



Small Group Study Guide
SERMON: When Scandal Meets Mercy
Redemption's Rogues: Tamar, Rahab and Bathsheba
December 7, 2025 | CrossPointe Church
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INTRODUCTION

Matthew's genealogy places scandal at the center of salvation history to show that God's redeeming work reaches into our worst places. Using Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba, PT traces how redemption buys back dignity, interrupts cycles, re-anchors identity, and rewrites destiny. His sermon calls the church to protective action, honest confession, courageous repair, and radical welcome so the manger's mercy can meet the desperate, the marginalized, and the wounded.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- Ephesians 1:7 — Redemption through Christ's blood: mechanism, scope, and motive of redemption.
- Matthew 1:1–17 — Genealogy of Jesus: lists ancestors including Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba to show the Messiah's line includes scandal, grace and redemption.
- Genesis 38 — Tamar's story: widowhood, broken promises, Tamar's disguise and claim on Judah, birth of Perez (line to David). Themes: desperation, survival choices, restoration.
- Joshua 2 — Rahab's story: a marginalized woman hides Israel's spies, expresses faith, uses a scarlet cord; she and her household are spared and later included in Israel. Themes: faith from the margins, mercy before merit.
- 2 Samuel 11–12 — Bathsheba and David: king's summons, abuse of power, cover-up, Uriah's death, Nathan's rebuke, David's repentance. Themes: coercion, communal complicity, costly repentance.
- 1 Corinthians 6:11 — "Such were some of you..." — reminder that many in the church were once living under scandal but have been redeemed.
- Revelation 21:5 — "Behold, I make all things new" — ultimate promise that God rewrites histories.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the three stories (Tamar, Rahab, Bathsheba) felt most like your story or someone you know, and why? (Genesis 38; Joshua 2; 2 Sam 11–12)
2. PT said, "*Redemption buys back dignity.*" What does that look like in a practical, relational sense for someone in our group? (Eph. 1:7)
3. Where have you seen small cracks become canyons in your life—what started small and became serious? How might confession have changed the course earlier? (PT used Chernobyl analogy)
4. How does Rahab's example challenge our tendency to let reputation determine who receives mercy? (Joshua 2; sermon: "*Reputation is a lousy résumé for mercy.*")
5. The sermon distinguishes vertical (Christ pays the price) and horizontal (confession, accountability, restitution) aspects of redemption. Which horizontal step is the hardest for you, and why?

6. PT urged one practical act toward repair: “one coffee, one call, one invitation” to someone we quietly exclude. Who might you contact this week, and what will you say? (Sermon challenge)
7. How does Matthew placing scandal in Jesus’ genealogy change your understanding of who is welcome at God’s table? (Matt. 1; Rev. 21:5)
8. Consider Nathan confronting David (2 Sam. 12). How should the church practice loving confrontation that leads to repentance without shaming the vulnerable?
9. For those who have been harmed by power: what concrete supports would you want from a church community? How can we offer them?

PASTOR’S BEST QUOTES

- *“Matthew’s list is not trivia — he names scandalous people because Jesus’ family line is a testimony: God redeems scandal and rewrites lineage.”*
- *“Minor issues left unchecked often lead to significant consequences.”*
- *“Redemption buys back dignity—it restores a name, not a label.”*
- *“Reputation is a lousy résumé for mercy.”*
- *“Stop pretending your closet is empty. Confess your compromise to the only One that matters.”*

ACTION PROMPTS - practical next steps.

- Confession: Spend 10 minutes in private prayer this week naming one truth you’ve hidden; bring it to God and to one trusted person for accountability.
- Reach-out: Do “one awkward thing” — invite someone you have quietly excluded to coffee, lunch, or a church event this week.
- Repair step: If you’ve hurt someone, identify one concrete restitution step you can take in the next seven days (apology, restitution, counseling referral) and tell a trusted leader.
- Protection plan: As a group, identify one way your small group will better protect and welcome survivors (e.g., training, a survivors’ advocate contact, etc.).
- Scripture practice: Read one of the core passages this week (choose Genesis 38, Joshua 2, or 2 Samuel 11–12) and journal what God highlights about redemption in that story.

CLOSING PRAYER (use to end your time) *“Lord Jesus, we come with closets open and closed, with scars and silence. Thank You that the manger announces a God who enters our mess to redeem. Give us courage to confess, wisdom to repair, and compassion to protect the vulnerable. Make us a church that believes survivors, welcomes the marginalized, and refuses reputation-management. Help each person here to grow in faith, lean into their small group where they are known, and invite others to join us on Sundays. Meet every need we have named; make all things new. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

PLEASE TAKE A GROUP PICTURE AND TAG PT and Tabatha Pankey ON FACEBOOK !!!