

Wednesday, August 29, 2018
Wednesday night couple's groups
Week 2
"From this day forward"
Small group questions

FROM THIS DAY FORWARD—2

Main Idea:

Having a healthy marriage starts with seeking God together, as God is your "one" and your spouse is your "two".

- **What's one idea from the message that really stood out to you? Why did this idea grab your attention?**
- **God is woven into every area of our lives. How would you like to see Him woven even more into your marriage?**
- **Read and discuss Psalm 10:4-6, and 2 Chronicles 7:14.**

Points to help explain:

- God began with specific instructions to the nation as it faced future hardships (7:13–14). There will be times of **no rain**, **locusts**, and **plague** (7:13). In his prayer, Solomon anticipated that **drought** (6:26–27), **locusts** (6:28–31), and **plague** (6:28–31) along with other difficulties would come upon Israel.

What were the Israelites to do when God chastised them?

- First, the identity of the nation is emphasized. Israel is called **my people** (7:14a). This terminology recalled Solomon's repeated use of '**your people**' in his dedicatory prayer (6:14–42). Throughout the Old Testament this terminology reflected the special covenantal bond between God and Israel (see Exod. 3:7, 10; Lev. 26:12; 1 Chr. 17:6, 7, 9, 10; Jer. 31:33; Hos. 1:9; 2:23). The nation is also **called by my name** (7:14a). Once again, the covenantal character of the language is evident (see Isa. 43:7; Jer. 14:9; Dan. 9:18–19). These instructions were not for the nations of the earth, but for those who were joined by covenant to God. All modern uses of this passage must recognize this limitation.
- Second, these instructions employ four terms to indicate the intensity and sincerity with which the covenant people must yearn for help from God. Reliance on external performances of temple rituals had led the nation of Israel into false confidence (see Isa. 1:10–15; Jer. 7:1–15; Amos 5:21–24; Mic. 3:9–12). These instructions make it clear that the people must go far beyond outward ritualism in four ways.

1) The people must **humble themselves** (7:14a). For the Chronicler this meant they were to recognize sin and acknowledge their utter dependence on God (see *Introduction: 18) Humility*).

2) They were to **pray** (7:14). This generic term is often associated as it is here with calling on God for help in times of need.

3) The people of Israel were to '**seek my face**' (7:14). The Chronicler used the expression 'to seek' many times with the connotations of worship and pursuit of God's favor.

4) The covenant people must **turn from their wicked ways** (7:14b). Devotion to God must demonstrate itself in changed lives. The Chronicler referred to the concept of repentance or 'turning' from sin and toward God on a number of occasions.

- The response from God to such sincere devotion would be as expected. He promised that he would **hear from heaven and will forgive** (7:14b). This language recalls similar repeated phrases in Solomon's prayer (see 6:14–42). Moreover, God promised to **heal their land** (7:14). In situations where the sins of the people brought disaster to the land and its natural inhabitants, sincere repentance would bring healing.¹
- **What has been your time of chastening or discipline from God in your marriage? How did you respond?**
- **How are you demonstrating the values of humility, praying, seeking, and repentance in your marriage?**
- **Praying together as a couple is important. What are some of the benefits you've experienced of praying together? If you are not praying together, what's preventing you from doing so?**

ACTION STEPS:

- **What's one thing you will do this week as a result of something you learned from this message?**

Take steps to seek God with your spouse this week by reading the following Bible passages together.

- **John 1:1-18**
- **James 4:1-8**
- **Proverbs 3:1-6**

¹ Pratt, R. L., Jr. (2006). [*1 and 2 Chronicles: A Mentor Commentary*](#) (pp. 341-343). Fearn, Tain, Ross-shire, Great Britain: Mentor.