

Restoring each other to peace with God

When King David committed **adultery** with Bathsheba and arranged the **murder** of her husband, the prophet Nathan **restored peace** between David and the Lord. Nathan's example is one we can follow, when we seek to restore each other to peace with God.

Before following Nathan's example, we need to have Paul's attitude in mind, as he worked to restore peace between Philippian believers and God. In Philippians 1:6-7, Paul writes:

He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of **you share in God's grace with me.**

It is God's work to bring peace as he brings to completion what he began. It is his word and Spirit at work.

Gospel partners share in God's grace. God treats believers in ways they don't deserve. Whatever someone has done wrong, when we share in God's grace, we are to treat each other with kindness, compassion and gentleness as we work toward restoring peace with each other and God.

Nathan's example

- 1. Be patient.** Nathan didn't rush. Nathan waited for God's time to approach David.
- 2. Establish a clear principle.** Nathan told a story to establish a principle. Pray, ask God for inspiration from his word to make the principle clear.
- 3. Check that the person understands and agrees with the principle.** When David got angry, he wanted justice and restoration, then Nathan knew that David had understood and agreed.
- 4. Make the person self aware.** Nathan said "David, you are that man." Hold the word of God up like a mirror.
- 5. Remind the person of God's goodness.** Point to the cross of Christ. Remind the person that God's mercy, grace, justice and judgement are satisfied. God is good.
- 6. Ask the person about their attitude to God's word.** Nathan asked "Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes?"
- 7. Remind the person of God's judgement.** Nathan said "The sword shall never depart from your house." and the gospel Jesus said "Repentance for forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem."
- 8. Pray for the person to be restored,** as David was, through repentance and confession. David said "I have sinned against the Lord." He then wrote Psalm 51. Encourage the person to pray that psalm.