

Date: March 3, 2013

Subject: Great Occasion - 2 Sam. 12:14

"Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."

2 Samuel 12:14

This is right after Nathan confronts David about his sin with Bathsheba, and tells him, "thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7).

Most of us are all too familiar with this story. While walking upon his roof one night, David saw a beautiful woman taking a bath. David called for her, had sex with her, and ^{later} when she told him that she was pregnant, David had her husband sent to the front of the battle to purposefully have him killed.

Afterward, God sent His prophet Nathan to David to rebuke him. David's sins were many, he lusted, coveted, adulterated, murdered, deceived, and if all that were not enough, Nathan told David, "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."

You see, David didn't just represent himself, he represented the LORD. People knew David was the King of Israel, people knew that the LORD was the God of **I**srael, so when the enemies heard of David's sin, it wasn't so much that they would blaspheme David, but that they would blaspheme God, "thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme..."

The Bible says that, "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God." Unsaved mankind ~~are~~ ^{is} always searching for reasons to discredit God and the Bible; and so in vain they concoct such fancies as evolution because they don't want to believe there is a God they must answer to. They search for any occasion they can find to try and appease their conscience, and sadly, they ^{are} ~~are~~ ^{given} many occasions by the people who are ^{supposed} ~~to~~ to represent God as real by what He has done in their life.

A couple of weeks ago I went to Personal Property to pick up some books. As I waited in line, some guys ahead of me were talking about a famous Christian painter who had just died. This painter had a large ministry, and would've ↑

appeared on many talk shows testifying to the grace of God and salvation by Jesus Christ. He was a ^{respected} ~~respected~~ representative of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well the news reported that after his death, the police reported finding drugs in his house and they also found out that he had been cheating on his wife... all this - and God knows what else - while professing himself to be a Christian.

Now the guys ahead of me who were talking about this, do you think they were Christians? Do you think they were concerned for this man's wife and family? Do you think they began praying for them? Absolutely not! These men - all of them - were enemies of God - enemies of Jesus Christ - enemies of the faith once delivered to the saints. Not only did they blaspheme God, but they ~~took~~ ^{took} pleasure in seeing a man of God fall. Romans 1:32

"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

If the ungodly take pleasure in the ungodly deeds

of other ungodly men, how much more pleasure do they have in the ungodly deeds of the "godly"?

Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, ~~that is~~ become tasteless, wherewith shall it be salted?" If the salt becomes tasteless, how shall the earth be seasoned? If you as a Christian representing the Lord Jesus Christ, lose your credibility by preaching against sin, all the while living in sin, you have become a hypocrite. If the saving power of the Gospel is dead in your life, how shall God affect it to the lives of those you minister to? "It is therefore good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Mat. 5:13).

In 2 Corinthians 5:20 the Apostle Paul writes that we are "ambassadors for Christ," meaning that God has entrusted us with His Word and to plead with others to be reconciled to God. This is a noble mission given to every follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Will you think about that for a moment? Can you appreciate the seriousness of this commission?

Have you been a faithful ambassador of Jesus Christ? Have you done or said things that have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme? Do you find yourself doing evil things to please the crowd? Have you been convicted while doing so ... and continued sinning anyway?

Do you have a foul mouth that you use to praise God one minute, and curse people the next? "Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." (James 3:10). What is your behaviour like at work? At home? At school? Playing sports? etc.? Do the people you're around even know you're a Christian? If you told them, would they be suprized??

Well if it be so, it doesn't have to remain that way. God's children have the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome these sinful behaviours. Christ has freed us from our enslavement to Satan, so if you really are in Christ, you ought to act like it. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Gal. 5:25) "... as Christ was raised up from

the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4).
 ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς (en kainotēti zōēs) a completely different moral quality of life driven by the Holy Spirit.

"But Neil, suppose I don't realize I'm doing something wrong until I am already doing it?"
 Answer: As soon as the Holy Spirit brings conviction, listen to it! Stop what you're doing. Apologize to those around you. Confess your sin to God and trust in the forgiveness by the blood of your Saviour Jesus Christ. And next time, try harder to not let it happen again. As you grow in maturity, you will become better and better. Don't give up, cleave to Christ by faith. "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." (1 Peter 2:15).

May God bless your walk with Him, and keep you from giving a "great occasion."

Your servant for Jesus' sake,

Dei O. W. W.