

## Psalm 51:3-4

### Sin: Broken Relationship

I need to ask all y'all a question. Were any of y'all fans of that TV show *Seinfeld*? The show was about Jerry Seinfeld and his three friends living in New York City. In one episode they have a whole bit on the Hebrew word Yada. They would say I went on a day with this woman. We had a nice meal. Yada, yada, yada. (pause) I went on this date. We saw a cool show. We had a nice meal. Yada, yada, yada. (pause) In the Old Testament when the Scripture reads, "and Abraham knew his wife Sarah," the word they use for *knew* is yada. When the cast of *Seinfeld* use the term they are talking about the physical act of sex. When the Bible uses the term yada the Biblical Authors are very often talking about something deeper and much more important.

I have been reading this book by a guy named Rev. Eugene Peterson called "Five Smooth Stones." In the book Rev. Peterson argues there is a similarity between making love with someone and our prayer life. What is similar is the intimacy that can happen. The more in love a couple is the more intimacy there is in the coupling. The deeper a person's prayer life the greater the intimacy they share with the Lord God Almighty. Hear the good news sisters and brothers God wants to *know* you. (pause) No. I am not talking about sex. I am saying God wants to know all of you intimately, and God wants all of us to know God intimately as well.

I have been wrestling with this idea of yada, and intimacy about God as I have come to this morning's passage and the realities of sin. This morning's passage is a Psalm. A Psalm is a musical lyric or poem. This Psalm is ascribed to King David, and the tradition is this Psalm was written after the prophet Nathan calls David out for sleeping with Bathsheba. To understand what is really going on we need to know the story of David, Bathsheba and Uriah, Bathsheba's husband.

This is a familiar story to many of you. Every spring and summer the armies of Israel would go out to fight whichever "ites" in the Promised Land who were not Israelites. The role of the king of Israel is to lead Israel's people under the authority of their one and only true king, the Lord God Almighty. The king is supposed to lead God's chosen people into battle. This year, David stayed home, and sent his general to lead the battle for him. While David was home he had time on his hands and one evening David took a walk out on the roof of the palace. Looking out over the city he saw the woman Bathsheba bathing. David wanted to know Bathsheba so he sent out his servants and had Bathsheba brought to him. David laid with Bathsheba while her husband Uriah was off fighting against the Ammonites, which is where David was supposed to be also. Not long after, Bathsheba sent word to David that she was pregnant. David called for Uriah to be sent home from the front lines of the battle hoping Uriah would go home to his wife, and cover David's sin. Uriah, was faithful to God, to David and to his fellow soldiers. He stayed in the king's gate until David sent him back to the front. Uriah did not go to his wife, Bathsheba. David sent Uriah with a message to give to the commander of David's army. The commander of David's army was ordered to put Uriah in the heaviest fighting at the front line of the battle. Uriah died. Bathsheba mourned, and then David brought Bathsheba into David's house to be one of David's wives. However, no sin is ever hidden from God. God sends the prophet Nathan to David. Nathan confronts David and tells David what God's punishment is going to be. David recognizes he has been caught. God sees all and God knows all. In Psalm 51:3-4 David confesses, "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done that which is evil in thy sight, so that thou art justified in thy sentence and blameless in thy judgment." David confesses. David asks for forgiveness. David, repents by turning back to God.

So here is my question. (pause) Why does God care? (pause) Let's think about this for a minute. Last week we talked about how we are barely a speck of dust to God. It's like that song from an old cartoon, "It's a great big

universe, and we're all really puny, we're just tiny little specks, about the size of Mickey Rooney, It's big, and black and icky, and we are small and dinky, it's a big universe and we're not."<sup>1</sup> We're just not. I mean, I don't care what a dust mite is doing under my couch until it's time to suck it up into the vacuum. Why should God care what we do when we are barely the smallest speck to God? (pause) No really. Why should God care? (pause) Honestly, I cannot think of a reason why God should care about anything we do. (pause) But here's the thing. God absolutely cares. God loves each and every one of us. **"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life"** (John 3:16). God does not just love us like, "Hey! Check out my new back pack! or, "I love my new car!" God loves us enough to send God's only son to be born like one of us, to grow up like one of us, and to die a traitor's death on the cross. My sisters and brothers, God really, really loves us.

God wants a close relationship with all of us. God wants to Yada us, and wants us to Yada – to **KNOW**, God. God wants to know us and to be known in an intimate way. God was very near to having this kind of relationship with David. Then David sinned against God by taking what he wanted without giving consideration to God. God rebukes David through Nathan saying, "I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul; and I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if this were too little, I would add to you as much more" (2Sam 12:7-8). Through the prophet Nathan God speaks as though God had been cheated on by David. I am not going to ask how many of y'all have been cheated on, but I have seen people go through that struggle. It's gut wrenching to imagine the violation of such an intimate relationship. However, that is what sin ultimately is. Sin is a violation of an intimate relationship with God.

There is a reason why God commands Hosea to set an example before Israel. God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute because Israel was committing harlotry before the Lord (Hosea 1:2). The people were cheating on God by chasing after false idols and fertility gods. God commands Hosea to have children with the prostitute, a woman again and again left Hosea for other men – wealthy men, and again and again Hosea went after her the same way God continues to come after us again and again.

Brothers and sisters God cares about you. God loves you. The way we know is because God chases us. God's sends God's prevenient grace that we would feel the reach of God stretching out to us. God allows God's justifying grace to wash us clean of the harlotry we have practiced against the Lord, and God sends sanctifying grace that we would come to understand just how good it is to be loved by God. Sanctifying grace helps us to grow into an intimate relationship with God all over again. Being in an intimate relationship with God is what abundant life is truly all about. That's what we mean when we talk about Christian perfection. That is what we mean when we talk about people who are saved will sin no more. I am not talking about rule following. Children can follow rules in school and then go wild when they get home. No. I am talking about growing into an intimate relationship with God where we no longer sin because we value the relationship we have with God over and above any temptation we face in this world. It requires commitment. It requires perseverance. (pause) And the rewards, are too great to imagine.

In the name of Jesus Christ,  
Amen

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<sup>1</sup> "Yakko's Universe," Animaniacs: Hello Holidays VHS (Fox Kids Network 1994).