

The Story: “The Trials of a King”The Story, Ch. 12

Pearl: Moving quickly to confession.

Function: To move worshippers to realize that we become careless, not even always realizing our sin and we sin thereby going to confession and seeking restoration with God.

David, the conquering hero King of Israel, was in a time of ease. Things were going well for him and his nation. They were winning their battles. It was a high time and it was spring. It was in this time of relative ease that David fell, and how very great was his fall.

1. As David was strolling on the roof of his palace he noticed a woman nearby bathing. He had someone find out who this woman was and then had her brought to him. He learned she was Bathsheba, the wife of a soldier named Uriah: he was a Hittite. Uriah was a soldier in David’s army. David seduced Bathsheba and then sent her back to her home. She soon found herself to be pregnant. King David was the father.
2. She reported this to King David. So he began to take charge of the situation, in all of the wrong ways. He arranged for Uriah to be brought back from the battles and hoped that Uriah would sleep with his wife Bathsheba and then it would appear that Uriah was the father.
 - a. It turned out that Uriah was a very upright man. He was a loyal and devout soldier who would not go to his own wife because his fellow soldiers were not also able to do so. He alone was given a leave so he insisted on refraining from the pleasures of reunion with his own wife! Here was a man of restraint and self-control. Here was a man of exemplary commitment!
 - b. David even tried one more time to arrange a reunion between Uriah and Bathsheba by getting him drunk and suggesting he visit with her. Uriah, even in his compromised state, slept at the gate of his house so

as to identify with his comrades who were sleeping outside on the fields of battle.

- c. So David arranged for Uriah to be placed at the front lines, the most dangerous point, and indeed he was killed. After Bathsheba finished mourning for her husband, David took her in as his wife.

It was at this point that the prophet Nathan went to King David and confronted him in a marvelous way by using a hypothetical story. He told the King a story of a rich man who took a poor man's precious lamb to slaughter for a feast because he didn't want to destroy one of his own animals. Nathan dramatically told this story to the King and as expected David was incensed at the injustice of this act. King David's anger was kindled and he actually said to Nathan: "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity" (II Sam. 12.5). Nathan then said to the King: "You are the man!"

1. Nathan further went on to say: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight?" (II Sam. 12.7-9).
2. What could David do? He was found out! He was caught!
 - a. David immediately admitted to Nathan: **"I have sinned against the Lord."**
 - b. There were no rationalizations. David played no blame games. He pointed no fingers.
 - c. There were no "damage control task force" mobilized. David immediately confessed. He confessed to God. He admitted that he was wrong.
 - i. From Psalm 51 we get a detailed account of David's confession to the Lord: **"Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment"** (51.4).

- ii. Indeed, there were other victims who David sinned against—Bathsheba—Uriah—the army commander who he conspired with.
- 3. There were significant human casualties of his sin but ultimately David’s sins were against God. When we sin we really sin against the Lord. This is because sin involves operating in opposition to the life-giving and life-sustaining impulses of life as created by the Source of Life, the Lord God.
 - a. I’ll say it again; when we sin, we offend the Lord. In the end, we ultimately offend the Lord.
- 4. The proper thing to do is to do exactly what David did: **Go to confession! Admit; confess.**

Like King David, we become careless. Most of us do not commit adultery and then murder to cover it up. But we put down our guard and we sin. We slip and do things or say things that we don’t really mean. We may not even realize that we said something but we did and our witness was compromised. I recently became frustrated and blurted out “I don’t care,” when in fact I do care. I don’t even remember saying those words. But I am told that I did. I will sometimes say that off-handedly, but not really meaning it. For I do care.

- 1. I have to admit: “I am the man!” You are the man; you are the woman; you are the boy; you are the girl.
- 2. We become careless. We slip. Our witness is compromised.
 - a. My friend, Ben Quintana, told me it is what he calls the “Yo-Yo Effect.” He reminded me of how we used to play with yo-yos and would work very hard to get it all wound up just right so that it would function properly. Then sometimes it would unravel and everything we had worked for was undone. That is how it is with our witness. We work very hard to get it to be good. We are seen as a decent person. Then we slip somehow and it is all undone. It is easy for our witness to come undone but much harder to get it back to where we want it.

Here is what must be done. Like King David, we should go directly to confession. It all begins with restoring our standing with God. It begins with restoring our relationship with the Lord.

1. When stuff is pointed out to you that needs to be changed or corrected, go directly to confession. As it goes in a popular board game: “Do not pass ‘Go’”; “do not collect \$200”; **go directly to confession!**
2. It is this kind of response which shows the Lord that we have a heart for him. King David had a big heart for God. Even though he fell very far, he was restored because he fell before the Lord and humbly admitted his failure.

(Invitation to Communion)

Communion gives us the opportunity to do this very thing. Communion is the place where we can be restored again. It is the Table of Grace. We come to it humbly aware of our great need and total dependence on God for life. Come to the Table of the Lord today and be restored. Indeed all of us have sinned. It is the place to reconnect to the Lord. It is the place of reunion with God. It is also the place of reunion with other people.