

Admit Your Mistakes

“I was wrong.”

These could be the most difficult words you ever say!

Do you always admit your mistakes?

Are you in the habit of acknowledging your errors and correcting them?

Or do you try at all costs to make yourself appear right and make everyone else wrong, so that you may maintain your own *“rightness”*?

This is an important question, your Christian growth depends on it and so may your very salvation.

Christians all make mistakes from time to time. They all sin and err in judgement occasionally, the fact they are human makes them prone to stumble.

This is what conversion is all about.

Christians are striving to overcome their human nature and bring their lives into harmony with God’s commandments in every way.

Spiritual growth is the result of acknowledging sin and faults, confessing them before our Creator God and turning from them.

If you refuse to admit mistakes you resist the work of the Holy Spirit, [John 16:8] and miss opportunities for Christian growth.

The prophet Samuel was called by God to anoint two notable men as kings over Israel.

Both of these men were given every opportunity to succeed, for the Creator God was with both of them when they were first appointed to be a king.

Yet one ended up rejected, a failure, even eventually stooping so low as to consult demons about major decisions.

The other was called *“a man after God’s own heart”* [Acts 13:22] and will rule over Israel in the world tomorrow after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, [Ezekiel 37:22-24].

What was the difference between these two men?

One major factor stands out.

King Saul did not truly repent of his mistakes, his acknowledgements of his errors and sins were shallow and insincere.

On the other hand David’s deep, heartrending prayers of genuine repentance are recorded in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, as examples for us.

1 Samuel 10:7 [New King James] *“And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you.”*

Saul was told emphatically that the Creator God was with him, Saul really couldn’t have hoped for a better start to his new role as king.

Yet in the matter of Amalek, Saul made a serious mistake.

1 Samuel 15:3 [New King James] *“Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”*

Very clear instructions from the Creator God. Yet Saul compromised with God’s instructions, fulfilling only part of them, [**1 Samuel 15:8-9**].

Notice that the Creator God put the blame on Saul and the people [**verse 9**] yet when confronted by Samuel, Saul placed the blame **only** on the people, [**verse 15**]. This was a clear case of “*buck-passing*,” I did not do it, it was the people!

Putting the blame on others is a common trait in this world, yet if Saul had been a “man after God’s own heart,” he would have accepted responsibility for his own sin.

When confronted and rebuked by Samuel, Saul’s confession appeared flimsy.

1 Samuel 15:30 [New King James] *“Then he said, ‘I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD your God.’”*

Saul’s major concern was **not** the gravity of his sin, but his image before the elders and the people.

Was King David without sin?

No, he sinned and made mistakes, certain of which are recorded in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, for us today.

In this David didn’t differ from Saul, his predecessor, but it was David’s willingness to admit his mistakes, deeply and genuinely repent of them and turn from them distinguished him from Saul in a great way.

On one occasion King David allowed Satan to influence him to take a census of the people of Israel. To number and train all the men for active armed service as soldiers.

1 Chronicles 21:1-5 [New King James] *“Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel. So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, ‘Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it.’ And Joab answered, ‘May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are. But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord’s servants? Why then does my lord require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?’ Nevertheless the king’s word prevailed against Joab. Therefore Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came to Jerusalem. Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. All Israel had one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and Judah had four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword.”*

It was David’s curiosity that was spurred on by arrogance, of his faith in his own strength to defend the nation, rather than faith in the Creator God.

This is why the Creator God was displeased [**verse 7**], and corrected Israel.

1 Chronicles 21:8 [New King James] *“So David said to God, ‘I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly.’”*

As soon as the Creator God showed David this displeasure, he acknowledged his sin and lack of faith in God.

King David was then given a choice of what the Creator God's correction would entail, [1 Chronicles 21:9-12]. King David took full responsibility on himself and submitted to the mercy he knew the Creator God had shown him in the past.

If we feel self-sufficient and put confidence in ourselves apart from the Creator God, we soon fall to Satan's schemes to destroy us and others who look to us as examples of Christian living.

The sin of King David, who should have been an example to all the nation as king, to put their trust in the Creator God, was so serious in God's eyes that 70,000 Israelite men died as a result.

The very thing that King David had put confidence in was totally decimated before his eyes. Note the number of "men who drew the sword" in **verse 5**, 21% of his army was killed at one time and the destruction continued [verse 15].

1 Chronicles 21:17 [New King James] *"And David said to God, 'Was it not I who commanded the people to be numbered? I am the one who has sinned and done evil indeed; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and my father's house, but not against Your people that they should be plagued.'"*

King David took full responsibility for this event, and obeyed exactly what the Creator God commanded him to do, [1 Chronicles 21:18-26].

The result of this incident was for King David's fear and awe of the Creator God to increase, [1 Chronicles 21:30] and to begin to build a temple to honour the Creator God, [1 Chronicles 22:1-5].

The details of another of King David's sins are recorded in –

2 Samuel 11:1-4 [New King James] *"It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, 'Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?'" Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house."*

To make things even worse, King David used his authority to have Bathsheba's husband murdered on the battlefield, [2 Samuel 11:14-17].

David took Bathsheba to be his wife but the Creator God was greatly displeased with King David, [2 Samuel 11:27].

The Creator God sent his prophet Nathan to King David after what must have been over nine months to reveal to him his great sin, [2 Samuel 12:1-15]. Note David condemned himself in his own words.

Two Psalms written by King David relate to these incidents in his life, [Psalms 32:1-5 and Psalms 51:1-13], both show the deep and humble repentant attitude of mind.

Admitting our sins before the Creator God is the first step we must take, we cannot expect Him to forgive us for sins we have not confessed, [Proverbs 28:13].

Then and **only** then can we declare with King David our thankfulness to a merciful God, [Psalms 32:1-2].

Psalms 51:1-15 is an eternal witness to what made King David a "man after God's own heart."

This Psalm is a fitting outline of how to truly repent before the Creator God when we sin, make it your personal prayer of repentance.

This willingness to admit our sins is **not** a negative characteristic, but rather a positive qualification absolutely required of those who seek to serve Jesus Christ.

For every child of the Creator God, the entire process of admitting sins, turning from them and correcting our lives to be in harmony with that of our Saviour Jesus Christ, yields spiritual growth.

Romans 3:23 [New King James] *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”*

None of us will go through life without sinning, and we must allow the Creator God to correct us.

Hebrews 12:5-11 [New King James] *“And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”*

Accepting God’s correction will lead to maturing as Christians.

What we have been studying is a life-or-death matter.

We will **never** be allowed in the Kingdom of God, that is God’s created family, unless we admit our sins and accept the loving discipline that the Creator God will extend to us.

Jeremiah 10:23-24 [New King James] *“O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. O LORD, correct me, but with justice; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing.”*

This makes a very effective basis for a prayer to our Creator God and Saviour, one that He will accept and act on to bring us to spiritual maturity.