

Life Group Lesson - Week of June 11

Toward the end of David's reign, David commanded a census be taken of God's people. It took his commander, Joab, nine months and twenty days to complete the pain-staking task of counting the number of capable warriors 'from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south'. David wanted to know how many were in Israel and he found out that he had over a million capable men ready for war. "But after he had taken the census, David's conscience began to bother him" (2 Samuel 24:10a).

Why was David convicted? At one point, David himself penned these words: "Some nations boast of their chariots and horses, but we boast in the name of the LORD our God" (Psalm 20:7). Why was David now seeking numerical figures when the Lord alone deserved his focus? David didn't need to count on a mighty army to defeat the Lord's battles. He knew that God had given him the victory in the fiercest of times. Like David, in our quest for more, we sometimes forget that everything we have achieved, accomplished, and yes, avoided is because of God's mercy and power.

Read 2 Samuel 24:1-25

Second Samuel 21:1 says the Lord's anger caused David to take the census. First Chronicles 21: 1 says, "Satan rose up against Israel and caused David to take a census." David's census may have been rooted in pride, fear, or in an attempt to reunite the nation. Or it may have been an attempt to regain respect on the heels of a season of dark depression.

David was still living with the consequences of his sin with adultery and murder. In fulfillment to the words of Nathan—"From this time on, your family will live by the sword" (2 Samuel 12:10)—two sons, at different times, had tried to usurp the throne ending in needless bloodshed. Whatever the reason, we must remember God is in ultimate control and God's ways, including His judgments, are perfect and in place for a purpose.

1. How is God to be honored when a census is taken? See **Exodus 30:11-16**.

Since a plague did break out when David commanded the census, we must assume the men counted did not follow the command of Moses and pay a sacred ransom, the half shekel that was to be given to the Lord. An offering given in obedience has a purifying quality to it and makes us right with the Lord (Exodus 30:15). In fact, the Lord says in Exodus 34:20b, "No one may appear before me without an offering." When David realized his sin, he immediately owned it. He confessed his sin before the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings at the very place he saw God about to destroy Jerusalem—on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

2. According to **Genesis 22:1-19** and **2 Chronicles 3:1-2** what is significant about the place of David's offering, Mt. Moriah?
3. Refer to the Plain Truth. Confessing our sin both honors God and shows that we ultimately respect the Lord. So how does confessing our sin before God empower us to respect one another?

God's presence among His people sets His people apart (see Moses' words in Exodus 33:16). How are you making more room for God's presence in your life? (be specific) What has this series 'More' revealed to you about *you*?

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Plain Truth:

Confessing _____ honors God and empowers us to _____ each other.

What can we learn?

- 1. You don't have to _____, when you _____ you _____ to God.**
- 2. Instead of counting, become a person who can be _____ on.**
- 3. Be about what _____ counts.**



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