

Study Guide for the Week of August 24, 2008

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Message manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday - Read 2 Samuel 12:1-14. In this passage of scripture you will find the words of Nathan the prophet to King David. We read about the political ruler, King David, being confronted by a religious prophet, Nathan. Nathan has strong words for David and his actions, and calls him to repentance for committing adultery with Bathsheba and sending her husband Uriah to his death (You can find this story in 2 Samuel 11). Where are the intersections of faith and politics today? Nathan delivered a message from God to King David. What message do you think God has for political leaders today? What message might God have for you today?

Tuesday - Read Psalm 51:1-12. Yesterday we read the story of the prophet Nathan delivering a strong message from God to King David. The scripture for today is often understood to be David's response to God's word from Nathan. This passage contains passionate words of regret and a desire to be made clean by God. The words of the prophet have made a tremendous impact on the king. Yesterday, we considered God's word for political leaders and for ourselves. Today ask yourself – "How do you think political leaders today would (or do) respond to a message from God?" How do you respond to God's message for your life?

Wednesday - Read 1 Kings 3:4-15. Solomon has just become king. One of the first things he does as a political leader is offer sacrifices to God. That night, God converses with Solomon in a dream and responds to Solomon's request for wisdom. These are important events in the life of the new King, Solomon, and shape his life as a political leader. Do you think religious practices shape the life of political leaders today? If so, how? If not, why not?

Thursday - Read Matthew 25:31-46. On Sunday Aaron talked about this passage of scripture was a political statement. If the definition of politics is, "The process for determining who gets what, when and how" what does this passage really say?

Friday - Read Isaiah 58:1-9. How had the people of that time tried to separate their faith from the mission of God? What religious activities were they busy with? What was God really seeking from them? What was the result of the disconnect? How might this apply to today's Christians? How does it apply to you and the relationship between your faith and your actions? How might you bring these two things into closer connection?