

Thank you for your interest in the “*Folks Like Us*” Bible studies by Fran Sciacca. Whether you’re using them for your own spiritual growth and journey, or as a resource for your small group, Sunday school, or homeschool program, you’ll soon discover why these studies originally sold over 600,000 copies in their print editions. The recent decision by the publisher to discontinue print editions and to return the publishing rights back to Fran has given him the freedom to make the nearly 70 individual character studies available to you...at no cost.

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Other great resources on fransciacca.com

Now that you’ve begun to explore the Bible study resources developed by Fran Sciacca, you will almost certainly benefit from the other things that he has made available:

- **“*The Road to Shalom*” podcast** – thought-provoking and thoroughly biblical, Fran explores what the Bible calls “shalom,”—the way things are *supposed* to be in God’s Kingdom, why they’re not, and how to restore them. All three seasons are available on the website.
- ***Biblical literacy courses*** – Three, 13-week Bible courses covering the entire Bible. Includes individual course books, audio, and optional animated slide supplements. Course books and animated slide supplements may be purchased on the web store.
- **“*What’s Wrong With the World?*”** – A 14-part video series exploring the questions, “*What is the gospel, and does it really matter?*” and “*What is a disciple, and what does one look like?*” Each episode includes a small group handout as well as supplemental leader’s notes. You may take the series for a “test drive” and purchase the series.
- **“*Knot or Noose? - Recovering the Mystery of Marriage*”** – A 9-part video series for singles, engaged, or married couples exploring marriage from a radical perspective. Instead of trying to figure out how to get God into marriage, this series will guide you into how to place marriage into the center of the larger redemptive plan of God. This conference has been presented live throughout the U.S. in a multitude of different settings. Each episode includes everything needed for a small group. You may take the series for a “test drive” and order the series.



FOLKS Like Us

DAVID

“Dealing with guilt.”

Timeless truths from our ancient past,
for a journey with God in the modern era.

Fran Sciacca

“Folks Like Us” — an introduction

Over the years I’ve written and published a number of Bible studies that collectively have sold well over a half-million copies. They were forged, most of them, in the furnaces of pain, doubt, and loneliness. Maybe that’s why they were well-used, they touched people where they hurt most.

Recently, my publisher decided that they no longer wanted to handle the books that contained these 60 or so individual studies. So, I’ve decided to make them available to any who might benefit from them. At no cost.

I have always believed that because God thought it best to become human in the Incarnation, that perhaps “incarnational truth” was His preferred method of revealing Himself and His purposes to us. I suppose that’s where the basic genre of these studies originated. I wanted to provide believers with Bible studies rooted in our ancestral past. The lives of men and women, who it turns out, are “folks just like us” in so many ways.

So, please take your time and work slowly through as many of these studies as you care to do... there’s a lot of them! And may God use the combination of the struggles and insights of your *ancient* brothers and sisters, combined with those of mine, your modern brother, to help you in your spiritual journey. That is the goal of this project.

Warmly in The Lamb,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fran Sciacca". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fran Sciacca
Birmingham, AL

DAVID

“Dealing with guilt.”

A **BIDING PRINCIPLE** – Deep discouragement over our sin is true guilt, intended by God to lead us to the freedom of forgiveness, never to the prison of despair.

"Any guilt suggested by the judgment of man is a false guilt if it does not receive inner support by the judgment of God." — Paul Tournier

David, the second king of Israel, scripture tells us, was "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22). When he was near fifty years old, he fell into a deep sin in a moment of weakness and terrible judgment. For almost an entire year, he refused to deal with the nagging voice of God in his soul. Within that time window, in an attempt to “bury” his sin of adultery, he added sin to sin, becoming a liar, a thief, and even a murderer. The consequences of these choices long outlived David, but in his lifetime, God eventually restored David to a place of fellowship and spiritual freedom, in response to David’s broken and repentant heart.

KEY SCRIPTURE: 2 Samuel 11-12 and Psalm 51

I. STUDY QUESTIONS...Dealing With *True* Guilt

A. The *Wrong* Response to True Guilt – *Judas Iscariot*

1. Read and ponder the Scriptures below that deal with Judas, Jesus’ betrayer. See if you can see a *pattern* in Judas' life, and explain why his response to true guilt could be what the Apostle Paul called "worldly sorrow" in 2 Corinthians 7:8-13.
 - a. John 12:3-6
 - b. John 13:21-30
 - c. John 18:1-3
 - d. Matthew 27:1-5

B. The *Right* Response to True Guilt – *King David*

1. As you saw in Question 1, Paul mentioned two types of "sorrow" in 2 Corinthians 7:8-13 as possible responses to true guilt. What were the two, and how are they different?

2. True guilt is a *motivating* force from God. Although it is designed to drive us *toward* God, it can also drive us *away* from Him—if we so choose. Examine David's involvement with Bathsheba and the progression of sin that resulted as he was driven further away from God.

SCRIPTURE	DAVID'S SIN
2 Samuel 11:2-3 (see also Matt. 5:27-28)	
2 Samuel 11:4	
2 Samuel 11:7	
2 Samuel 11:13	
2 Samuel 11:14-17	
2 Samuel 11:25	

3. At what point in this downward spiral should David have dealt with his guilt? Why?
4. Do you see something insightful in Psalm 32:1-4 about David's *quickness* to confess at a different time in his life?

5. Read Isaiah 1:18 and 59:1-2 slowly. In light of the message of these verses, how would you summarize the *differences* between "godly sorrow" and "worldly sorrow," as manifested in the lives of David and Judas? (See also the statement in Question 2 above.)

II. STUDY QUESTIONS...Dealing With *False Guilt*

False guilt is a feeling and a burden imposed on us from *outside* us. True freedom from these powerful and destructive feelings will come only through our dependence on God and His Word.

1. In dealing with feelings of guilt, we must constantly remember that *we* are responsible for our thoughts. The things we allow to make themselves home in our minds. Thoughtfully read the scriptures below, and try to draw a principle from each of them for handling guilt *feelings* that are not coming from true guilt.
 - a. Philippians 4:8 –
 - b. Ephesians 6:13-14 –
 - c. John 8:31-32 –

2. In the chart below, list the potential sources of *feelings* of condemnation and guilt on the left side, and then on the right side, write-out what God says in His Word.

Possible Source of Feelings of Guilt and Condemnation	What God Says
John 3:19-24 –	1 John 2:1 –
2 Corinthians 10:18 –	Galatians 2:20 –
Romans 14:10-13 –	Romans 2:1 –

Possible Source of Feelings of Guilt and Condemnation	What God Says
James 4:11-12 –	Matthew 7:3-5 –
Revelation 12:10 –	Hebrews 2:14-15 –
Job 1:6-11 –	Colossians 2:15 –
Matthew 10:28 –	Romans 8:31-34 –
Hebrews 9:27 –	Colossians 1:22 –

3. Looking at the two passages below, who bears the responsibility to reveal and convict us of sin? What "tools" does He use?

Philippians 3: 13-16 –

John 14:25-26 and 16:13-14 –

4. Although James 1:5 and 3:17 are describing God’s wisdom in general, the descriptors certainly apply to what we can expect the Spirit's conviction of sin to “be like.” Describe in your own words, what these passages say about what we can expect when it’s really *God* who’s speaking to us about our sin.
5. Is there an area of your life where you are responding to the Spirit's conviction over true guilt with "worldly sorrow" instead of with "godly sorrow” (as you now understand the difference)? What do you need to do, based on what you’ve learned?
6. Is there an area in your life where you are struggling with what you now know to be *false guilt*—being accused and condemned by sources other than God? What do you need to do, based on what you’ve learned?

SCRIPTURE MEMORY (optional)

- Freedom from condemnation – Romans 8:1