

STUDY GUIDE

8-2 -10 TO 8-7-10

The Study Guide is an opportunity for you to read and study the Bible on your own or with a friend. Each day's reading will only take a few minutes, but will serve as an opportunity for you to grow in your faith and to spend time connecting with God. Enjoy!

Prayer for the Week: Almighty God, in wisdom you have created us and called us by name. Provide our daily needs and grant us grace and strength to fulfill the ministry to which we have been called. We offer our prayers in the name and spirit of Christ. Amen.

MONDAY –Read Psalm 51. This psalm is attributed to King David after he has realized the depth and seriousness of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. Knowing how difficult it has been for our political leaders to admit mistakes and sins, how do you think David found the humility and strength to make this confession?

Psalm 51

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

⁵Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

⁶You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

¹¹Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

¹⁴Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

¹⁶For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

¹⁷The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

¹⁸Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,

¹⁹then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

TUESDAY –Read Judges 16. This is the story of Samson, a prostitute and Delilah. Scripture does not withhold anything about our forefathers and foremothers in the faith. Contrast this with our stories of George Washington and the cherry tree (which is a fictional story to describe his honesty). What do you think would happen if we knew the darker side of our ancestors?

Judges 16

¹⁶Once Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute and went in to her. ²The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here." So they circled around

and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They kept quiet all night, thinking, "Let us wait until the light of the morning; then we will kill him." ³But Samson lay only until midnight. Then at midnight he rose up, took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.

⁴After this he fell in love with a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵The lords of the Philistines came to her and said to her, "Coax him, and find out what makes his strength so great, and how we may overpower him, so that we may bind him in order to subdue him; and we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver." ⁶So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me what makes your strength so great, and how you could be bound, so that one could subdue you." ⁷Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that are not dried out, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else." ⁸Then the lords of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not dried out, and she bound him with them. ⁹While men were lying in wait in an inner chamber, she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he snapped the bowstrings, as a strand of fiber snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known. ¹⁰Then Delilah said to Samson, "You have mocked me and told me lies; please tell me how you could be bound." ¹¹He said to her, "If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else." ¹²So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" (The men lying in wait were in an inner chamber.) But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread. ¹³Then Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies; tell me how you could be bound." He said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and make it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else." ¹⁴So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web, and made them tight with the pin. Then she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web. ¹⁵Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me three times now and have not told me what makes your strength so great." ¹⁶Finally, after she had nagged him with her words day after day, and pestered him, he was tired to death. ¹⁷So he told her his whole secret, and said to her, "A razor has never come upon my head; for I have been a nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If my head were shaved, then my strength would leave me; I would become weak, and be like anyone else."

¹⁸When Delilah realized that he had told her his whole secret, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "This time come up, for he has told his whole secret to me." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. ¹⁹She let him fall asleep on her lap; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. He began to weaken, and his strength left him. ²⁰Then she said, "The Philistines

are upon you, Samson!" When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, "I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free." But he did not know that the Lord had left him. ²¹So the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles; and he ground at the mill in the prison.

²²But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved. ²³Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon, and to rejoice; for they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand." ²⁴When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us." ²⁵And when their hearts were merry, they said, "Call Samson, and let him entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. They made him stand between the pillars; ²⁶and Samson said to the attendant who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, so that I may lean against them."²⁷Now the house was full of men and women; all the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about three thousand men and women, who looked on while Samson performed. ²⁸Then Samson called to the Lord and said, "Lord God, remember me and strengthen me only this once, O God, so that with this one act of revenge I may pay back the Philistines for my two eyes." ²⁹And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. ³⁰Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." He strained with all his might; and the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So those he killed at his death were more than those he had killed during his life. ³¹Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.

WEDNESDAY –Read Romans 12. 17-21. Getting even when someone hurts us it a natural human reaction. Paul instructs us about following a different path and quotes a proverb (Proverbs 25.20-22) There is an old Quaker saying, "*If you become like the beast to defeat the beast then bestiality has won.*" Do you hear Paul saying the same thing?.

Romans 12.17-21

¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the

Lord." ²⁰No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

THURSDAY –Read Genesis 3. This ancient story reveals a lot about human nature. In this story no one wants to take the blame for disobeying God, but always claims it is someone else's fault. Do you think the same thing is happening today? What else does this story reveal about our relationship with God?

FRIDAY –Read John 8.1-11. Scripture does not tell us what the woman did next. Make a list of what she might have done after being set free by Jesus? For example, did she ever commit adultery again, or did she have another affair, or do something else. We are not told because what is important to us is not what she did, but what will we do when we receive God's forgiveness?

John 8.1-11

8while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. ³The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, ⁴they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. ⁵Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" ⁶They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."⁸And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has

no one condemned you?" ¹¹She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

SATURDAY ---Tomorrow Pastor Steve begins a sermon series on "Forgiveness,"
Tomorrows sermon title is *Seeking and Accepting God's Mercy*. In preparation, **read**
Matthew 18.23-35. In addition, children from Vacation Bible School will be singing and
we will recognize our volunteers.

August 8, 2010

1. Title - Seeking and Accepting God's Mercy
2. Text-- Matt. 18:23-35; John 8. 1-11
3. **Visual illustration throughout sermon series.. carrying grudges like stones**
4. VBS – singing at all services
5. Volunteer Recognition (Nancy Troy) August 8