

How the Mighty have Fallen

During the fall of 2006, news came that Ted Haggard, the pastor of a great church in Colorado, had been exposed in areas of sin. I remember being filled with sorrow at the news. I didn't know him personally and had only heard him speak once. But for him and his family, for the Body of Christ as a whole, I was grieved. At that time I pointed our church family to David's words in 2 Samuel chapter 1, verse 25 which reads, "How the mighty have fallen in battle. Jonathan lies slain on your heights."

This week, I became aware of the fall, the sin of Todd Bentley. He is the young minister who has been leading the Lakeland Outpouring in Florida. He has now stepped down from ministry because of his action to separate from and divorce his wife as well as reported inappropriate relationships with ladies on his staff. The full extent of his sin has not yet been exposed. Perhaps it never will be. However, we do know God's character in Todd Bentley was not deep enough to sustain the anointing and gifts.

The question for us is "How should we respond to this or any other sin discovered in the Body of Christ?" "How should we respond to sin found in the church we are committed to, or in our fellow Christians whoever that may be?" To that end, I want to repeat some thoughts I shared in 2006.

- 1- David had sorrow over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. He wrote a song lamenting their loss. "*How the Mighty are fallen in battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights.*" "*The weapons of war have perished!*" (2 Sam. 1:25, 27) Sorrow is a Godly response to the Mighty who fall in battle. Godly sorrow is always called for when a believer stumbles or a leader falls.
- 2- Though he had been wronged, David had no judgment against Saul. He didn't say, "I knew it would happen". There was no attitude of "he deserved it". There was only grief. When you hear about sin in Todd Bentley, other leaders or your neighbor, do not pass judgment. You do not know all the facts, and it's God's job to judge. Rather, take some time to fly your flag at half-mast. Please, don't get into conversations that poison God's Kingdom or His people. Many stories and tidbits of the wrong will be spoken. God in us is grieving. Let's grieve with those who grieve.
- 3- When I think of my own life, I cannot help but say, "But for the grace of God, there go I". Isn't that true for all of us? We are not guiltless or free from the sins of our flesh. We stand because of God's grace. This is not the time to point fingers. It's time for each of us to kneel before the One to whom we will all give an account.
- 4- Now what? I think this is a very good time to recommit our own lives to purity in both word and deed. Jesus is our Righteousness. His Spirit within prompts us to put aside every weight and sin that so easily besets us. "*Therefore... let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*" (Heb 12:1-2)