

# Week 20: Saul and David — The Difference Between Pride and Repentance

*A Sabbath Family Bible Study*

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## Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 15:10–30; 2 Samuel 12:1–13; Psalm 51 (KJV)

*With Commentary Throughout*

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### **1 Samuel 15:17–19**

*“And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight... the LORD anointed thee king over Israel... Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD?”*

#### **Commentary:**

Saul began humbly but quickly became consumed with **pride, self-preservation, and disobedience**. When given a clear command to destroy Amalek, he spared what was valuable and justified it with religious excuses. Pride often wears the mask of spirituality while defying God’s Word.

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### **1 Samuel 15:24**

*“And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed... because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.”*

#### **Commentary:**

Saul’s confession was shallow. He admitted fault, but shifted blame and was more concerned about **saving face than being forgiven**. True repentance doesn’t negotiate with God—it surrenders fully. Saul’s pride kept him from being restored.

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### **2 Samuel 12:7, 13**

*“And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man... And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD...”*

**Commentary:**

David also sinned—grievously—yet when confronted, he **took full ownership**. He didn't blame Bathsheba or his circumstances. His immediate, heartfelt confession marked the beginning of true repentance. The contrast with Saul is stark: **David's humility opened the door to restoration**.

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**Psalm 51:1–4**

*“Have mercy upon me, O God... Against thee, thee only, have I sinned... that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest...”*

**Commentary:**

This psalm is David's prayer of repentance. It reveals the heart of one who understands that sin is first and foremost against God. Unlike Saul, David did not make excuses or seek public honor. He sought **God's mercy, cleansing, and a renewed spirit**.

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**Psalm 51:10–12**

*“Create in me a clean heart, O God... restore unto me the joy of thy salvation...”*

**Commentary:**

True repentance leads to transformation. David didn't ask for mere consequences to be removed—he wanted a **new heart**. This is the cry of every genuine believer: not to escape discipline, but to be made holy.

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## Discussion Questions for All Ages

**Young Children:**

- What did Saul do wrong when God told him what to do?
- How did David respond when he knew he had sinned?
- Why does God want us to say sorry when we do wrong?

**Older Children & Teens:**

- What's the difference between being caught and truly being sorry?

- Why do you think God forgave David but not Saul?
- How can you show true repentance when you sin?

**Adults:**

- How can you guard against the pride that ruined Saul?
- What are signs of godly sorrow versus worldly regret?
- How can your family cultivate a culture of humility and repentance?

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## Psalm Reading

### Psalm 32:1–5 (KJV)

*1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven...*

*3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old...*

*5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee... and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

*Selah.*

### Commentary:

Concealed sin brings spiritual decay; confessed sin brings healing and joy. This psalm, also by David, pairs with Psalm 51 to show the full journey of repentance—from guilt to grace.

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## Hymn: “Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken”

By Henry F. Lyte (1824)

1.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,  
All to leave and follow Thee;  
Destitute, despised, forsaken,  
Thou from hence my all shalt be.  
Perish every fond ambition,  
All I've sought or hoped or known;  
Yet how rich is my condition,  
God and heaven are still my own.

2.

Let the world despise and leave me,  
They have left my Savior too;  
Human hearts and looks deceive me—  
Thou art not, like man, untrue.  
And while Thou shalt smile upon me,  
God of wisdom, love, and might,  
Foes may hate and friends disown me;  
Show Thy face and all is bright.

3.

Man may trouble and distress me,  
'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;  
Life with trials hard may press me,  
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.  
Oh, 'tis not in grief to harm me  
While Thy love is left to me;  
Oh, 'twere not in joy to charm me,  
Were that joy unmixed with Thee.

4.

Haste then on from grace to glory,  
Armed by faith and winged by prayer;  
Heaven's eternal day's before me,  
God's own hand shall guide me there.  
Soon shall close my earthly mission,  
Swift shall pass my pilgrim days;  
Hope shall change to glad fruition,  
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.



## Family Application Points

1. **Teach the Heart of Repentance:**

Make clear that saying “sorry” is not the same as **repenting**. Use Saul and David as contrasting case studies to show that **God looks at the heart**.

2. **Foster a Repentant Environment:**

Allow time in family worship for confession. Let children and adults alike confess faults without fear of shame, but with hope for **mercy and restoration**.

3. **Guard Against Self-Justification:**

Discuss how pride leads to blame-shifting and excuses. Encourage your family to

accept correction quickly and thank God for the chance to grow.

4. **Practice Psalm 51 Together:**

Read or pray Psalm 51 aloud regularly. Memorize verses 10–12 as a family. Let David's prayer shape your own language of repentance.

5. **Honor the God Who Forgives:**

Celebrate God's mercy. After repentance, move forward in **joy, not shame**. Teach your family that grace doesn't excuse sin—but it does restore the soul.



## Closing Prayer

*Merciful Father, we come before You with humble hearts. Teach us to walk in repentance, not pride. May we never be like Saul—making excuses or seeking to justify our sin. Instead, give us the broken and contrite heart of David, who knew how to confess and be cleansed. Let our home be a place where sin is not hidden, but brought into the light of Your mercy. Renew our spirits, restore our joy, and make us faithful in Your sight. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*