

## SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Series: Family Life?  
Message Title: Wisdom  
Speaker: Kevin Myers  
Date: November 15, 2009

### Icebreaker:

Looking back over your life, what do you think was the wisest decision you ever made and why?

### Message Overview:

As we've explored previously in our 'Family Life' Series, King David made some serious mistakes in his life, and his poor choices caused some major consequences. However, as Pastor Kevin (PK) pointed out today, through the course of his experiences, David learned some critical lessons which had positive implications in his parenting later on:

- **Family mistakes are temporary *unless* we refuse to change**  
When David committed adultery with Bathsheba, it was the result of a *series* of wrong decisions. However, once he confessed and changed, God turned even that mistake into a blessing: His son and successor Solomon was also a son of Bathsheba. And we all make mistakes at some point in our lives as well, and using the illustration of his family experience, PK reminded us that while our family of origin may *explain us*, it does not *excuse us* to make the same mistakes. As his mom had learned from her mistakes, she in turn pressed in on PK to land these well as he matured: Love God; marry as a virgin; get an education; be wise financially.
- **Change to His Wisdom**  
David obviously passed on the lessons he had learned to his son Solomon, who in turn gained valuable insight that helped him to make the right decisions early on (Prov. 5:18-23; I Kings 3: 4- 15). Similarly, when we can talk with our children about mistakes we've made, it can help our kids not to repeat them.

### Discussion:

(Leaders: Do not attempt to cover every question provided in this study guide, but rather review the complete list, selecting a mix of questions that work best for your group, mixing scripture research/discussion as well as personal application of the teaching principles.)

### **Family mistakes are temporary *unless* we refuse to change**

- What are some of the mistakes your parents made? Did they try to teach you from those mistakes, or did they attempt to hide them from you? What parenting behaviors do you think you picked up from how they managed their 'image' as parents?

- PK: "Mistakes of your parents may explain who you are, but they do not excuse who you are." Where do you use mistakes of others as an excuse for your own behavior?
- Read James 1:13-15. What is the path of sin? Learning from David's mistakes, how can we arrest ourselves before we commit a sin with a bigger consequence? If we feel that it's too hard, what does James recommend us to do? (See James 1: 2-6)

### **Change to His Wisdom**

- Read 1 Kings 3: 4-15. Solomon had the chance to learn from his father's mistakes, and he wisely asked God to grant him wisdom (a discerning heart). But what if the same opportunity were given to you...what would you have asked for?
- Sometimes we try really hard to make changes within, but often it just doesn't seem to work. Read Psalm 127:1-2. What does the Psalmist say about the results of doing things yourself? How far are you trying to attempt change out of your own strength vs. relying on God and His power? You can pull from His power if God lives in you! Have you ever truly said yes to Him? (Leader: See Appendix 1 if someone in your group would like to receive Christ.)
- A wise person once said, "It's bad to make mistakes and not learn from them. It's good to learn from your mistakes. But the really wise way to go is to learn from the mistakes *others* make." Which of these sounds closer to your faith journey... learning from your own mistakes, or the mistakes of others? How are you trying to encourage your kids to learn from the mistakes you or others have made?
- Read Proverbs 4:1-9. What was the main message David taught Solomon? What are the main things you are teaching your children?
- PK mentioned four areas his mother taught him well. Recap the four areas by reading the corresponding Proverbs passages: Win God first (Proverbs 2:1-8); get married as a virgin (Proverbs 5:1-4, 15-20); get an education (Proverbs 1:8-9 – in those days education happened at home); be wise financially (Proverbs 3:7-10). Share ways in which you can teach these points to your children.

### **Wrap-Up:**

If you feel like there are several people in your group who have made many mistakes and would like to pursue changes, have a quiet moment of letting the past go and looking ahead into the future. You can lead this by a time of prayer or even writing down mistakes and sticking them to a cross or burning them.

### **Throughout the Week: (Optional)**

(Leaders: Share these optional exercises for further study and growth with your group.)

- 1) Memory verse: *"For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."* (Proverbs 2:6 NIV)
- 2) Take some time to study Proverbs 1-7. Write down some truths you want to apply to your life and some that you would like to teach your children within the next few weeks.
- 3) Look at your Christmas budget and set aside some money for the GiveLife Christmas action that will be presented next Sunday.

## Appendix 1: The Plan of Salvation

The "bridge" illustration is an excellent way to explain the plan of salvation.

### 1. God loves you and created YOU to have a personal relationship with Him.

- **God created you** - *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." Psalm 139: 13-14 (NIV)*
- **God loves you** - *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" John 3:16 (NIV)*
- **God wants you to know him** - *"Now this is eternal life; that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ who you have sent." John 17:3 (NIV)*

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**Why is it that many people do not have a personal relationship with God?**

### 2. OUR SIN keeps us from having a personal relationship with God.

- **What is sin?** *"Anyone, then, that knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." James 4:17 (NIV) - God is holy and perfect and we are not. Sin not only means doing wrong or failing to do all that God wants. Sin is also our attitude of ignoring or rejecting God. Because God is Holy, he cannot accept our sin.*
- **Who has sinned?** *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23 (NIV)*
- **What Happens when we sin?** *"Your iniquities have separated you from your God your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear" Isaiah 59:2 (NIV) "For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23 (NIV) - Sin causes a gap between God and us. Death, which means eternal separation from God, is the penalty for our sin.*

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**What is the solution to our separation from God?**

### 3. Only through Jesus Christ can you have a personal relationship with God.

- **Why Jesus?** *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me." John 14:6 (NIV) - It is only through Jesus Christ that we can have a relationship with God.*
- **Why did Jesus have to die?** *"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body, but made alive by the spirit" 1 Peter 3:18 (NIV) - Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins, so we could be forgiven.*
- **Why did Jesus rise from the dead?** *"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time." 1 Corinthians 15: 3-6 (NIV) - Jesus rose from the dead to prove he could give us eternal life.*

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## How can you begin your personal relationship with God?

### 4. You must personally respond by trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord.

- **You respond with trust in Christ.** *"For it is by Grace you have been saved, through faith- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) - You must trust in him; you can't earn your salvation by doing good things alone.*
- **You respond by turning to God from sin.** *"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out." Acts 3:19 (NIV)*

**You respond by receiving Christ.** *"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (NIV)*

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### Receiving Christ means:

- Turning to God from your own way of living (repentance).
- Inviting Christ to come into your life and trusting him to forgive your sin.
- Allowing God to direct your life.
- Receiving Christ is not just an emotional experience; nor is it just agreeing with your mind that Jesus is the son of God. It means your total trust, an act of your will.

### YOU can begin your personal relationship with GOD by receiving Jesus Christ by faith.

You can express your faith and trust through prayer. Prayer is simply talking to God. He knows what you mean even when it is difficult to express yourself. You can use this prayer, or use your own words:

"Dear God, I know that my sin has separated me from you. Thank You that Jesus Christ died in my place. I ask you Jesus to forgive my sin and to come into my life. Please begin to direct my life. Thank you for giving me eternal life. In Jesus name, Amen. "

Can you say this to God, and mean it? If you can, pray now and trust Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life, as He promised.

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### What now?

### 5. Your trust in Jesus Christ begins a lifelong relationship.

- **God commits himself to you.** *"You are in me, and I am in you" John 14:20 NIV)*
- **God assures you that Jesus Christ has come into your life.** *"Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you" Hebrews 13:5 (NIV)*
- **God will never leave you.** *"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life" 1 John 5:13 (NIV)*
- **God assures you that you have eternal life.** *"Since we live by the spirit, let us keep step with the spirit." Galatians 5:25 (NIV)*
- **God gives you his Holy Spirit** to enable you to live the Christian life. You commit yourself to God. *"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV)*

Ref: <http://www.gracecovchurch.org/bridge/index.html>