

## 13. You are the man!

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Confrontation and being confronted are kinds of things we'd like to avoid if it is all possible. If you are a type of person who would like to confront others on a regular basis, either you are far more godly than anyone of us here or you are full of yourself.

Tonight we are going to witness the finest confrontation ever recorded in the OT by a prophet Nathan to king David who has been trying to dodge the eyes of God for about a year.

However, God's man may get into sin, but he will not stay in sin. That is what distinguishes God's man from the worldly carnal man. A sheep may fall into the mud, but he will struggle out of it as soon as he can, but a pig will stay in the mud and enjoy it.

### A. 12 MONTHS OF MISERY

David's sinful deed was done. The growing baby in his pregnant bride was now a mute reminder of that fateful spring night when adultery stained the king's record. Not only adultery but hypocrisy, deception, murder, and a cowardly cover-up.

No doubt, in the aftermath of David's crime, eyebrows were raised, two and two were put together, and scandalous whispers buzzed throughout the palace. But not one charge was laid against the king, not one finger of judgment pointed his way. Even so, David was hardly free. A far harsher prosecutor kept him bound in a strait-jacket of guilt – his conscience. The Greek philosopher, Polybius, once said, "There is no witness so dreadful, no accuser so terrible as the conscience that dwells in the heart of every man." And David was feeling the full scorn of his accuser within.

For about a year, David lived in misery. He conducted the same affairs of state as before, met with the same people, kept the same schedule. Externally, nothing changed. Yet on the inside, everything changed. The memory of his sin hounded him during the day and haunted him at night. During this time, nowhere do we find any prayers or psalms that were done by David. He expresses the deep anguish he had in his heart after he was confronted by God's man Nathan in Psalm 51:

*Psalms 51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me.*

Riddled with guilt, David began to deteriorate physically.

*Psalms 32:3-4 When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah*

However, nothing could be compared to the agony of the silence from God. During that one year, the heavens were shut against David. For the first time, David knew what it was like to feel hopeless, desperate, and utterly alone isolated from God.

The devil never tips his hand in temptation. He always gets us to be in the front while he tempts us, but he always deserts us at the end.

These are the wages that sin pays. Despite his suffering, David hardened his heart and refused to confess his sin for a year, until the moment of truth came to him.

## B. NATHAN'S PARABLE

*2 Samuel 12:1-6 Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds. 3 But the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. 4 And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfar- ing man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and pre- pared it for the man who had come to him." 5 So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! 6 And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."*

What do you get out of this?

David wouldn't listen to the conviction of the Holy Spirit or his conscience. Now God will send someone else to speak to David. Yet no one should presume that God would speak to the unrepentant sinner forever.

*Genesis 6:3 And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."*

When we hear or sense the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we must respond to it immediately, because it might not always be there.

The story stirred David's own memories of being a poor shepherd and how he had loved his sheep. It also unleashed emotions he had bound and gagged in his efforts to live with his guilt – emotions such as compassion, zeal for justice, anger at evil.

David immediately passed a sentence on the guilty man of Nathan's story. David shows that we often try to rid our guilty conscience by passing judgment on someone else.

Our sins look horrible when someone else is committing them. But, if I'm committing them, it doesn't look really that bad. Because I'm very generous to myself. Very gra- cious. It would be like asking God to give them justice, but mercy to me for the same sin.

The Mosaic Law required the rich man to pay back four sheep for the one he stole according to Exodus 22:1. But that punishment was too lenient for the rich man in David's thought. In passing judgment on the rich man, David had issued his own sentence. David knew the words of the Bible, but he was keeping a distance from the Author at this point.

It is a story that will reveal David as though he were looking in a mirror. The Word of God is a mirror that reveals us as we really are.

## C. THE CONFRONTATION AT ITS FINEST

*2 Samuel 12:7-8 Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8 I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!'"*

What is your interpretation of this?

Quickly, Nathan unsheathed the sharp-edged words of truth and plunged them deep into David's heart: "You are the man!" In chastened silence, David listened to Nathan expose the dark details of his sin as revealed by God.

David had broken three of the Ten Commandments: "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife (10th)," "You shall not commit adultery (7th)," and "You shall not murder (6th)".

In v8, we find "*I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping.*" Does it mean that David married Saul's wife or concubine? We don't find any record of that. The word translated 'wives' can also mean 'women,' including the female servants who became David's when he became king.

*"If that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!"* shows us that the grace of God to David was not something that was about to be exhausted. All David had to do was ask, and God would have given him favor upon favor.

From Nathan's example, we pick up 4 principles to remember when we are called to confront:

**1) Base the charges on absolute truth.**

Take time to get all the facts before you point your finger.

**2) Wait for God's timing.**

Confronting a person too early, while emotions are turbulent, can do more harm than good. Better to wait for God's green light.

**3) Use wise wording.**

Nathan didn't accuse David right away. He softened his heart with a word picture. Plan your words carefully before you talk to the person.

*Proverbs 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.*

**4) Go with courage.**

Prophet Nathan dares to confront king David. With the flip of his thumb, Nathan's head would be rolling on the palace floor. But the man of God did what he was told by the Lord.

No one likes to be confronted. We always run the risk of straining a relationship or even losing a friend. But the risk is well worth the reward when the person is restored.

*Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*

Most of all, do all confrontations to restore that person in love, not to shoot down.

*Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

## **D. THE 4 CONSEQUENCES**

*2 Samuel 12:9-12 Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have*

taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. 10 Now therefore, (1) the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. 11 Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, (2) I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and (3) I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'"

What do you see here?

Although pained by Nathan's piercing words, David must have felt a gush of relief. Finally, the festering sins were in the open. No more living a lie. No more pretending nothing was wrong. But there would be consequences to face:

### **1) The sword of violence in the family**

One of king David's sons, Absalom is going to kill another son, Amnon, because Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar. Later, Solomon kills his brother for the throne.

### **2) An enemy within the family**

Absalom revolts against his own father and tried to dethrone him.

### **3) His concubines will be taken by his son**

The private affair he had had with Bathsheba would be multiplied in public by Absalom, who would have an affair with not just one but many of his concubines.

*Luke 12:3 Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.*

## **E. DAVID'S HEARTFELT CONFESSION**

*2 Samuel 12:13-14 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. 14 However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, (4) the child also who is born to you shall surely die."*

What kind of interpretation are you getting from this paragraph?

David's words were few, but that is a good sign of a thoroughly broken spirit. There is no excuse, no hiding, and no concealment of the sin. There is no searching for a loophole, no pretext put forwards, and no human weakness pleaded. He acknowledges his guilt openly, candidly, and without evading the truth.

I don't believe for one moment that David was in love with Bathsheba at first sight. It was nothing more than an act of lust. The reason why he chose to marry her was a part of his extensive cover-up process.

David had used Bathsheba, betrayed Uriah, shamed his family, and disgraced the nation. But he had sinned against the Lord most of all. When David finally admitted it, though he deserved death, God showed him grace.

### **4) To protect His Name, God would take the life of David's illegitimate son so that the Lord's enemies would have no reason to blaspheme.**

With the last of the judgments given, the confrontation was over, and Nathan went home.

I have a question to ask you all: According to the Mosaic Law, the adulterer and adulteress should be killed. Why is that God allowed David to be spared?

- 1) **God knew that David would repent completely.**
- 2) **The lineage that establishes the Messiah is not set up yet. From the line of Nathan came Mary the mother of Jesus. From Solomon came Joseph, Mary's husband.**

God's forgiveness was immediate. God did not demand the time of probation.

David's example shows us what true repentance involves:

- 1) **An open, unguarded admission of guilt**
- 2) **A desire to make a complete break from the sin**
- 3) **A broken and humble spirit**
- 4) **A claiming of God's forgiveness and reinstatement**

After the confrontation, David penned perhaps one of his most moving psalms, Psalm 51, a psalm embodying an attitude of genuine repentance. Listen to his words. Hear the cry of his broken spirit. And You will know the heart of a man who is truly sorry for his sin.

There's only one way to ease a guilty conscience: Repentance.

- 1) **Getting your sin out in the open, confessing it**
- 2) **Asking forgiveness to God and to the person who we offended**
- 3) **Restoring your relationship with the person you offended including God, if it can be done**
- 4) **Paying restitution, if needed**

For most people, repentance doesn't come easy. It took Nathan's stern confrontation to get David to do it. But when he did, a feeling of relief washed over David like a clear fountain of spring water.