



DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR OCTOBER 5, 2012

GLORY AND SHAME

Achan replied, "It is true! I have sinned against the LORD." (Joshua 7:20, NIV)

PERHAPS THE SUNDAY TURN OF EVENTS AT THE RYDER CUP FOOLED YOU AGAIN. You found yourself looking at glory and at shame, and you saw them as opposites. Nothing crazy about that. In the way we portray winners and losers, it's easy to draw that dichotomous conclusion.

But what of Phil Mickelson, who displayed an exceptionally sporting demeanor despite his gut-wrenching loss? Sometimes winning isn't all it takes to be a winner. Sometimes "glory" and "shame" walk on the same side.

Among Scripture's most infamous villains was Achan, a soldier in Joshua's army at the battle of Jericho. God put some tight parameters around his people that week. For six days they did not fight with weapons, but with their marching feet and their priestly trumpets. On the seventh day, with the people again following God's specific orders, the walls fell down, the soldiers entered the city, and Jericho fell.

Among God's battle instructions conveyed by Joshua were these: "The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD"—a devoting that was done by complete destruction. There was to be no plunder. But Achan secreted beautiful clothing, a wedge of gold, and 200 silver coins. These he dared to keep for himself. God saw this, of course, and his judgment on the people meant an embarrassing and devastating loss in their next encounter. When Joshua cried out to God, wanting to know why he would let them now be defeated like this, God told Joshua that there was sin in the camp. Someone had stolen devoted objects.

In the events that followed, Achan was identified as the looter. Joshua stood face to face with this man and said, "My son, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and give him the praise. Tell me what you have done; do not hide it from me."

Now look: Achan sang no hymn. He gave no shout of "Glory to God!" He didn't raise his hands or fall to his knees. Achan confessed. In his shame, he glorified God. Achan died for his sin. This was the judgment of God. But Achan went to his death with praise on his lips, glorying that sounded like this: "I have sinned."

Confession and praise

Read Luke 18:9-14. How does this parable confirm that our confessions give glory to God?

Read Psalm 51. Which phrases depict David's confession? Which point to the glory of God?

Confession and healing

Read James 5:16. How might confession lead to healing before God? How would this healing give him praise?

Action: What steps do you need to take in enacting this type of confessing, glory-giving approach in your life today?