homer Simpson of biblical Dads. No record of prayer for his kids. No discipline. No taking them in hand. No intervention to straighten things out. Just passivity.

### **David - A Broken Heart.**

When Nathan the prophet confronted David, the enormity of what he had done began to sink in. ***"Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord.'"*** ***Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord, the son born to you will die."*** (2 Samuel 12:13-14 NIV). By the time Nathan the prophet came to confront David, it was too late. The sin with Bathsheba was going to bring its consequences, no matter how broken hearted and repentant David was. He pleaded with God that Bathsheba's baby wouldn't die. He refused to eat and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. But the child still died. Sin always has its consequences. David's sin with Bathsheba marks a turning point in his life. Up until then he was confident and cocky. He thought he was bulletproof. But when his cheating, murderous heart was exposed, we see a different side of David. We see a broken heart.

### **Prayer From A Broken Heart.**

After Nathan the prophet exposed his sin, one of the Psalms David wrote was Psalm 51. This is the sort of prayer that comes from a broken heart.

***"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast***

***me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Psalm 51:1-17)***

### **Confession, Repentance And Forgiveness.**

As we have followed this series on the life of David, have you wondered why he would be called “A man after God’s own heart?” How does a man who feigns madness, who nearly commits genocide, who is an adulterer and a murderer – how on earth does a person like that get called a man after God’s own heart? The secret is found in Psalm 51, and other Psalms like it. God doesn’t measure our hearts by what we have done, but by our willingness to confess and repent. It’s a broken heart that God loves. It’s a prayer that says “God have mercy on me, a sinner” that God loves to hear. When John the Baptist began preaching and preparing the way for Jesus, he preached a message of repentance. So did Jesus. Jesus said ***“I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32 NIV)*** Read through the Psalms written by David and you will see this pattern of confession, repentance and forgiveness everywhere.

The thing about sin is that we don’t forget it. David says in his Psalm, “My sin is always before me”. David would never be able to remove from his memory the things he had done. God doesn’t remove the memory when he forgives us, but he does remove the pain of it. We know that we have been healed when can look back on the sins we have committed, and it doesn’t hurt anymore. The Apostle John writes this in the New Testament. ***“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9 NIV)*** Confession of our sin and forgiveness by the Lord is like being washed clean. It’s like being made new from the inside out. Repentance means turning 180 degrees and walking in the other direction. Walking away from our sin and toward God and his purposes. The beginning place is a broken heart.

One of the songs written by Brooke Fraser is a prayer that goes like this;

“Heal my heart and make it clean  
Open up my eyes to the things unseen  
Show me how to love like You have loved me  
Break my heart for what breaks Yours  
Everything I am for Your Kingdom’s cause  
As I walk from earth into eternity”

“Break my heart for what breaks yours.” That’s quite a thing to pray. But it’s very much in line with the prayer of David. Let’s take a moment of quietness to pray. As we pray, I want to invite you to take Psalm 51 that is on your printed sheet, and underline the words that touch your heart. Make them into your own prayer. And if you would like someone to pray with you at the end of the service, come to the front, and people will be available to pray with you. Or if you don’t know people at the front, go to someone you trust and ask them to pray with you.