

2 Samuel 12:1-6

1and the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds; ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meagre fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveller to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." ⁵Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; ⁶he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

Are you amazed at how brave Nathan was? Well perhaps you need to read 2 Samuel 11 and then the next section of Chapter 12 if you are not familiar with the story.

Nathan was called by God to challenge the King for his behaviour, acts of selfishness and cowardice. Acts of injustice needed to be challenged.

Who was Nathan? We are not told. We have no idea as to his background, relationship to David or anything else; all we know is he was sent by God.

Nathan enabled David to see the truth of his situation for himself through listening to a story about sheep.

Sheep, a subject David was familiar with. David would have known what it was to have a precious lamb. It is very likely that in his shepherding days he had kept a weakened lamb alive by extra care, and in the doing so had a favourite.

The story touched David in such a way that he was enraged by the action of the rich man. The result was David exclaiming "The man who has done this deserves to die," Nathan was bold enough to declare, "you are that man!" (2 Samuel 12:7)

In that statement David realised the truth about himself. Out of his own mouth came words that made the situation with Bathsheba and Uriah real.

Having the courage to face up to injustice and call it out is not easy and very rarely comfortable.

History has many such stories of people with courage. Rosa Parks comes to mind as one who called out against the injustice of racial segregation in America by refusing to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 resulting in her being imprisoned. There followed a 13-month boycott of the buses and eventually a change in the laws regarding racial segregation.

In recent months we have had various bits of "Party Politics" going on as one group calls out against another for breaking rules. How closely does the accuser wish for his or her actions to be questioned? "Let the one without sin cast the first stone," comes to mind.

There are situations of injustice in our society at all levels. Last Sunday's episode of Call the Midwife raised one about the homeless and meth drinkers in the mid 60's and the need for action to be taken. Still more needs to be done.

Is God calling you, at some level, to lift up your voice and speak out? Is it on a big issue in the wider community or could it be an issue within your own family where someone is being oppressed for no reason, could you be the oppressor?