

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
Fruitfulness on the Frontline  
6 Mouthpiece for truth and justice

*'Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.'* (Isaiah 1:17)

## Welcome

1. Can you remember a time when you got into trouble as a child? What did you do and what were the consequences? Or was one of you siblings the 'naughty one'?!

*In the last session we looked at moulding culture – influencing the way things are done on our frontlines so that they become places where people can better flourish.*

2. Does anyone have any observations to share about the culture of their frontline this week - perhaps something positive or something negative that you noticed for the first time?
3. Did anyone have the opportunity to begin to make a small change to their frontline culture?

*Today, we're looking at being a mouthpiece for truth and justice, speaking up for right living & fair dealings so that things become more in line with God's ways.*

## Word

*In 2 Samuel 11, David, the king of Israel, had done something terrible, breaking three of the Ten Commandments in dramatic fashion. First, he covets another man's wife, as he watches Bathsheba bathe from the*

*vantage point of his palace roof. Secondly, he commits adultery with her, having had her brought to him, and she falls pregnant. Then thirdly, having failed to cover up his part in Bathsheba's pregnancy, he has her husband Uriah killed, in order that he may take Bathsheba to be his own wife. David's ruthless plan succeeded because many people around him simply obeyed orders and did not question his actions. It appeared that he had got away with what he had done. However, after the birth of the child, the Lord sends the prophet Nathan to bring David face-to-face with his wrongdoing.*

## **Read 2 Samuel 12:1-13**

4. Nathan could have found many excuses not to follow the Lord's instruction. If you were Nathan, what are some of the reasons you might have given for not wanting to confront King David?
5. Why do you think Nathan uses a parable to confront David about his actions? Can we learn something from this approach about how we confront issues?
6. How does the injustice in the story that Nathan tells about the rich and the poor man relate to King David's actions?
7. How does David's condemnation of the rich man's greed help him acknowledge and condemn his own actions?
8. What do you think would have happened in King David's life if Nathan had not taken this step of courageous obedience?
9. Nathan speaks with great wisdom and is able to bring King David to the point of realising his own wrongdoing. How might we learn from Nathan's example? What factors might be relevant for us when we are weighing up whether or not to speak out in our own circumstances?
10. What instances of injustice or untruth have you seen on your frontline recently?
11. What are some of the issues that might prevent you from speaking out on your frontline?

12. Do you think that you can have an impact by speaking up on your Frontline?
13. On our frontlines, all of us will have found ourselves in conversations where the person we are talking to is saying something unkind (whether true or not) about someone else. Are there any tactics that you have found useful in these situations that have enabled you to stand up for truth and justice?

## Optional Extra

*David wrote a Psalm after his encounter with Nathan.*

Read Psalm 51

14. Where do you see the pain from David's sin specifically expressed in this psalm?
15. Why is recognising God's love and mercy the important first step of confession? (v 1-2)
16. How does David own up to his sin? (v 3-6)
17. What is the difference between trying harder and God providing a renewed heart? (v 7-11)
18. What role does our effort play in behaviour change?
19. How does David ask God to help him deal with his sin? (v 12)
20. How does David hope to escape God's wrath? On what basis does he hope for restored relationship? (v 13-17)
21. Why does David generalise his prayer to include the whole nation? What does this say about the nature of sin? (v 18-19)
22. Summing up – What does Psalm 51 teach us about how we should deal with our wrongdoing?

## Praying forwards

Spend a few minutes in silent reflection. Think about the injustices and untruths that you see on your frontline

- Is God bringing one particular thing to your attention?

- Like Nathan, might there be things that God is prompting you to do about this and is there any particular wisdom you may need?

Share your reflections and pray together.

## Takeaway Action

Take some time to meditate on Philippians 4:8 this week and ask God what this might mean for your particular frontline:

***‘Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy— think about such things.’***

## 6Ms

**M**odelling godly character

**M**aking good work

**M**inistering grace and love

**M**oulding culture

Being a **M**outhpiece of truth and justice

Being a **M**essenger of the gospel