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Pastor Matt Woods

“Forgiveness Big Enough for A King”

I am accident prone. I could give you a litany of trouble I manage to find for myself. I have managed to cut my left thumb on a table saw...twice. I have managed to spill a pitcher (flagon) of wine off the front of the altar at church...twice. I have run into the back end of a stranger’s car while waiting to turn right at the yield sign...twice (two different cars many years apart). I have managed to accidentally shoot my left leg with a pneumatic nail gun while nailing shingles on a roof—all the way up to the head, just missing my knee cap. I have pinched my hand between rocks, dropped things on my feet. And sometimes my accident-prone ways spill over onto my poor wife.

Our forty-pound dog ruffles once ran after a piece of dirt I tossed into the yard. She was tied to a thirty-foot leash which was being held by my wife. When the dog reached the limit of that thirty feet, the line when taut, yanking my wife air born off of her feet, horizontally like super girl for ten feet. She landed hard on the ground dazed, her right arm stretched out in front of her still holding the leash on the ground. It was not a comfortable moment. Thankfully she was gracious and forgiving about it as we nervously laughed it off.

I am not always at my best. Truthfully, none of us are always at our best. The good news is someone is gracious and forgiving—that of course, being Jesus. Good news this morning--even when someone is at their absolute worst God’s forgiveness is at its best. And that is what we are about this morning.

Not even the godliest of kings after God’s own heart can really can escape being prone to bad decisions and sin. When David hit rock bottom with Bathsheba the Lord was still able to bring forgiveness to David.

Consider then our text from Psalm 32:1-5. This a Psalm written by a repentant king David after Nathan confronted him for his sin against Bathsheba.

Blessed is the one

whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.

² Blessed is the one

whose sin the LORD does not count against him
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

³ When I kept silent,

my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

⁴ For day and night

your hand was heavy on me;
my strength was sapped
as in the heat of summer.

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.

I said, “I will confess

my transgressions to the LORD.”

And you forgave

the guilt of my sin.

In 2 Samuel 12:1-14 the prophet, Nathan confronts David on the Lord’s behalf. He quickly reviews all that sins that David had done. David loved the Lord but with Bathsheba he really blew it. It was more than accident. It was sin.

David coveted Bathsheba. David Lusted for Bathsheba and committed adultery. David stole her from a faithful man, Uriah who wasn’t even a native Jew but a Hittite. None-the-less he was faithful to the army of Israel and to the God of Israel. David lied in an attempt to cover up his sins and pretend that didn’t happen. David committed murder by giving the order to let Uriah die on the battlefield. And when Nathan told a

parable of the rich man who stole the beloved lamb of a poor neighbor David was quick to condemn such a man.

Thankfully God was not so quick to condemn David who is the man described in this parable. David compounded his sins, one after the other. It was willful and deliberate. David was not at his best; not even close. Nathan called David out making it very clear that none of it was hidden from God. The Lord also made it clear that his actions would have lasting consequences upon his household, upon the kingdom, and upon himself. Just like Tricia, all three would be pulled right off their feet and suddenly find themselves pulled over by forces they didn't see coming.

But the critical verse is verse 13 for David. ¹³ 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.'

Thankfully, the Lord's forgiveness was big enough even for the huge sins that David had committed. The Lord's forgiveness is bigger than our worst moment. And the best news is that we are saved because of it. We will not die but live in and through Jesus' cross and resurrection.

The cross of Jesus was great enough to bring about such forgiveness that all the sins of the world for all time of all people were placed upon Jesus. So, when we feel like we have committed one sin too many the Lord can forgive. When our hearts are broken because of something we know was wrong the Lord can forgive you. When we have been that prodigal, distant, indifferent, and selfish and we wonder if we can go home, we remember the Father's reaction in the parable Jesus told in Luke 15. God can forgive you. When we feel unworthy and see ourselves as outcasts the Lord seeks us out as friends. God can forgive you. As the Psalm says, "Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered."

The Psalm also encourages us not to try and hid our sins. ³ When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer..." Holding on to our sin is toxic for our hearts and soul. Guilt becomes acid in our hearts. He is physically weak from holding it in and hiding from God something that could not be hidden. And so, it is a relief for David to confess it. And as soon as He does David feels freedom. "I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." And you forgave the guilt of my sin."

We all sin. Sometimes we launch into an impulse as David did and the logic of it is lost in a fog of emotions. Our hearts and minds lose focus and without true understanding of ourselves we end up sitting next to the Apostle Paul in Romans 7. "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." I just don't understand myself, Paul says. And yet Paul knew and depended on the forgiveness of Jesus to overcome the sin living within himself. He knew that Jesus' forgiveness was forgiveness big enough even for a King like David.

The same is said of us. God's forgiveness is bigger than anything you or I could throw at Him. We can trust in the Lord in this. So, confess your sins to the Lord. He is always more ready to forgive than we are to ask because He loves you so much. May the Lord renew a right spirit within us this week. And may we find peace within our own hearts as David did.

And now the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with His favor and give you His peace in Jesus. Amen.

Pastor Matthew Woods
John 3:30