



WHEN IN DENIAL.....

August 12, 2019

2 SAMUEL 12:1-7a NKJV – (1) Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: “There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. (2) The rich *man* had exceedingly many flocks and herds. (3) But the poor *man* had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. (4) And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.” (5) So David’s anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! (6) And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity.” (7a) Then Nathan said to David, “You *are* the man!

Denial is a coping mechanism that gives you time to adjust to distressing situations — but staying in denial can interfere with treatment or your ability to tackle challenges. If you’re in denial, you’re trying to protect yourself by refusing to accept the truth about something that’s happening in your life. Refusing to acknowledge that something is wrong is a way of coping with emotional conflict, stress, painful thoughts, threatening information and anxiety. You can be in denial about anything that makes you feel vulnerable or threatens your sense of control, such as an illness, addiction, eating disorder, personal violence, financial problems or relationship conflicts. You can be in denial about something happening to you or to someone else.

- When you're in denial, you:
 - Won't acknowledge a difficult situation.
 - Try not to face the facts of a problem.
 - Downplay possible consequences of the issue
 - This description fit David to a tee. First, the prophet Nathan uses a parable (verses 1-4), then God exposed him through His prophet Nathan (verses 7a). David could not deny what was said, what he had done. David refused to stay in denial.

So the question is, what did David do to come out of his denial and how can we use the same principals to help us today?

1) CONFESSION (verse 13)

2) REPENTED (verse 20)

Yes, David experienced depression to the consequences (**verses 15-19**), but he did what was necessary to get back in fellowship with His Father. We must do the same. When denying reality it enables us to continue engaging in an unhealthy behavior (e.g. addiction, impulsive risk-taking, etc.) or when it facilitates the continuation of a harmful situation (e.g. abusive relationship, a job that exploits you, etc.) then it's pretty safe to say that it is harmful. Unfortunately, most people won't recognize the harmful effects of denial until they are knee-deep in a bad situation. If the same bad outcomes keep happening to us and we can't seem to figure out why, there's a good chance that we are denying reality in some way.

SCRIPTURE READING: MARK 13:9

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Tolerance implies no lack of commitment to one's own beliefs. Rather it condemns the oppression or persecution of others.