

The Uncomfortable Discovery

Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man!” (2 Samuel 12:7a)

David was the king. It didn’t get any better than that. Armies were at his disposal, and countless adoring citizens were probably thrilled to receive audience with him. Though David’s reign was just beginning, he was already a very popular king. But David was not perfect.

David lusted after a soldier’s wife; her name was Bathsheba. He orchestrated circumstances, as only a king could, that caused Bathsheba’s husband to die in battle. He could then take her as his own. The situation became even more pressing when it was discovered Bathsheba was carrying the king’s child.

God called Nathan to bring correction to the king. In a stroke of genius, Nathan told the story of injustice which caused the king to cry out in righteous indignation. The surprise ending, of course, was that the story was about the king himself.

Sometimes, in the course of our daily living, we stumble on an uncomfortable reality. Maybe we discover a child is hiding drugs, a daughter is pregnant outside of marriage, or someone is unfaithful to their spouse. Our reaction is very important if we want to demonstrate that we clearly care.

From David we learn that, even in the midst of sin, we still have a natural sense of justice. That is why David became so indignant about Nathan’s story of injustice. His own sinfulness blinded him to what he was doing. He needed the loving correction of someone who cared.

Identifying something as wrong and sinful is easier when it is done at a distance. That is why we so easily judge others but often overlook our own shortcomings. We are blinded by our subjective passions and desires. All of us need someone who clearly cares enough to say something.

When you discover a loved one’s sin, consider first of all what is at stake. Any sin that is defended and left unconfessed jeopardizes the soul for eternity. Any sin! Your task, however, is not to stop the sin but to witness to the truth. Consider Ezekiel 3:18ff. In that passage we are told very clearly that warning others of their sin is our job. It is not a private matter — not when a soul is in jeopardy.

The manner of pointing out sin is also prescribed in Scripture. We are told to do it with “great patience and careful instruction” (2 Timothy 4:2). Our goal is not to prove ourselves right by acting as “judge and jury.” Rather, our goal is to bring the heartfelt sorrow of sin that cries out for forgiveness. And, we must be ready for the reality that such repentance may not come immediately. Gentleness and a patient demeanor may pay off in the long run.

Demonstrate that you clearly care by correcting sin out of your love for others, knowing God’s patient and loving correction of all of us and the forgiveness we have in Jesus.

For additional information and resources in dealing with this life topic, visit the Christian Life Resources website at www.ChristianLifeResources.com or call us at 1-800-729-9535.