

David and Uriah

David, who was a man after God's own heart, we know also had his failings. He was not perfect. Indeed, he did some pretty terrible things. So this contrast of the heart will focus for a moment on his dark side.

David was a great warrior, as is evidenced by his victory over the lion, the bear, and the giant Goliath. As a servant of Saul, he also won many victories and the hearts of his countrymen. But as he got older, he began to get a little lazy and let others do his fighting for him. One time his general, on the verge of capturing a city, sent a message to David to come to the battle line so that he could enter the city as a conqueror -- even though the general had done none of the work.

It was during this time of idleness that he looked out over the city and saw the woman Bathsheba bathing. He was so taken by her beauty that he called for her and committed adultery with her. Bathsheba soon sent word that she was pregnant, thus putting David in a real spot. To admit this could be his political suicide. So David decided that he would try to pull a fast one; he would call in Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, from the battlefield and let nature take its course.

But David did not choose the wife of an ordinary man. David had gotten used to a life where his pleasure had become most important, and he assumed Uriah would think the same way. Uriah was one of the chief thirty -- one of his greatest warriors. And Uriah would -- could not -- enjoy the pleasures of home when his comrades were suffering on the battlefield. So even though David got him drunk Uriah would not go home because of the unity he felt with his army. So now David was in a real fix. The baby was on the way and he had a real problem. But David was the king and his word was law. So he wrote a note to his general commanding him to abandon Uriah in the field of battle so that he would be killed. To add insult to injury, he made Uriah carry his own death sentence.

The interesting thing about this story is that David had a whole army of real men. Uriah's comrades would not leave him to die alone in the battle, so there were many casualties before David's wish comes to pass. David was not only responsible for Uriah's death, but for some of the other great men in his army. What loyalty and commitment are shown by all of these men!

So the contrast that we see here has to do with commitment. David naps, peeps, and flirts during the war and takes his pleasure with the wife of another man. Uriah, on the other hand, refuses to have any such pleasure while his fellow soldiers and the ark are at peril. He is fully committed to the job that his king has given him to do. And his commitment costs him his life.

David paid for this crime with the loss of not only this child of Bathsheba, but three other sons as well. He thus paid the full restitution called for by the Old Testament. He truly repented of what he had done. David was a good man that just got trapped by his mistakes. It can happen to any of us. Thanks be to God that he forgives us of all our sins. But we must stay committed to Him.