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- ***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.
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# FOLKS Like Us

NATHAN

The Biblical Alternative to “Unfriending”

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

# NATHAN

## *The Biblical Alternative to “Unfriending”*

**A** **BIDING PRINCIPLE** – When the Heavenly Father seeks to confront His children with a difficult truth about their lives, He normally uses someone from the same family—His—the family of God. We sometimes need to have the courage to serve as God's spokesperson when He clearly calls us to do so, but to confront that person with love and godly motives.

*“Love can be every bit as blunt as hostility. We beat around the bush, not because we're tactful, but because we're cowards.”*

” – John White

**K**ing David's most infamous sin, probably the one he regretted most, occurred in the privacy of the palace bedroom as he took another man's wife into his arms. It was a sin that grew from lust to adultery to conspiracy to murder. But it was also a sin that did not go unnoticed *or* unaddressed by his heavenly Father.

God chose someone close to David, a prophet named Nathan, to confront his king with this sin. This encounter and the fruit it bore in the heart and life of David are a strong testimony to the power of God-initiated confrontation among those in the community of faith. The name "Nathan" comes from a Hebrew word that means "to give." Sometimes the greatest gift we can give a friend is the painful truth about himself or herself, but to also wrap it in profound sensitivity.

**KEY SCRIPTURE:** 2 Samuel 11:1- 12:25; Psalm 51

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### **STUDY QUESTIONS...**

1. Read and marinate a little in 2 Samuel 7:1-3, 12:24-25, and 1 Chronicles 29:29. Based on these verses, how deep do you think David and Nathan's relationship was? Explain.
2. Read over David's sin again in 2 Samuel 11:1-5,14-16. Do you see any evidence in these verses to suggest that Nathan was aware of David's sin *before* he confronted him in 2 Samuel 12:1-14? What does this signify?
3. Look at 2 Samuel 11:5,26-27 and 12:1. Nearly a year had elapsed between David's sin and Nathan's confrontation. Why do you think Nathan hadn't gone to him earlier?

4. Look back over your responses to questions 1 and 3. There are a number of really significant principles about confronting those we love in these scriptures. What principles do *you* see?
  
5. Psalm 51 provides us with a sort of “page out of David’s diary” after he was confronted by Nathan. It seems like *God* was already active in the heart and mind of David during the time period between his sin and his encounter with Nathan. What do you see God perhaps doing?
  - a. What insight about the “best time” to confront a friend does this add to the opening sentence of 2 Samuel 12:1?
  
6. A legitimate question that we should have regarding this whole idea of confronting one another is, “Who *should* I confront, and who *shouldn't* I confront?” Obviously God needs to be the one prompting us, like He did with Nathan. But, there are also some broad principles in Scripture that can help us determine which situations we should even begin to *consider* becoming involved in. What answers to the issues of who, when, and how to confront can you glean from the following passages?
  - a. Proverbs 26:17 –
  
  - b. Matthew 18:15-17 –
  
  - c. James 5:19-20 –
  
7. Another question that our hearts raise in regard to confrontation is, “*Why* should I confront someone I love in the first place?” If we fail to ask this question, it is likely we will either fail to confront, or make matters worse by confronting. Read over the following four clusters of verses carefully. What answers to this “why” question can you get from each cluster?
  - a. Leviticus 19:17; Ezekiel 33:6-8; Acts 20:26-27 –

- b. Proverbs 10:17; Titus 1:13 –
  
  - c. Proverbs 15:10; James 5:20 –
  
  - d. Hebrews 3:12-13 –
8. Using Scripture as your guide:
- a. What is *my* responsibility toward those who've sinned against me? (Matthew 18:15-17).
  
  - b. What is my responsibility toward someone *I've* sinned against? (Matthew 5:23-24).
9. How should I view the one I'm confronting? (Proverbs 27:6; Ezekiel 34:16; 2 Thessalonians 3:15).
10. Paul provides us with some really clear guidelines about the process of confronting someone we love with the truth of his or her sin in Galatians 6:1-3. Read these verses carefully, and then paraphrase what Paul is saying about confronting a friend.
11. How someone responds to *being* confronted can reveal a lot about that person. What do the following scriptures say about this? (Proverbs 9:8-9; 13:1; 23:9).
12. Take a few minutes to look back over what you've studied and learned in this study on David and Nathan. Then, honestly search your own heart and ask each of the following questions of yourself:

- a. Has God brought to mind a fellow believer in your life who He is asking you to confront with the truth regarding either a sin or a "blind spot" that is hurting that person or others? If so, how can you go about it in a way that will be private and not interrupted? (This is *not* something to be done via text or email!)
  
- b. Are *you* approachable and teachable about your own life? How have you responded to correction in the past? Ask a trusted friend (*not* a spouse) if he or she perceives you as an approachable person. Be open to God as you take this step. It may very well turn out to be a confrontation in itself!
  
- c. Is there at least one other person in your life right now, other than a spouse or dating partner, who has total liberty to be a "Nathan" to you? If not, will you pray and begin to seek one? Who might that person be?

### SCRIPTURE MEMORY (optional)

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- The *need* for confrontation – Hebrews 3:12-13
- The *goal* of confrontation – Galatians 6:1

### OPTIONAL

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There are a number of confrontations recorded for us in the Bible. Some are more detailed than others, but they can all provide further insight into this subject. If you are interested, here is a list of a few of them:

- Samuel and Saul (1 Samuel 15)
- Jesus and Peter (Mark 8:27-33)
- Paul and Peter (Galatians 2:11-21)