

I Have Sinned

Ponder: The difficulty of admitting personal sin.

Scripture “And David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die’” (2 Samuel 12:13, NKJV).

Do you remember the situation comedy “Happy Days”? One of the characters, Arthur Fonzarelli (“The Fonz”), wanted everyone to think he was faultless. He didn’t take criticism well, and on those occasions when he had to admit error, he found it virtually impossible to say, “I was wrong.” The first two words were easy, but when he got to “wrong,” his abundant ego kept him from pronouncing anything past the “r” sound.

While we laughed at the conceited sit-com character, the only reason it was funny is because we saw so much of ourselves in him. Nobody enjoys admitting wrongdoing. We may not go to the silly extremes Fonzie did, but we use various tactics to avoid confessing that we were wrong.

When Nathan confronted King David about his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, Uriah the Hittite, David stated in the plainest of terms: “I have sinned against the Lord.” A lesser man might have used his royal authority to persecute anyone who told him things he didn’t want to hear, especially if it was a rebuke for sin. How dare he speak to the king that way! The wicked King Ahab imprisoned Micaiah for speaking the truth (1 Kings 22). But David responded to Nathan with humility and repentance.

How do you deal with sin in your life? What would God have you to do? “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Our tendency, though, is to make excuses. King Saul blamed his people for his own failure to obey God (1 Samuel 15:9).

Or we rationalize. Again we think of King Saul telling Samuel that he hadn’t killed the Amalekite livestock as God had ordered because he was going to use those animals in sacrifice.

Finally, we simply downplay the seriousness of our sins. “My sin isn’t as bad as what that other person did!”

Instead, hear Solomon: “He who covers his sins will not prosper; but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).