

Grace: God's undeserved love for each and every one of us. Mercy: God forgiving us our sin for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ. And Peace: Peace of heart, peace of mind, peace with God. All of these are yours from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The portion of Scripture before us today is found in the second book of Samuel, beginning in the eleventh chapter the twenty-sixth verse,

When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.

The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. "Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him." David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! He must pay for that lamb four times over,

because he did such a thing and had no pity." Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.' "This is what the LORD says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes

I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.'" Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die." After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill.

And now may the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing and acceptable to you, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Dear Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb,

So many times when we think about parables we think about our Savior, Jesus Christ. He was a pro at using parables to get His point across to an audience. And yet, when it came to parables, more often than not Jesus had to explain the parables: to the crowd or even to His disciples.

Using a parable to explain something is a very effective method. Telling a heavenly story or truism using an earthly story is a great way to go about it. Think about how many times a pastor will look for a good example or illustration... he's basically using parables. And that is what Nathan did in our text for today. He used a parable to explain a point to a hardened sinner, David.

Usually when we think of King David we think of "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). King David is, after all, a type of Christ. King David, is an on running theme that we use to explain Christ and what He does for the nation of Israel. How could we possibly say that David was a hardened sinner? Very easily actually.

Nathan is telling David the parable, the story, of two men: one who had much and one who was in want, as the Hebrew states it. One man who had everything he could want and another who had very little. One man who had the world, and one man who was struggling to hold on to the very little that he had. These two men are King David and Uriah. King David is the man who had plenty, who had much. Uriah is the man who was in want, the man who had very little.

Nathan then tells us that a visitor came to see the rich man and that the rich man was not willing to give up something he already had plenty of, so instead he took from the poor man. And it's not like he took something that the man could easily do without; rather, he took what is described as his daughter. The rich man, in taking the sheep, did not simply take a sheep away from the poor man, he took a family member, one who had eaten from his table and drank from his cup. The rich man was, in essence, taking a very family member from the poor man. And that is exactly what David did to Uriah. David came into Uriah's house and took a family member, he took his wife. And the worst part: David felt no remorse. Instead of feeling remorse, after David took Bathsheba, he killed Uriah. But David couldn't even muster the guts to do it

himself, he used a battle and the entire army to get rid of Uriah. David, very cowardly, destroyed a man and his family, just so he could have the man's sheep... the man's wife, and he felt no pity, no remorse, no sadness over doing this. And Nathan points that out in his parable.

And before Nathan tells David that he is the rich man, David very hastily says that whoever has done this "should die!" Whoever has done such a horrible earthly thing should die. But what about the heavenly point attached to this story? What about breaking God's Commands and Law and feeling no remorse over it?

And I wonder, how often we do the same thing. How often do we sin, and feel absolutely no remorse over our actions? How often do we lie and feel no pang of guilt? How often do we gossip and not

give it a second thought? How often do we disobey God and let it roll off of our back? So many times in our own lives we sin, and so many times we do not let it bother us.

And how does God respond to David's actions? He has Nathan tell David, that David has despised God's Word. David and us, we have despised God's Word when we sin. Whether it is murder in order to gain a spouse or whether it is gossiping behind someone's back... when we sin and break God's holy Law, we despise His Word and as David says, we deserve to die. We deserve eternal death, we deserve hell when we sin.

But, thanks be to God, that is not what we receive in the end. For just as God did for David, so He does for us also. God sends us people in our lives (pastors, friends,

family) to show us how and when we have erred. God sends people into our life to show us our sin, to preach His Law. To pronounce upon us the judgment of God if we do not repent and amend our lives, turning away from our sins and turning toward God, as Jesus says, "But unless you repent..." and that is exactly what David did. As the Apology states, "Therefore the law is the Word that convicts and condemns sins. This voice that says with David, 'I have sinned against the Lord, is the record. Ungodly and smug people do not say this seriously, for they neither see nor read the sentence of the law written in their hearts. This sentence is perceived only in the midst of genuine sorrows and terrors. Therefore the record condemning us is contrition itself.'" (AP, XII, 48)

Also as Kretzmann (OT Vol I, 529) states, “Note that the purpose of every reproof of sins is to move the heart and conscience of sinners, to cause them to forsake their transgressions, and to turn to the mercy and grace of God.”

When David heard the pronouncement against himself, he immediately realized his error, “I have sinned against God.” He realized his wrong and he had remorse, he had sorrow, he had contrition, he had repentance in his heart. How do we know this? Nathan says, “The Lord has taken away your sin.”

And so dear friends, this is the same message that I wish to impart to you today: The Lord has taken away your sin. Not because of some great and grand gesture you have made or done, but solely because of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus

Christ, who lived the perfect life and died the innocent death. Jesus Christ, who was tempted in every way that we are and yet was without sin. Jesus Christ, who endured ridicule and scorn on this earth and was given the prize of dying on the cross for all of our wrong... It is all because of Jesus Christ that you and I will be in heaven, it is not because of us.

And while David did not have the full knowledge of Christ's life, he knew that his Savior would deliver him. David knew that heaven awaited him, and that is why he was able to say “I have sinned against God.” And it is with this knowledge, that Jesus has done everything for our salvation, that we too can say, “I have sinned against God.” And yet know that the next part is also just as true, “The Lord has taken away your sin.”

aDear friends in Christ, today is Father's Day. On Father's Day it is custom to 'honor' one's father, to thank one's father. On this Father's Day let us look beyond and maybe see Father's Day as a great parable for us. An earthly day/story which points to a heavenly meaning. Let us see Father's Day as a day in which we really stop and thank God our Father for everything that He has done for us. Let us take a moment and praise Him for sending His Son to live and die for us. Take a moment to thank God for giving us faith, faith in all that He has done, so that we have salvation. Take a moment to thank God for strengthening our faith through His means of grace.

I pray that we would also take time today, to thank our earthly father's for bringing us to church. For being an example of the Christian life that we ought to live. For

being an example of humility. For being an example of a sinner... who is forgiven by Jesus Christ.

On this Father's Day, I would like to leave you with a quotation from Martin Luther, **"The fact that such a great man—filled with the Holy Spirit, with the highest good works and divine wisdom, and famous above all for his outstanding gift of divine prophecy—should have fallen so miserably is an example for us, to comfort us when we are beset by sin and fall, or when our consciences are touched by a sense of the wrath and judgment of God. Here in a glorious example there shines the goodness and mercy of God, who is ready to forgive sins and to justify us, just as long as we do not add to our sin a denial that we have sinned."** Whether talking about your

dad, or talking about you, or talking about King David... God has forgiven us all our sin, because of His Son Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God. Amen.