

and forward-looking in hope for a new direction away from patterns of brokenness.

By grace God wants to give life abundant life, filled to overflowing. By receiving grace and possessing grace, we are empowered to extend grace. Belief in the work of Christ and Christ's sinless sacrifice for us allows us to receive the grace of God and begin living in its power, letting it take us from death to life. This is the work of grace.

No one is beyond the light of God's love. And if we fail after we become His children, God is not through with us. God is ready for us to turn toward Him. God retained David as king because David was brokenhearted over what he had done. God is ready to forgive, ready for relationship, ready to adopt us into His forever family. Restoration is waiting for us. New life is waiting for us. Let us receive His grace and cry out for His mercy. God's grace is greater than our sins and our shortcomings.

Questions for Reflection

1. When the prophet Nathan accused David of his behavior, David immediately responded his wrong doing saying, "I have sinned against the Lord." How would you respond if someone tells you about your shortcomings or wrong doings?
2. By faith in Christ and Christ's sacrifice for us, we have received God's grace. How can you explain God's grace to your family or friends who don't believe in Jesus Christ?
3. Read Psalm 51 and write your own prayer of repentance.

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EXTRAORDINARY GRACE (4)
The Application of Grace
2 Samuel 11:1-5, 26-27
Rev. Dr. Charles Yoon

The 'Silence Breakers' were Time's 2017 Persons of the Year. They were victims of sexual misconduct and led the "Me Too" movement. The "Me Too" movement, or "#MeToo," is a movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault. The movement began to spread in October 2017 as a hashtag on social media to demonstrate the widespread incidences of sexual assault and harassment, especially in the workplace. Tens of thousands of people, including hundreds of celebrities, replied with #MeToo stories.

In addition to Hollywood, "Me Too" declarations stimulated discussion of sexual harassment and abuse in the music industry, sciences, sports, academia, and politics. In November 2017, the hashtag "#ChurchToo" was started to try to highlight and stop sexual abuse that happens in a church. In early January 2018, about a hundred evangelical women also launched "#SilenceIsNotSpiritual" to call for changes of how sexual misconduct is dealt with within the church. One of the biggest crises in the history of the Catholic Church is the child sexual abuse that is being reported. Sadly, today there is no safe place for victims of sexual misconduct in our society.

Today's story is a kind of "MeToo" story in the Bible. However, according to a biblical scholar, the woman Bathsheba was not even a minor character, but simply part of the plot. And she was not an equal party to sexual misconduct (Adele Berlin, "Characterization in Biblical Narrative: David's Wives," *JOT* 23 (1982) 73.). So we may call it a "YouToo" story instead of a "MeToo" story. In the story of David and Bathsheba the Bible focuses on the moral responsibility entirely on David. What David had done was "*evil in the eyes of the Lord*" (27b). Nathan suddenly appeared to him and announced God's judgement on David's behavior (12:7).

Bathsheba told David that she was pregnant. In response to her words, David launched a cover-up plan. He summoned Uriah from the battle-front to get him to sleep with his wife so that he might appear to be the child's father. David urged Uriah to "go down to your house and wash your feet" and sent a present with him. But Uriah did not "go down." He slept with the king's servants at the gate. David asked Uriah why he did not go to his house. He told David that he could not enjoy his house – eating, drinking, and taking personal pleasure with his wife, while his fellow armies endured the hardships in the field.

David made one more attempt to get Uriah to his house. He got Uriah drunk, but Uriah still did not "go down" to his house. So David's cover-up plan failed and his plan shifted to a murder plan. He ordered to place Uriah in the midst of heavy fighting and withdraw support. Thus Uriah was killed in battle.

Uriah's death was reported to Bathsheba. She observed the proper rituals of mourning for her husband. David brought her to the palace. David and Bathsheba married and a son was born. David surely thought that all was well and the matter was finished.

However, from God's perspective this matter was not finished. David's power couldn't control the judgment of God. The Lord sent Nathan to him. Nathan started his talk with a parable: There is a rich man and a poor man. The rich man had large flocks and herds and the poor man had only a single lamb. For the poor man his lamb was like his child. When a guest came to the rich man's house, he was reluctant to take a lamb from his own flocks to feed his guest. The rich man took the poor man's beloved lamb and fed it to his guest. It was such a heartless act. David was shocked and angry at the action of the rich man.

At this moment, Nathan accused David saying, "*You are the man!*" (12:7). David was the one who had much and took the possession of one who had little. David was the exploiter and the offender of injustice. But David immediately responded to God saying, "*I have*

sinned against the Lord" (v. 13a). He did not attempt to justify himself or deny his behavior. His tears streamed and his body shook. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry for what I've done to Uriah, to her, to Bathsheba and to put her in this position."

More emotional wails and racking sobs cried out of his body. In Psalm 51 He prayed: "*Have mercy, O God, have mercy on me. Not because I have pleased You or obeyed You, for I have not. Have mercy on me because of Your unfailing love. Because You are filled with compassion. Forgive me. Wipe this stain from my heart, from my mind, from my life. Wash me. O God, clean this filth from me because I am nothing but filthy before You.*"

"Cleanse me, wash me. If You don't, I won't be clean. I want to hear again, to be joyful again, to experience life and health and gladness and Your goodness. Though my bones ache and my body feels crushed, I know You have the power to make me rejoice."

"Erase all of my wickedness and create inside of me a pure heart, a clean heart, O God, and renew in me a spirit of faithfulness to You. I want fierce loyalty to You to be part of my life again."

"Restore within my very being the joy that comes knowing Your forgiveness, Your salvation and sustain me with a desire to follow You. Give me a voice again. Open my lips and I will speak of You. I will sing of Your goodness and mercy."

Nathan announced that David's sin had been put aside and he would not die. David's life could be reclaimed and continued in the midst of the consequences of sin. God's grace is often wrapped in pain and failure. It is received with joy and hope, but it isn't applied until some deep regret sets in. Failure is the soil where grace grows. This is the way of grace.

David's confession models a first step toward repentance. In the Hebrew concept repentance is related to the word meaning "to turn." To repent is to turn and go in a new direction. Repentance is dynamic

