

Remembering the Past

I'm trying to understand.

Reflecting on the past is not an exercise I often relish, albeit there are numerous pleasantries to be recalled. However, my experience (hopefully not yours) is that the mind seems to flip through the myriad of files stored in the mind's vault (that would make Fort Knox appear like child's play), and retrieve some record that had been stored away, encased in steel, welded shut and buried deep and with little effort open the pages and begin to read. In such cases it reminds me of the old game show "Name That Tune." In many cases "that tune" can be named in one note. The occasions are vivid and the nerve endings still raw.

With such memories in mind, individuals have often stated, "My sins are so heinous that there is no way God could forgive me." With such thoughts in mind the actions of several men of antiquity come to mind. King David was a man who took to himself the wife of one of his choicest "mighty men:" Uriah. Then to add to the occasion, he was instrumental in the death of Uriah for the sole purpose of hiding his transgression. Yet, during his life, David was as God would have him to be (Acts 13:22), notwithstanding his transgressions. In like manner, there was a man of Tarsus of Cilicia, who said of himself, "I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," to the cause of Christ (1 Timothy 1:13). Saul also said, of himself, "when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him" (Acts 22:20). This man, Saul of Tarsus, obtained mercy and is this day better known as the Apostle Paul. As for King David, concerning his actions with Bathsheba and the death of Uriah, he petitioned his God with "a broken and a contrite heart" and said, "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities" (51st Psalm). On another occasion, David addressed the issue of his sins, saying, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones wasted away Through my groaning all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: My moisture was changed as with the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, And mine iniquity did I not hide: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah; And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. For this let every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: Surely when the great waters overflow they shall not reach unto him" (32nd Psalm).

The apostle Paul sums up the hope set before us, when he said, "I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service; though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief: howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life" (1 Timothy 1:12-16).

Do not let the devil deceive you by convincing you that the power of the blood of Christ is unable to reach unto you. ret