

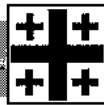
Accountability: Beyond Football and the Weather

Topic: Our Need for Others

Raising the roof for a friend

Mark 2, 1-12

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"-- he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."



Mark 2, 1-12

THE HEALING OF A PARALYTIC

For Life Study

In this Bible study, you will meet four friends who were so concerned about the well-being of their friend that they literally "tore up the roof" for this person. This story is a wonderful example of what it means to help others and to be helped by others when needed. We all need each other!

Optional Ice-Breaker Questions:

- When was the last time you had to go to the emergency room?
- How often were you sick as a child?

1. If you were one of the paralytic's four friends and saw the crowd where Jesus was, what would you do?
 - suggest we come back later
 - politely wait in line
 - make a hole in the roof
 - go along with the hole in the roof, but make it clear it wasn't my idea
2. How would you feel if you were the paralytic when your friends decided to help you "drop in on Jesus"?
 - reluctant—"You'll embarrass me."
 - grateful—"Thanks for your care and concern."

- apprehensive—"They are going to throw us out!"
- mixed feelings—"I don't think this will work, but I will trust you guys."
- scared—"I'm afraid you're going to drop me."

3. What impresses you most about the four friends?
 - their faith
 - their ingenuity and creativity
 - their concern for their friend
 - their boldness
 - their determination

4. What is the closest you have come to having a supportive community who cared for you when you were hurting?

5. What event in your life brought you closest to God?
 - when Jesus healed me when I was hurting
 - when someone I was close to got really sick or died
 - when I was confirmed
 - when some friends really supported me

- when I felt God's forgiveness
- No event has brought me that feeling.
- other: _____

6. How do you need to change to receive more support from friends?
 - be more open
 - be a better listener
 - stop trying to be so self-sufficient
 - be more supportive myself
 - find some new or different friends
 - be more patient
 - have a more positive attitude
 - other: _____

7. Who are the friends in your life who care enough to help you walk closer with Jesus?

8. If you had friends who would take you to Jesus for healing today, what kind of healing would you ask for?
 - physical
 - spiritual
 - emotional
 - relational

9. How can this group pray for you?

Accountability: Beyond Football and the Weather

Topic: Our Need for Accountability

Gehazi caught red-handed

2 Kings 5, 1-27 (Pg 510)

Naaman, the army commander of the king of Aram, was highly esteemed and respected by his master, for through him the LORD had brought victory to Aram. But valiant as he was, the man was a leper. Now the Arameans had captured from the land of Israel in a raid a little girl, who became the servant of Naaman's wife. "If only my master would present himself to the prophet in Samaria," she said to her mistress, "he would cure him of his leprosy." Naaman went and told his lord just what the slave girl from the land of Israel had said. "Go," said the king of Aram. "I will send along a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman set out, taking along ten silver talents, six thousand gold pieces, and ten festal garments. To the king of Israel he brought the letter, which read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy." When he read the letter, the king of Israel tore his garments and exclaimed: "Am I a god with power over life and death, that this man should send someone to me to be cured of leprosy? Take note! You can see he is only looking for a quarrel with me!" When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, he sent word to the king: "Why have you torn your garments? Let him come to me and find out that there is a prophet in Israel." Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The prophet sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean." But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought that he would surely come out and stand there to invoke the LORD his God, and would move his hand over the spot, and thus cure the leprosy. Are not the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be cleansed?" With this, he turned about in anger and left. But his servants came up and reasoned with him. "My father," they said, "if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, 'Wash and be clean,' should you do as he said." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. He returned with his whole retinue to the man of God. On his arrival he stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel. Please accept a gift from your servant." "As the LORD lives whom I serve, I will not take it," Elisha replied; and despite Naaman's urging, he still refused. Naaman said: "If you will not accept, please let me, your servant, have two mule-loads of earth, for I will no longer offer holocaust or sacrifice to any other god except to the LORD. But I trust the LORD will forgive your servant this: when my master enters the temple of Rimmon to worship there, then I, too, as his adjutant, must bow down in the temple of Rimmon. May the LORD forgive your servant this." "Go in peace," Elisha said to him. Naaman had gone some distance when Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, the man of God, thought to himself: "My master was too easy with this Aramean Naaman, not accepting what he brought. As the LORD lives, I will run after him and get something out of him." So Gehazi hurried after Naaman. Aware that someone was running after him, Naaman alighted from his chariot to wait for him. "Is everything all right?" he asked. "Yes," Gehazi replied, "but my master sent me to say, 'Two young men have just come to me, guild prophets from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two festal garments.'" "Please take two talents," Naaman said, and pressed them upon him. He tied up these silver talents in bags and gave them, with the two festal garments, to two of his servants, who carried them before Gehazi. When they reached the hill, Gehazi took what they had, carried it into the house, and sent the men on their way. He went in and stood before Elisha his master, who asked him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?" He answered, "Your servant has not gone

anywhere." But Elisha said to him: "Was I not present in spirit when the man alighted from his chariot to wait for you? Is this a time to take money or to take garments, olive orchards or vineyards, sheep or cattle, male or female servants? The leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And Gehazi left Elisha, a leper white as snow.



2 Kings 5, 1-27

For Life Study

CURE OF NAAMAN

When this story takes place, the people of Aram and Israel were officially at peace, though border skirmishes were not uncommon.

Optional Ice-Breaker Questions:

- What is the sickest you've ever been?
- Does your family have any "home remedies" to cure the hiccups, a cold or something else?

1. How would you describe Naaman before he was healed?
 - respectable superstitious
 - courageous vain
 - proud easily offended
2. How would you describe Naaman after he was healed?
 - clean grateful
 - converted humbled
 - superstitious generous
3. What seems to bring about the change in Naaman's attitude toward God?
 - the logic of his servants
 - water from the Jordan River

- intervention by God
- the humility of Elisha
- his request for forgiveness

4. What did it take to convince you, like Naaman, that there is no God in the world except the Lord?
5. Is your faith in God stronger today than it was one year ago?
6. What do you suppose Gehazi was thinking?
 - Elisha was a fool.
 - Naaman got off too easy.
 - It's a shame to let Naaman go home with everything he brought.
 - If Elisha doesn't want anything, I might as well get something.
 - Elisha deserves to be paid.
 - I deserve to be paid.
7. What do you think caused Gehazi's leprosy?
 - greed guilt
 - lying getting caught
 - It was contagious.
8. What do you struggle with the most?

- fear—like the king of Israel (v 7)
- anger—like Naaman (v 11)
- pride—like Naaman (v 12)
- resisting God's instructions—like Naaman (v 13)
- greed—like Gehazi (v 20)
- total honesty—like Gehazi (v 25)

9. How do you feel about a fellow Christian, or group of Christians, holding you accountable the way Elisha did Gehazi?
 - That would be great!
 - Yeah, great—just so they can't see me all the time like Elisha could!
 - I wouldn't like someone looking over my shoulder.
 - I can hold myself accountable.
 - It's scary, but it's also what I need.
 - That's what this group is all about.
10. If you haven't already let it be known, is there anything you would like this group to hold you accountable for?
11. How can the group pray for you?

These are the names of David's warriors. Ishbaal, son of Hachamoni, was the first of the Three. It was he who brandished his battle-ax over eight hundred slain in a single encounter. Next to him, among the Three warriors, was Eleazar, son of Dodo the Ahohite. He was with David at Ephes-dammim when the Philistines assembled there for battle. The Israelites had retreated, but he stood his ground and fought the Philistines until his hand grew tired and became cramped, holding fast to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory on that day; the soldiers turned back after Eleazar, but only to strip the slain. Next to him was Shammah, son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had assembled at Lehi, where there was a plot of land full of lentils. When the soldiers fled from the Philistines, he took his stand in the middle of the plot and defended it. He slew the Philistines, and the LORD brought about a great victory. Such were the deeds of the Three warriors. During the harvest three of the Thirty went down to David in the cave of Adullam, while a Philistine clan was encamped in the Vale of Rephaim. At that time David was in the refuge, and there was a garrison of Philistines in Bethlehem. Now David had a strong craving and said, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the cistern that is by the gate of Bethlehem!" So the Three warriors broke through the Philistine camp and drew water from the cistern that is by the gate of Bethlehem. But when they brought it to David he refused to drink it, and instead poured it out to the LORD, saying: "The LORD forbid that I do this! Can I drink the blood of these men who went at the risk of their lives?" So he refused to drink it. Abishai, brother of Joab, son of Zeruiah, was at the head of the Thirty. It was he who brandished his spear over three hundred slain. He was listed among the Thirty and commanded greater respect than the Thirty, becoming their leader. However, he did not attain to the Three. Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, a stalwart from Kabzeel, was a man of great achievements. It was he who slew the two lions in Moab. He also went down and killed the lion in the cistern at the time of the snow. It was he, too, who slew an Egyptian of large stature. Although the Egyptian was armed with a spear, he went against him with a club and wrested the spear from the Egyptian's hand, then killed him with his own spear. Such were the deeds performed by Benaiah, son of Jehoiada. He was listed among the Thirty warriors and commanded greater respect than the Thirty. However, he did not attain to the Three. David put him in command of his bodyguard.



2 Samuel 23, 8-23

For Life Study

DAVID'S WARRIORS

Recorded here are some exploits of King David's most valiant warriors.

Optional Ice-Breaker Questions:

- On a scale of 1 ("play it safe") to 10 (Evil Knievel) how much of a daredevil were you as a kid? How about now?
- Who is your favorite sports figure? What do you admire most about them?

1. What would you call this listing?
 - Israel's Ancient All Stars
 - David's Daring Dudes
 - God's Gladiators
 - Thirty Thugs
 - Sanctified Super Heroes
2. How do you envision these men?
 - tough and toothless
 - sly as a fox
 - ferocious as a lion
 - faithful friends
3. What would a guy like Eleazar or Benaiah probably be today?
 - a middle linebacker
 - a professional wrestler
 - a biker

- a Green Beret
- a Secret Service agent
- a street minister
- a prayer warrior

4. What do you think made David's mighty men so mighty?
 - a team spirit
 - brute strength
 - good leadership
 - superior strategy
 - individual heroics
 - willpower and determination
 - God's favor
5. If you were David, how would you have felt when the three men risked their lives to get you water from Bethlehem?
 - overwhelmed with gratitude
 - tempted to drink it
 - honored by their support
 - unworthy of such devotion
6. How would you have felt if you were one of the three when David poured out the water?
 - foolish for making the effort
 - unappreciated by my leader

- esteemed by my leader
- blessed by David turning my physical sacrifice into a spiritual sacrifice

7. Who have been the "spiritual giants" who have fought at your side?
8. How much do you feel a need in your life for support from other people now?
 - I really feel that need.
 - I recognize that need, and thankfully it is being met.
 - I want to move in that direction, but I feel a little uptight about it.
 - Strong people can stand on their own without support.
 - Giving and receiving people's help is easier said than done.
9. Do you feel like you are fighting any battles all by yourself? In what way could your small group provide reinforcements?
10. How can the group pray for you and encourage you?

Accountability: Beyond Football and the Weather

Topic: Our Need for Counsel

Rehoboam needs advice

1 Kings 12, 1-25 (Pg 485)

Rehoboam went to Shechem, where all Israel had come to proclaim him king. Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon, returned from Egypt as soon as he learned this. They said to Rehoboam: "Your father put on us a heavy yoke. If you now lighten the harsh service and the heavy yoke your father imposed on us, we will serve you." "Come back to me in three days," he answered them. When the people had departed, King Rehoboam consulted the elders who had been in his father's service while he was alive, and asked, "What answer do you advise me to give this people?" They replied, "If today you will be the servant of this people and submit to them, giving them a favorable answer, they will be your servants forever." But he ignored the advice the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were in his service. He said to them, "What answer do you advise me to give this people, who have asked me to lighten the yoke my father imposed on them?" The young men who had grown up with him replied, "This is what you must say to this people who have asked you to lighten the yoke your father put on them: 'My little finger is thicker than my father's body. Whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will make it heavier. My father beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions.'" On the third day all Israel came back to King Rehoboam, as he had instructed them to do. Ignoring the advice the elders had given him, the king gave the people a harsh answer. He said to them, as the young men had advised: "My father put on you a heavy yoke, but I will make it heavier. My father beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions." The king did not listen to the people, for the LORD brought this about to fulfill the prophecy he had uttered to Jeroboam, son of Nebat, through Ahijah the Shilonite. When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king: "What share have we in David? We have no heritage in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own house, David." So Israel went off to their tents, but Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites who lived in the cities of Judah. King Rehoboam then sent out Adoram, superintendent of the forced labor, but all Israel stoned him to death. Rehoboam managed to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem, and Israel went into rebellion against David's house to this day. When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they summoned him to an assembly and made him king over all Israel. None remained loyal to David's house except the tribe of Judah alone. On his arrival in Jerusalem, Rehoboam gathered together all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin--one hundred and eighty thousand seasoned warriors--to fight against the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam, son of Solomon. However, the LORD spoke to Shemaiah, a man of God: "Say to Rehoboam, son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to the house of Judah and to Benjamin, and to the rest of the people: 'Thus says the LORD: You must not march out to fight against your brother Israelites. Let every man return home, for I have brought this about.'" They accepted this message of the LORD and gave up the expedition accordingly. Jeroboam built up Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. Then he left it and built up Penuel.



Before Solomon died God told him that, due to his spiritual disobedience, he would lose most of the kingdom. However, for the sake of his father David, this would happen to his son. A prophet also promised Jeroboam he would later rule the northern tribes. The southern tribe of Judah naturally accepted David and his descendants since they were from that tribe. Now Rehoboam has succeeded his father Solomon as king, and travels to Shechem in hopes of receiving the continued support of the northern tribes.

Optional Ice-Breaker Questions:

- Who's your favorite talk show host or newspaper columnist?
- What was the best or worst advice a close friend ever gave you?

1. What was the philosophy behind the advice Rehoboam received from the "elders"?
 - Politicians should make promises.
 - Politicians should be servants.
 - Creative solutions are win-win.
 - It takes strength to compromise.

2. What was the philosophy behind the advice of Rehoboam's friends?
 - Show them who's in charge.
 - Tread softly and carry a big stick.
 - Play hardball.
 - Compromise is for sissies.
3. Why do you think Rehoboam chose the young men's counsel?
 - He didn't trust old people.
 - He gave in to peer pressure.
 - He thought it was the best way to keep the kingdom together.
 - He didn't want to look like a wimp.
 - God made him.
4. What's the closest you've come to experiencing something like the events of this story?
 - a divorce in my family
 - other family problems
 - church problems
 - factions at work
 - cliques or gangs in school
 - a group breaking up
 - a friendship breaking up
5. Shemaiah's advice prevented a civil war. Do you have a peacemaker

like that in your family, parish, workplace, school, etc.?

6. When have you rejected good advice (that you later wished you had taken) in favor of your peers?
7. How can you know whether to take someone's advice?
 - check out their background
 - find out if they really care about me
 - check their advice with what the Bible says
 - make sure no one will get hurt if I do what they say
 - other: _____
8. How important is it for Christians to seek counsel from others? How closely does your practice match your principles?
9. Where do you usually go for counsel? What do you do if you don't like what you hear?
10. What problem or situation are you needing advice on today?
11. How can the group pray for you?

Accountability: Beyond Football and the Weather

Topic: Our Need for Correction

Nathan rebukes David

2 Samuel 12, 1-15a (Pg 440)

The LORD sent Nathan to David, and when he came to him, he said: "Judge this case for me! In a certain town there were two men, one rich, the other poor. The rich man had flocks and herds in great numbers. But the poor man had nothing at all except one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He nourished her, and she grew up with him and his children. She shared the little food he had and drank from his cup and slept in his bosom. She was like a daughter to him. Now, the rich man received a visitor, but he would not take from his own flocks and herds to prepare a meal for the wayfarer who had come to him. Instead he took the poor man's ewe lamb and made a meal of it for his visitor." David grew very angry with that man and said to Nathan: "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this merits death! He shall restore the ewe lamb fourfold because he has done this and has had no pity." Then Nathan said to David: "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king of Israel. I rescued you from the hand of Saul. I gave you your lord's house and your lord's wives for your own. I gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were not enough, I could count up for you still more. Why have you spurned the LORD and done evil in his sight? You have cut down Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you took his wife as your own, and him you killed with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah to be your wife.' Thus says the LORD: 'I will bring evil upon you out of your own house. I will take your wives while you live to see it, and will give them to your neighbor. He shall lie with your wives in broad daylight. You have done this deed in secret, but I will bring it about in the presence of all Israel, and with the sun looking down.'" Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan answered David: "The LORD on his part has forgiven your sin: you shall not die. But since you have utterly spurned the LORD by this deed, the child born to you must surely die." Then Nathan returned to his house.



The previous chapter records David's great sin: his adultery with Bathsheba, his attempts to cover up the fact he got her pregnant—ending with his ordering her husband's murder, and then taking Bathsheba as his wife. Now God confronts David, through the prophet Nathan, by using one of the Old Testament's most striking parables.

Optional Ice-Breaker Questions:

- Have you ever been attached to a pet? What was its name?
- What punishment that you received as a child do you still remember? Was it fair?

1. Why did Nathan start with a story?
 - to get David's attention
 - to dramatize his point
 - to disarm David's defenses
 - so that David would incriminate himself
 - because prophets often do that
2. What was the Lord's message through Nathan?
 - "You blew it."
 - "I am angry."
 - "Why didn't you repent?"
 - "It's too late for apologies."

3. Do you think David's confession was sincere? If so, why didn't he do it sooner? What do you think about David's punishment?

4. How do you feel about God's standards for sexual purity? Choose one of the two options in each of the following pairs. God's standards are:
 - *clear* or *unclear*
 - *outdated* or *relevant*
 - *attainable* or *unattainable*
 - *for our good* or *unnecessary*

5. Who do you admire (now) because they were willing to tell you what you needed to hear even though it hurt?
 - my father a teacher
 - my mother a coach
 - my brother a boss
 - my sister a priest
 - a friend other: _____

6. How do you respond when someone corrects or criticizes you?
 - I want to cry.
 - I accept it without comment.
 - I accept it as God's word to me.
 - I get frustrated with my imperfections and mistakes.
 - I get defensive.

- I avoid that person.
- I assume I deserved it.

7. Which of the following is easiest for you? Which is hardest?
 - seeing sin in myself
 - seeing sin in others
 - going to confession
 - confronting others in love
 - receiving an apology
 - loving those who expose my sin

8. If others see something wrong in my life, they:
 - should let me know.
 - better be right.
 - should keep it to themselves.
 - need to be subtle.
 - should show me by example.
 - should also praise me when I do something right.

9. Do you have anyone you can talk to about the most personal things in your life? If not, what can you do to find somebody?

10. How would you feel about giving someone (maybe this group) permission to correct you when you sin?

11. How can this group pray for you?

Accountability: Beyond Football and the Weather

Topic: Our Need for Mentoring

Moses commissions Joshua

Numbers 27, 12-23 (Pg 251)

The LORD said to Moses, "Go up here into the Abarim Mountains and view the land that I am giving to the Israelites. When you have viewed it, you too shall be taken to your people, as was your brother Aaron, because in the rebellion of the community in the desert of Zin you both rebelled against my order to manifest my sanctity to them by means of the water." (This is the water of Meribah of Kadesh in the desert of Zin.) Then Moses said to the LORD, "May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, set over the community a man who shall act as their leader in all things, to guide them in all their actions; that the LORD'S community may not be like sheep without a shepherd." And the LORD replied to Moses, "Take Joshua, son of Nun, a man of spirit, and lay your hand upon him. Have him stand in the presence of the priest Eleazar and of the whole community, and commission him before their eyes. Invest him with some of your own dignity, that the whole Israelite community may obey him. He shall present himself to the priest Eleazar, to have him seek out for him the decisions of the Urim in the LORD'S presence; and as he directs, Joshua, all the Israelites with him, and the community as a whole shall perform all their actions." Moses did as the LORD had commanded him. Taking Joshua and having him stand in the presence of the priest Eleazar and of the whole community, he laid his hands on him and gave him his commission, as the LORD had directed through Moses.



Numbers 27, 12-23

JOSHUA TO SUCCEED MOSES

After 40 years in the wilderness, the Israelites are stationed just across the Jordan River—ready to enter the promised land. The Lord repeats his pronouncement that Moses will not be allowed to enter the land because of an earlier act of disobedience.

Optional Ice-Breaker Questions:

- Who was your favorite priest or church leader when you were growing up? What was special about them?
- What special possession do you want to stay in your family after you die?

1. If you were Moses, how do you think you would have reacted to God's words in verses 12-14?
 - "Nobody's perfect—can't I have another chance?"
 - "I really don't want to die!"
 - "At least I get to see the land."
 - "After all I've done for you, this is what I get?!"
 - "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."
2. What does Moses' response in verses 16-17 say about him?

- He wasn't a whiner.
- He was ready to die.
- His focus was on others' needs.
- He was willing to step aside and let someone else take over.
- He let God dictate the future.

3. Which of the statements in the last question is most true of you? Which one do you most need to work on?
4. What would Moses' successor most need in order to be successful?
 - big feet to fill Moses' sandals
 - wisdom and experience
 - youthful enthusiasm
 - a shepherd's heart
 - military genius
 - the people's respect
 - God's Spirit
 - God's blessing
 - Moses' blessing
5. What would commissioning Joshua before Moses died do for Joshua? For the people? For Moses?
6. When have you lost someone who has been a spiritual leader or shepherd in your life? How did you han-

dle that experience and the transition to a new leader or shepherd?

7. Joshua had been Moses' trusted aide for many years. Who is your "Moses"—the person you look to as a mentor? Who is your "Joshua"—the person you are helping to be all God wants them to be?
8. What does this story say to you about getting older?
 - Life and death are in God's hands.
 - Power to influence the next generation is in my hands.
 - There's something special about touching another person.
 - Older believers aren't "over the hill"; they're on the mountain waiting to enter the promised land.
 - I want to do all I can for my faith community before I'm gone.
9. How are you preparing for the day you will be "taken to your people"? What legacy do you hope to leave behind?
10. How can the group pray for you as you work on that legacy?

Considering today's passage answer the following questions:

1. How do keep yourself accountable? Do you have circle of friends that can tell straight in your face what they think of you? Maybe your wife or even children? Spiritual director?
2. Do you feel that you need to be held accountable to be able to grow either on your spiritual journey or in your human integrity? Is there anything in particular that you would like this group to hold you accountable for?
3. What do you struggle with the most? Have you told anyone about this problem or your personal struggle?
4. What is wrong with stretching the truth for a good cause? Does a good cause sometimes justify rotten means? Is total honesty always the best policy?

Men's Ministry

Men (Section 2 Opt1)

2Samuel23v8-23

Our Need for Support --- David's warriors

Accountability and Mutual Support

David's Warriors (2 Samuel 23, 8-23)

1. Take a moment to reflect on your membership and role in some of the groups and organizations to which you belong, for example: your family, your business, your parish and your community. What is the mission of each of those groups and why do you support them? How would you prioritize your level of support for each of the groups and organizations based on your spiritual, emotional, time and financial commitment to each of them?
2. How does your role in a group (leader, mid-level manager, or part of the rank and file) affect your attitude, loyalty, enthusiasm and level of support? Do you repeatedly find yourself either overly self-confident or lacking in appropriate self-esteem in such a way that it adversely affects your ability to be a team player in working toward a common goal? Are you comfortable in both leadership and follower roles?
3. Discuss times when you have been the leader of a group/team and would have preferred to be a mid-level manager or part of the rank and file, and the times when you have been part of the rank and file or a mid-level manager and wanted to be the leader.
4. What are the qualities you look for in a person that sets them above others and makes them the kind of person you would support and respect as a leader? How have you handled the times when you have had to work under a leader you have had trouble supporting and respecting?
5. How important is it to have respect, support and accountability moving both up and down an organization's chain of command? Discuss some examples of leaders in your life, who like David, have shown you the same gratitude, respect, support and accountability that they have expected of you. Also, discuss some of the ways you show gratitude, respect, support and accountability to those who have worked for you.

St Mary Men's Ministry, 12/22/2007

Accountability

Topic 4: Our Need for Counsel

1 Kings 12:1-25

Seeking counsel

From whom do you seek advice? Friends, intellectual authorities, or people whose judgment you trust? Are they people who will tell you what you want to hear, or people who will challenge your actions and presumptions? Is your answer different depending on whether it is regarding the work, family, or spiritual components of your life?

Receiving advice

Do you seek counsel honestly, or just to make others feel involved? Do you accept unsolicited advice? Are you more open to advice after a failure, or do you try to rectify the situation by yourself?

Evaluating advice

What standards do you use to judge advice? Does your faith help you evaluate advice in the workplace, or do your expectations for family govern your assessment of what occurs in the parish?

Offering counsel

Have you ever offered advice that wasn't followed? Did it affect your performance (for that organization) or willingness to offer advice in the future (to anyone)? Are you more or less willing to offer advice (solicited or not) to your: boss, friend, spouse, parent, or priest?

[Code of Canon Law 212.3: "According to the knowledge, competence, and prestige which they possess, the Christian faithful have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful, without prejudice to the integrity of faith and morals, with reverence toward their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons."]

Questions for Discussion:

Our topic today is “Our Need for Correction.”

2Samuel12v1-15a.

There is no doubt that David needed correction and received it from the prophet, Nathan. The sin which is the focus of today’s passage is not an insignificant sin — it is the sin of David’s life, and it had lasting impact on his life in many different ways.

1. What was David’s sin — in what did it consist? Was it one sin or did it involve several sins? What made it so serious?
2. Nathan tells him a story and then tells David that he is the man in the story. That leads to David admitting his sin. Do you think he would have done so without that meeting with Nathan? Does David’s admission sound wholehearted?
3. David’s role as King played an obvious role in his moral decision-making. Spend some time discussing the role that leadership positions play in moral decision-making today.
4. Today’s passage certainly paints an image of God. What kind of God does today’s reading conjure up in your mind? Is it basically the same or different from the picture of God we get from the New Testament?
5. Nathan was a significant person in David’s life who brought his most serious sin to his attention. Is there a person or are there persons like that in your own life? Your wife, a close friend perhaps? Have you ever played that role for another person?
6. How about the role of correction in the life of your own children? How comfortable are you with that role?
7. How difficult is forgiveness in your life? Forgiveness of others as well as forgiveness of yourself?