

Hidden Faults

Psalm 19:12
Charlie Brackett

David's high regard for the word of God is evident in a number of his psalms, but no more so than in the 19th where, having clearly outlined reasons for extolling God's law, he drew this conclusion in verse 11:

Moreover, by them Thy servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

Almost at the mere utterance of these words, David is reminded of the difficulty of keeping God's commands. On many occasions in his life he had failed. He had ignored the warnings of God's word when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and, as if that were not bad enough, he continued to ignore God's laws, laws of which he was very familiar, as he plotted to have her husband killed that he might take Bathsheba for himself. Though the Bible calls him a man after God's own heart, he stood guilty of the worst kind of presumption and rebellion against his God.

Despite this, there was throughout David's life a special kind of sensitivity to the will of God. His life was marked by a strong desire to do what was right regardless of the cost. In his youth he often suffered unjustly and was content to pour out the anguish of his soul in poetry rather than in retaliation. Though a courageous warrior and a powerful king, he often was willing to lay aside the weapons of war and the power of position and simply lean on his faith. Over and over he showed himself a man of deep feeling and tender compassion. And, most of all, when he sinned he was willing to admit fault and repent. Perhaps in this David we can more clearly see the man after God's own heart.

I've said all of this to help us appreciate the significance of David's statement in verse 12 of the 19th Psalm.

Who can discern his faults? Acquit me of hidden faults.

Most of the time, David keenly desired to do and be right, and He knew well the difficulty. He must have often longed to know that he had acted righteously, that there was no sinful motive lurking in his life, hidden even from him. And there is no doubt from his 38th and 51st Psalms that He had known another kind of hidden sin, the inner strife and torment of hiding one's guilt from family and friends. He knew what it was to try to hide from God. In all of this - desiring to do what is right on the one hand and keeping up a false front of purity on the other - David felt deeply the need to be freed from the bonds of hidden faults. Surely, we can learn from the experience of David.