

I Will Go

The Hard Conversation

2 Samuel 12:1-14

March 3, 2024

HDBC

King David was one of the most powerful individuals in the Old Testament era. He was the first great king of Israel and is still revered by most as its greatest of all time. He expanded the geographical footprint of Israel and established it as a powerful nation that often dominated the region. He influenced generations after him through the writings and leadership of his son, Solomon. He is the most important figure in the lineage of the Jesus, the Messiah.

He won some great victories and experienced some great defeats. At times it was as if he was on the top of the world. And, at other times he sank deep into the **muck and mire of personal sin**. 2 Samuel 11 reveals the ladder. It describes the time in David's life when he **multiplied his guilt by adding sin upon sin** and trying to cover it all up. **Inward conviction was not enough to move him toward confession & repentance**. It required a hard conversation initiated by a courageous friend. 2 Samuel 12 tells that part of this story.

Review:

David had sex with the wife of a good friend and loyal soldier.

Pregnancy resulted, so David tried to cover it by bringing her husband home.

When he refused to be with his wife, David had him killed in battle.

David married his widow in hopes that he could continue to cover his sin.

He assumed he had gotten away with it, until the day **Nathan told him a story!**

There is power in a story! They - Inspire - Encourage - Inform - Motivate.

But stories also . . . Penetrate . . . Wound . . . and Convict.

It was a simple story that God used to get David's attention and lead him onto the road to repentance and restoration. It started with a courageous friend who was willing to step in and **initiate a hard conversation**. Note five things in our text.

1. The Story (1-4) (don't read it yet)

David had lived with his sin for the better part of a year. Anyone knowing the situation must have thought God was asleep, or that He had forgotten about David's sin, or perhaps that David was so special to Him that he could sin with impunity. None of those things would have been true.

After giving David ample time to repent on his own, God sent Nathan to have the hard conversation that would shine the light on David's sin and lead him to confession. At the heart of the conversation was a powerful story.

Read the story.

Wow, what a story. How could a person do such a thing? It happens all the time. Let me be quick to point out that this story, like the story of the rich man and Lazarus, is not an indictment on the wealthy. Certainly not all wealthy people are like this. It is however a reflection of **how things often go in a broken world**. It is also a reminder to those of us who have, to make sure that we use what we have to bless others, rather than hoarding and clinging.

2. The Reaction (5-6)

He is furious! He assumed Nathan was describing a real scenario and he was quick offer his judgment about the situation. Note a few things.

1st, David's anger burned against the man. David was not simply angry about the situation, like one might be angry over a natural disaster. David's anger was focused on a single man who was guilty!

2nd, David brought God's name and reputation into the equation. **As the Lord lives**. He was invoking the righteousness of God as a justification for the judgment that he was about to pronounce on this guilty man.

3rd, David pronounced a clear judgment on the man. He deserves to die. He must make 4-fold restitution.

4th, The man's sin was primarily a sin of selfishness. He did not have compassion on the other person. He was thinking only of self. **At that point** Nathan had David right where he wanted him. The trap was set, and David had stepped right into it. Nathan was ready!

3. The Meaning (7-12)

In four three-letter words, Nathan brought an end to David's hypocrisy and his deception. ***You . . . Are . . . The . . . Man!***

In this brief but potent statement, Nathan revealed the meaning and purpose of the story. It was shared to send a message to David, about David! The king learned a valuable lesson that day.

God may not always settle accounts with us quickly. But He will settle up with us! God's movement to call us to repentance cannot be put into a timeframe that can be managed or manipulated to satisfy our convenience. He speaks and acts when He chooses. But when He does, He means business! ***David, You . . . Are . . . The . . . Man!***

Nathan then elaborated, as God clearly instructed him to do.

First, there was a reminder of what God had done for David. (7-8) All the good things that David had, including his position as king were given to him by God. And, if he wanted more, all he had to do was ask God. I find it interesting that God indicated that the answer to David's unasked question for more would have been a resounding yes. See it at the end of verse 8.

Second, you have despised God's word in doing these evil things. Adultery, deception, murder. This is like the judge in a courtroom reiterating the crimes before handing down the sentence.

Third, he hands down God's sentence, or in this case the divinely ordained consequences of David's sins. **Important principle to remember!**

Forgiveness does not negate consequences. You can receive forgiveness for sins but still experience devastating consequences for those sins. Note the additional suffering that will come as a result of David's sins.

Violence and shame will plague your family. Nathan presents a bleak and foreboding future. David's family would experience violence, some of his wives would be taken from him and violated by others, even as David had done to Uriah. ***What you did to others in secret, will be done to you in public.***

4. The Confession (13)

David's response is quick, short and surprising.

I have sinned against the Lord. That's it? If it is heartfelt, that is all that is needed. He was quick to respond because his heart was finally broken to the point of surrendering his will, his reputation and his pride to the Lord. It is surprising because he has continued to cover and hide his sin for months. Why would he now, so quickly confess and repent?

Part of it is the convicting power of this story which was used by the Spirit of God to break through David's heart that had become crusted over with his own selfishness. But more has already been going on. You can read Psalms 32 and 51 to find out what God had been doing to prepare David for this hard conversation.

The point here is that David confessed and repented. That's what God was looking for, waiting for, working for.

5. The Damage (14)

David's sins caused immediate as well as long-term damage. Verse 14 offers some real insight into why God has allowed the consequence of David's sins to be so damaging. His actions have given opportunity for the enemies of God to blaspheme Him. In other words, David's actions impacted how others viewed the character of God. He dishonored God's name and reputation.

Not only will David's family experience violence, the baby produced through his sinful action will die. Wow, already we have seen the innocent suffer because of David's sin. Uriah and his fellow soldiers who were killed. They were innocent. Now, an innocent infant will also die.

This is a sad, sordid, affair that would mar David's name and legacy forever. He lived 3000 years ago, and we still remember this sin. There seems to be nothing good in this story. But there are things we can learn and takeaway. And we will.

Takeaways:

1. Secret sin is never hidden from God

David thought he could hide his sin from God, but could not. We think we can hide our sin from God today, but we cannot. God Always Sees!

2. If it was evil 3000 years ago, it is still evil today

Adultery was evil then and it is evil today. Same can be said of envy, jealousy, dissension, greed, gossip and a host of other sins. God's standard of evil does not change with the times.

3. The sinner deserves death because sin causes death

Have you even wondered **why** the wages of sin is death? It is because sin causes death. When we choose to sin, we are choosing death for someone or something at some time. Sin always kills!

4. The joy of forgiveness is worth the pain of confrontation

This is true if you are the one called to confront. It may be painful and difficult, but the forgiveness that may come to the one confronted is worth it. If you are the one confronted, the pain and humiliation are a worthy price to pay to experience the freedom and joy of forgiveness.

5. Confrontation is risky but sometimes necessary

There is no indication that Nathan was chomping at the bit to go and confront David. There is also no indication that he took any joy in doing so. He was simply responding to the call of God to go and have a hard but necessary conversation with a power man.

There are two extremes among us today. Some in the room are hoping like crazy that God will never call them to confront. They hate confrontation. At the other extreme are those who feel like this sermon is an endorsement to go get them! Both extremes are real. So let me offer a few practical helps for those times when hard conversations are called for.

- 1) Confront reluctantly.
- 2) Confront obediently.
- 3) Confront prayerfully.
- 4) Confront humbly.
- 5) Confront fearlessly.

Christian businessman and author John D. Beckett shares the following personal story about the redemptive power of speaking the truth in love: I was in a dental chair being prepped for the replacement of a filling. Just as my mouth was filled with dental hardware so I could only mumble, the dental technician said, out of the blue, "You're Mr. Beckett, aren't you?" I grunted assent.

"Well, I want to thank you for firing my husband."

I was stuck. I couldn't move. I couldn't speak. I could only listen to the ensuing monologue.

"It happened ten years ago," she said. "A few days after your company hired my husband, he was notified he had failed a drug test. You may not recall," she continued, "but you called him into your office before he left. You said, 'I realize I don't have any choice but to terminate you, but I want to tell you something. You're at a crossroads. You can keep going the way you are, and the results are very predictable. Or you can take this as a wake-up call. You can decide you're going to turn your life around.'"

I'm sure the technician couldn't see the beads of perspiration on my forehead under all the paraphernalia as she continued: "I want you to know, my husband took your advice. Today, he's a good father, a good husband, and he has a fine job. Thank you for firing my husband!"

Early in his career, Matt Redman, the popular Christian musician in Britain, was singing with his church's praise band when his pastor confronted them. They were proud of their musical performance, he said, but they were neglecting true worship.

Insulted by the charge, the members of the band left the church—all, that is, except Redman. Shortly afterward, he wrote his hit song "The Heart of Worship," which included these words: "I'm coming back to the heart of worship, and it's all about you, Jesus."