

Lessons From 'The Bible': When Leaders Fail, Grace Must Abound

Along with millions of Americans, I have watched *The Bible* miniseries on the History Channel. As much as I'm enjoying the TV series, the book is way better.

Highlights from Part 2 included: the crumbling walls of Jericho, Samson doing major damage with a jawbone, Saul and David's dysfunctional relationship, and Nathan calling out David.

I can't stop thinking about the sad story of David, Bathsheba, Uriah and Nathan, especially that last scene when Nathan confronts David. Because of a faithful and fearless friend like Nathan, and a forgiving and gracious God, David repented and ended strong.

It is always tragic when leaders fail. Here are some of my thoughts as I ponder Episode 2 of *The Bible* about Samson, Saul and David—three leaders who failed.

Irresponsible Delegation. It was the season when all good kings go off to war, but David got lazy, delegated his duty to General Joab and took the month off (see 2 Sam. 11:1) While hanging out on his roof deck, David spotted Bathsheba taking a bath and acted on his lustful impulse. We all know the rest of the story.

David got in trouble because he was not where a leader should have been during that season of life. When leaders stop doing what they are called to do, they invite trouble. There are certain things that can't be delegated—certain battles that we must personally fight. If we refuse to lead and fight, we will make a mess of our lives and the lives of those around us.

The Faithful and Fearless Friend. One of the most powerful scenes in *The Bible* miniseries was Nathan confronting King David. Every leader needs a friend like Nathan who will speak uncomfortable truth. The higher one climbs on the leadership ladder, the less people are willing to speak truth. That's why so many fall from great heights. God, give us modern Nathans who will tell the truth!

Forgiveness and the Consequences of Sin. To his credit, David confessed and repented as soon as Nathan rebuked him. Nathan's reply to David's repentance is both comforting and terrifying: *"The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die"* (2 Sam. 12:13, NIV).

I am sure David was comforted knowing that God was not going to kill him. However, while forgiven, David's sin was not quite forgotten. Nathan spells out the consequences of David's sin: that Bathsheba's child will die and that innocent family members will suffer horribly (see verses 11,14).

Sin is quickly forgiven, but the sowing and reaping process is rarely suspended. Lest we reason that because God is forgiving, we can sin and repent at will, we better remember that sin hurts—and sometimes destroys—innocent bystanders.

Steve's blogs can be found at [.](#)

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