

How to Handle Grief in a Godly Way – Part 1 2 Samuel 1

Introduction:

1. Have you ever received bad news that literally took the breath from you?
2. As this book opens, David receives the news that King Saul and his best friend, Jonathan, have been killed in battle. David can't believe it. vs. 5
3. David had quite a history with both of these men. Even though Saul had turned on David, David still loved Saul. Saul was David's boyhood hero. David served under Saul, and married Saul's daughter. Of course, David and Jonathan were best of friends.
4. How did David respond to the news? He mourned and wept. vs. 11-12, 17
 - To "*lament*" means "to express sorrow." David was dealing with grief.
5. As we go through this life, we are sure to go through some painful and devastating losses. Many times, we can't control them. But, we **can** determine how we respond to them.
6. This time of grief was a real transitional time in David's life. He was anointed as king 10 - 15 years earlier, but had been through some deep waters. Now that Saul was dead, David would transition to being the king of Israel.
7. Times of grief are transitional times in our lives. Times of grief can make us stronger, or destroy us. Therefore, we must handle grief in a godly way. As we examine David's grieving here in this text, it gives us great insight into how to handle grief in a godly way. How can we do this?

G – Grant that a loss has occurred.

1. If there is one thing we learn from this text, it is this: It is okay to grieve! It is normal, and it is natural. David tore his clothes and began to grieve right in front of all his men. vs. 11-12, 17
 - They "*mourned, and wept, and fasted.*" Have you ever been so grieved you didn't want to eat? It's okay to grieve. God built us with emotions, and it is human.
2. What is the shortest verse in the Bible? "*Jesus wept.*" As people were grieving over Lazarus, it moved Jesus and He wept with them.
3. This isn't the only time Christ grieved. In Luke 19:41, Jesus gazed at unbelieving Jerusalem and the Bible says, "*...he beheld the city and wept over it.*"
 - As Jesus faced the imminent cross in the Garden, the Bible says that His soul was "*exceeding sorrowful, even unto death...*" Matthew 26:38
4. **Godly** grieving is **honest** grieving, whereby we admit that there has been a loss. We don't minimize it, deny it, or simply avoid it. This can be internally destructive.
5. Sometimes we are taught to be tough ("big boys don't cry"), and so we bury our feelings and never truly allow ourselves to grieve. Or, we get caught up in sideline issues and never give ourselves a chance to grieve.

6. Saul is dead. David could be king now. But rather than focusing on this fact, or how Saul's death would help him, David realized the need for lament and grief.

R – Refuse to dwell on the painful past.

1. If you were here when we went through 1 Samuel, you know that David had been through some huge hurts and disappointments with King Saul.
2. Over and over again, Saul had lied to David and done him dirty. Some would say that Saul ruined David's life for a span of about 10 - 15 years. Yet, David still loved Saul (even though Saul didn't love him back), and David felt grief.
 - There is nothing wrong or abnormal about that. It is really a beautiful thing to behold. It shows David's tender and forgiving heart.
3. Jonathan was David's best friend. But, notice verse 17. David mourned over Saul **and** over Jonathan. Isn't this amazing? How could David do this? You would think that David would relish this, and rejoice that Saul got what was coming to him.
4. But, this would have been destructive to David. David had a tender heart, even after all that Saul put him through. David simply refused to focus on the painful past.
5. Instead of remembering the emotionally crippled Saul who lashed out at people, David remembered Saul as the mighty warrior king who gave David his first chance in battle. vs. 19, 22-23
 - Some of us can relate to this. Maybe you had a loved one that really changed the last few months or years of his or her life. Maybe the person's attitudes, actions, and words were hurtful and painful to you. If you choose to focus on this, it will hinder your grieving process.
 - David refused to focus on the pains and hurts of his past with Saul. He chose to remember the good times with Saul and Jonathan.
6. David was obviously a very forgiving person. This is so Christ-like and so spiritually healthy. This is how he could grieve. Unforgiveness and bitterness create a calloused heart. Forgiveness creates a tender heart that can express grief and other emotions. Ephesians 4:32
7. When Christ was on the cross, you never see Him dwelling on how the disciples or anybody else did Him wrong. He said, "*Father, forgive them...*"
8. When you go through a loss, it is so easy to dwell on past hurts. Refuse to do it so that you can grieve in a healthy and godly way.

How to Handle Grief in a Godly Way – Part 2

2 Samuel 1

Introduction:

1. Have you ever received bad news that literally took the breath from you?
2. As this book opens, David receives the news that King Saul and his best friend, Jonathan, have been killed in battle. David can't believe it. vs. 5
3. David had quite a history with both of these men. Even though Saul had turned on David, David still loved Saul. Saul was David's boyhood hero. David served under Saul, and married Saul's daughter. Of course, David and Jonathan were best of friends.
4. How did David respond to the news? He mourned and wept. vs. 11-12, 17
 - To "*lament*" means "to express sorrow." David was dealing with grief.
5. As we go through this life, we are sure to go through some painful and devastating losses. Many times, we can't control them. But, we **can** determine how we respond to them.
6. This time of grief was a real transitional time in David's life. He was anointed as king 10 - 15 years earlier, but had been through some deep waters. Now that Saul was dead, David would transition to being the king of Israel.
7. Times of grief are transitional times in our lives. Times of grief can make us stronger, or destroy us. Therefore, we must handle grief in a godly way. As we examine David's grieving here in this text, it gives us great insight into how to handle grief in a godly way. How can we do this?

G – Grant that a loss has occurred.

R – Refuse to dwell on the painful past.

I – Include those who want to grieve with you.

1. One thing that is very impacting about this story is how David felt free to be able to grieve publicly. He included others in his grieving process. vs. 11-12
2. Many times, we want to go into seclusion when we grieve. We isolate ourselves from everybody, and think, "I must handle this alone. I must grieve alone."
3. I believe this is a huge mistake. Not only can it send you into a tailspin of depression, but, it isn't good for those who desire to grieve with you over the loss or minister to you.
4. God has designed us, as humans, to need each other. Adam was lonely and God gave him Eve. The apostle Paul wasn't married, but he always had friends and companions that traveled and ministered with him.
 - Example of Paul grieving with other men: Acts 20:36-38
 - Even Jesus, when He was sorrowful in the Garden, took three men to be with Him.

5. This is what a local church is all about. It is a community of people bound together by our faith in Jesus Christ. The church is called the body of Christ. We are all members that compose one body. 1 Corinthians 12:12-14
 - The Bible says that we are “*fitly joined together and compacted...*”
Ephesians 4:16
 - You know what that means? We’re in this together!
6. When we go through a loss and we are grieving, God has designed it so that we have a community of believers to support us, encourage us, comfort us, and grieve **with** us. 1 Corinthians 12:25-27; Romans 12:10, 15
 - This is what helps us to deal with the loss, and be able to move on in our lives.
7. I think sometimes we push that support away and think that we don’t need it. We feel like we must bear it alone. This simply is not true. Galatians 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:11
8. There have been many times throughout the years when I have heard months later about a loss that one of our people went through. They simply didn’t tell anybody. I think sometimes pride is a root cause of this.
9. Many times we are afraid to admit that we have suffered a loss, or that we’re hurting, because we are afraid of what people will think of us. Men are very bad about this.
 - Will people think I lack faith? Will people think I am emotionally weak? These are all lies from Satan. Do you know what people will think? They will think you are human, and they will rally around you and help you through it.

E – Entreat the Lord – He understands.

1. After David grieved, it says in 2 Samuel 2:1 that David “*enquired of the Lord...*”
2. Hebrews 4:14-16 is a wonderful passage. This passage is basically saying that you can go to Jesus Christ in prayer during your time of need and get help. Do you know why? Because Christ has been there. He understands your grief and pain.
3. This is the great miracle of the incarnation. Christ took on our flesh and blood, and has walked in our shoes. In religion, it is always man desperately trying to get to God. In Christianity, it is just the opposite. It is God coming down to man.
 - “*The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us...*” **John 1:14**
 - “*God was manifest in the flesh.*” **1 Timothy 3:16**
4. Christ knows what it means to weep over the loss of a loved one (He wept). He knows what tears are. He knows all about physical pain and suffering. He understands death (He died Himself). He knows what it is to worry about a mother who will be alone. He knows how it feels to have friends hurt you and disappoint you, etc.
 - We have an Intercessor in heaven Who is moved by our grief. He is not distant and aloof, non-caring and non-understanding. When you are grieved, He is moved by this.
5. When Christ walked the earth, He had a friend named Lazarus who died. He apparently was a young man who got sick and died rather suddenly.

- When Jesus arrived on the scene, people were weeping over their loss. They were comforting Mary and Martha (Lazarus' sisters), and weeping with them.
 - When Christ came on the scene, He did not rebuke them for a lack of faith. He did not coldly and callously lecture them on what He would do, and how He had it all under control. He did not tell them to suck it up and quit this sobbing.
 - What did He do then? John 11:33-36 - Jesus stood there and wept with them.
 - Others did not look at this as a weakness in Christ. They said, "*Behold how he loved him!*"
6. This is your Savior, if you know Him today! This is the One who is at the right hand of the Father, Who is interceding for you every time you call upon Him!
 7. You can be honest with God about your grief. You can express your grief to God. He understands completely. He is there to provide comfort and help in your time of need. Philippians 4:6-7 is a wonderful prayer promise.
 - He is called "*the God of all comfort.*" 2 Corinthians 1:3
 8. When you are going through a time of grief, remember to entreat the Lord. He understands!

F – Forge ahead with life as soon as possible.

1. It is certainly appropriate to take some time to grieve after you have experienced a loss. David and his men did so after Saul and Jonathan's death.
2. But, notice 2 Samuel 2:1-2. Here we see David moving on and forging ahead with life. We don't know exactly how many days went by between the lamentation of chapter 1 and David moving on in chapter 2. But, after an appropriate time to grieve, David got on with his life and engaged in the process of eventually becoming king of Israel.
 - David had to do the same thing several years later when his little baby boy died. 2 Samuel 12:18-23
3. How long is a proper grieving time before engaging in the normal activities of life again? There is no magic formula to determine this. It depends on the magnitude of the loss. Every person is different and unique.
4. But, there must be a point in time when you determine to get on with your life. You cannot withdraw and grieve so long that you fail to engage in life again.
5. There are many people who endured a loss years ago, and have never really resumed a normal life. They are still bitter, or angry, or maybe even resentful towards God because they somehow blame Him for the loss. You hurt yourself and those around you when you do this.
6. You have to move on. You have to forge ahead and begin living again. You cannot change the past. Withdrawing from life will not change it.
7. Focus on the good, cherish the positive memories, but forge ahead. Paul said he was "*reaching forth unto those things which are before.*"

In Conclusion:

1. I realize that there are times when our grief is so acute that we do not even desire to go on living.
2. But for the believer, we have to remember the words, "*To me to live is Christ.*"
3. Every day we have on this earth is an opportunity to display to others the marvelous grace of God and the incredible message of Jesus Christ. Our life is not simply about us. It is about glorifying our wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ.

Making Jesus the King of Your Heart

2 Samuel 2-5

Introduction:

1. King Saul had finally died. No longer would he be king of God's people, Israel. Israel would now need a new king.
2. God had already chosen who that man would be. Way back in 1 Samuel 16 God sent the prophet Samuel to anoint the shepherd boy David to be king of Israel. This was many years ago, and David had been through the school of hard knocks to get to this point.
3. But even with Saul now dead, David did not become king of all Israel immediately. In fact, when you examine David's life, He became king of Israel in three stages. 2 Samuel 2-5 tells us of David's rise to power.
4. It is amazing how King David is a picture of the King of kings, the Root of David, the Offspring of David; Jesus Christ.
5. The three stages of David's rise to be king over all the land actually illustrate for us three different groups of people and their varying responses to the King. Every person in this room falls into one of these three categories.
6. Listen carefully and at the end of this message you decide which group you fit in.

First, there was a group that would not accept or receive David to be king.

1. Let's go back and examine 1 Samuel 16:1. God was looking for a new king and told Samuel He had found one. God had Samuel anoint David in front of witnesses. David then went out in the next chapter and proved His God-given anointing by slaying Goliath.
2. But wait a minute – 15 chapters and 7 years later, David had still not been **received** as king by most of the people of Israel. There was only a small remnant of people that recognized who David was and believed in him.
3. David was the anointed, yet rejected king - to the point that he was living in the land of the Philistines when chapter 2 opens up (read vs. 1).
4. David is a picture of Jesus Christ. Jesus was clearly the anointed Messiah and King of Israel. Like David, Christ proved His anointing with mighty signs and wonders, yet the people of this earth, by and large, rejected Christ and screamed, "Crucify Him." **Acts 2:22-23**
5. Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead, ascended into heaven far above all power. Paul said that he is "*the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.*" **1 Timothy 6:15**
6. Yet, by and large, the people of the earth still reject Christ. Just as Israel chose to live under the reign of wicked King Saul (a type of Satan), people today would rather live under the tyranny of the prince of this world (Satan) rather than giving their heart to Christ the King. This is called the "lost" man. You remain lost in your sins.
7. They refuse to accept Him as Lord and King of their heart. It is not a question of whether He is the divine anointed King – **He is**, and has proved it through His resurrection, ascension, and exaltation.

8. The question is this, “Have you **received** Him as the King of your heart?” This King gave His life sacrificially for you on the cross where He made a full payment for every one of your sins. God desires for you to believe on Him and trust Him as **your** Savior and allow this Savior-King to reign in your personal heart and life. **Romans 10:9-10**

Second, there was a group that made David king over part of the land.

1. There were 12 tribes of Israel and only one tribe made David their king – the tribe of Judah (2:3-4). The other tribes allowed Saul’s son (Ishbosheth) to reign over them. The name Ishbosheth means “son of shame.” 2:8-10
2. David was the anointed king by God, but yet Israel only allowed David to reign over **part** of their land. They allowed the “man of shame” to reign over the other part.
3. What a picture of so many Christians today. We have received Christ as our Savior, but we only allow Christ to reign as Lord and King over **part** of our life, not all of it.
4. This is very dangerous. Do you know what happened as a result of Israel’s decision? Read chapters 2-4 and you will read of civil war, with the two sides in constant conflict.
 - Chapter 2 – Joab is David’s general and Abner is Ishbosheth’s general. Abner kills Joab’s brother and many men die on combat.
 - Chapter 3 – Abner deserts to David and Joab gets revenge on Abner by murdering him.
 - Chapter 4 – Two men go and murder Ishbosheth while he is sleeping.
5. Here is my point – all of this conflict and pain could have been spared if Israel would have recognized David as king over **all** the land.
6. Many times, we are like Israel. We allow Christ to have control over certain areas of our lives, but we want to have control of other areas. The Bible calls this the carnal man. He is saved and has received Christ, but has yet to give Him full control. **1 Corinthians 3:1-4, Galatians 5:17-18 (civil war)**
 - Jesus is resident, but not president. We remain carnal, fleshly, babes in Christ.
7. Jesus Christ desires to reign as King over every area of your heart and life. When God touches certain areas of our lives and wants control, we kick, and scream, and holler, and resist. We say, “That is my area.” (work, home, hobbies, pocketbook, computer, etc.)
Take a lesson from Israel. This never works. Christ must be Lord of all or He isn’t Lord of your life at all.

Third, there was a group that made king David over all the land.

1. 2 Samuel 5:1-3 – This is what Christ desires for you. He wants to be king over your entire heart. The man that allows this is called the spiritual man. You are giving God full control of your heart and life.
2. Look at 2 Samuel 3:1. What a picture for us. God’s plan is for the believer to grow spiritually and wax stronger and stronger in Christ (Colossians 2:6-7). We

- call this making Jesus Lord of your life. “Lord” means “supreme in authority, controller.” This is what God desires for you and me (Romans 12:1-2).
3. There will be no real joy, peace, or contentment for the true child of God until this happens. There was no peace for Israel until David was given control over **all** the land.
 4. Just as real as the day you got saved, you need to come to the point where you, as a believer, make Jesus the Lord and King of your life. You quit trying to retain control and you say, “Jesus, I want you to reign over every nook and cranny of my heart. I want you to be Lord and King of my heart.”
 5. When you get saved, Jesus becomes your Savior; but when you decide to give Him full control of your daily life, Jesus becomes your Lord – He is now King!

In Conclusion:

1. Okay, now we have seen all three groups, but the question is, which group do you fall in? You are in one of these three groups this morning.
 - The lost man – Jesus is the anointed King in heaven, but you have never asked this King into your heart.
 - The carnal man – Jesus, the King, lives inside, but you have yet to make Him Lord. The King has not been given full control.
 - The spiritual man – Jesus, the King, lives inside and you desire for Him to reign in full authority.
2. Only you and God truly know your heart. What about those who refuse Christ and will not acknowledge in any way that He is the anointed King and Savior?
Philippians 2:9-11
3. Wouldn't you rather make this choice right now?

Doing Things God's Way 2 Samuel 6

Introduction:

1. Have you ever bought an object, and on the box were the dreaded words, "Assembly required"? Have you ever worked hard to assemble something only to realize that you did it all wrong? You then have to start over and do it the right way.
2. Unfortunately, I've done this in my spiritual life, too. I've done things "Dan's way," only to realize, "This isn't going to work. I need to do this God's way."
3. This is what happened to David, here in our text. David had just been made King of Israel, and decided to do a good thing. He was going to bring the ark of the covenant back to where it should be – Jerusalem.
 - The ark was basically a portable chest, but the most important sacred object of the Israelites. It was located in Moses' tabernacle in the Holy of Holies. This was the place where God's glory would hover, and where God spoke to Moses.
 - Of course, the ark would mean nothing to us today, even if we found it. It was a picture of Jesus Christ, but we don't need a picture. We have Christ Himself living within us! We have the real thing!
4. In our text, David attempted to do this noble task **David's** way and, of course, he messed everything up, and the whole project ended in failure. I'm so glad God allowed things like this to be recorded in the Bible. It lets me know there is hope for me!
5. Finally, David decided to do things God's way and, of course, it worked, and David succeeded in getting the ark to its rightful spot in Jerusalem.
6. Every day we wake up, we make a choice. Either we will live our lives **our** way, or God's way. But there are consequences to the choices we make. There is "an end" (Psalm 37:37-38). Every believer must determine to do things God's way. How? Let's learn from David here in 2 Samuel 6.

First, seek God's counsel rather than man's opinion.

1. Do you know where David made his first mistake? He sought everybody's opinion but God's. 1 Chronicles 13 gives us details about this same story. (Read vs. 1, 3, 4.)
2. David sought God when the Philistines surrounded him. 2 Samuel 5:19, 23
3. But in chapter 6, the Philistines had been defeated, and everything was going great. It is at these times when we are most likely to seek man's opinion rather than God's.
 - When things are going good, we tend to forget God and how much we need Him. But when we do this, things can fall apart very quickly. Deuteronomy 8:10-11

4. Each and every day we need to remember the words of Christ, "...without me ye can do nothing." But Paul gives us the positive side of that coin. He said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." **Philippians 4:13**
5. It is certainly not wrong to seek counsel from a godly person, but our first move should always be to Christ. We need to fill our minds with the mind of Christ. Philippians 2:5
6. Do you know why we sometimes get bad advice from people and it leads us into making bad decisions? It is because the person is carnally-minded. They are not capable of giving you spiritual advice because they are not spiritually-minded. Notice this passage: Romans 8:5-9; cf. Proverbs 19:21
7. It is a serious thing to turn away God's counsel for man's opinion. Proverbs 1:25, 31

Second, follow God's Word rather than man's ideas.

1. God had given explicit instruction on how to bear the ark (Numbers 4:5-6, 15; 1 Chronicles 15:2, 15). Instead, David disregarded God's Word and put the ark on a cart to transport it. vs. 3-4
2. Where did he learn this from? He learned it from the ungodly Philistines (1 Samuel 6). David conformed to the world's methods rather than following the correct pattern in God's Word. What was the result? vs. 6-7 (death)
 - Remember the verse we read in Romans 8:6, "*For to be carnally minded is death...*"
 - Proverbs 14:12 states, "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*"
3. This is what happens when we start doing things **our** way and think that we are smarter than God. There are many people who will miss heaven because they ignore God's Word and try to make it to heaven their own way. Matthew 7:13-14
4. There is only one way to gain eternal life (John 14:6). After we come to Christ and we are saved, there will still be a lingering temptation to live your Christian life by the world's ideas and philosophies. This is very dangerous. 1 John 2:15-17
5. David did things **his** way. Do you know what the results of his choice were? God's judgment (vs. 6-7), David got bitter and angry at God (vs. 8), David became paranoid and fearful (vs. 9), and David lost the blessing that could have been his. vs. 10-11
6. We have to decide each day, "Will I do things my way or God's way?" If you desire to do it God's way, follow God's Word rather than man's ideas. Man will lead you astray; God will never lead you astray. You can always trust God's Word.

In Conclusion:

1. Three months went by and David received news about the ark. David must have repented of his wrong actions because he decided to try it again. This time he did it God's way (vs. 12-13). The Levites prepared it and then carried it six paces to see if God would judge, then they made an offering unto the Lord.

2. Do you know what the result was when David did things God's way? Gladness and total joy! vs. 14-15
 - Side note: David was not performing some sensual 21st century dance in our text. The dance that the Bible speaks of was more of the idea of what children would do when there are ecstatic with joy (ring around the rosy).
3. When you do things God's way there is a joy, peace, and contentment that is beyond explanation. Paul called it "*joy unspeakable and full of glory.*" Oh, the joy that comes when we do things God's way!

A Man After God's Own Heart 2 Samuel 7

Introduction:

1. When Saul rebelled against God, and God rejected him as king of Israel, God made this statement in 1 Samuel 13:14: *"The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart."* Of course, David was chosen by God to be the next king.
2. We get even more insight into the mind of God when we turn to the New Testament. God made this incredible statement: *"I have found David, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will."* Acts 13:22
 - The Bible uses the word "heart" in the sense that your heart is what you are all about, what really makes you tick, what is important to you, what you value and hold precious, etc.
 - Somebody may ask, "Why do you work at a homeless shelter?" The person may say, "Because I have a heart for homeless people."
3. What does it mean to be **after** a person's heart? If I am trying to capture Deniece's heart, what would this infer? It means that I want to learn what is important to her, I care about what she cares about, I long to please her, and I live unselfishly for her.
 - What is your heart consumed with? What is your heart all about? How would those who **know** you answer that question?
4. David was a man after **God's** own heart. Why? This chapter will give us insight into answering this question, and teach us how we can truly be a people after God's own heart.

His heart was purposed to glorify God.

1. David is now established as the king of Israel (vs. 1). He is living in Jerusalem in the king's palace, and has rest from his enemies. It has been a long journey for David with a lot of twists and turns.
2. But one thing hadn't changed. David's heart was still upon the Lord. He wanted so much to glorify God. As he is sitting there, he has a thought: "It isn't right for me to live in a permanent home, and the ark of God has no permanent place to reside."
 - Up to this point, the ark had dwelt in a portable tent that was picked up and moved each time Israel moved. It did not have a permanent house and location.
3. David purposed in his heart, "I'm going to build a beautiful house - a temple for the ark to dwell in where God's presence and glory can permanently reside."
vs. 2-3
4. Today, it seems so much of Christianity is shallow and is consumed with the one thought, "What is God going to do for **me**? How is He going to bless **me** and enrich **me**?"

- But David was purposed in his heart to do something for the Lord. How refreshing! Not, “What can God do for me?” But rather, “What can I do for God?” vs. 26
5. God, give us believers who will say, “Let me study God’s Word and find out what God wants done, and what God wants to accomplish, and let me become consumed with that.”
 6. Paul said that his consuming passion was for Christ to be magnified in his body. He said, “*For me to live is Christ.*” Philippians 1:21
 - To be after God’s heart means that we truly seek to glorify God in all that we do.
 7. Whether it is our work life, home life, or leisure time, we desire to further what God is doing. We realize that it’s not about us, God being our heavenly genie that is there to bless us. We realize that it’s about us serving Him, and glorifying Him!

His heart was established by God’s promises.

1. God’s heart was truly moved by David’s desire to glorify Him, and so God sent the prophet Nathan back to David with some promises. We call this passage “the Davidic covenant.” It contains a series of promises that God makes to David. vs. 8-11
 - In another lesson, we will study this covenant in detail. But the covenant deals with God’s promises to David of a continuing seed, kingdom, and throne which involve Israel and, ultimately, the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. But today, while we are not Israel, we as the church (the body of Christ) have some incredible promises also. Our promises are all found in Christ. 2 Corinthians 1:20-21
3. God’s promises to David established David’s heart because of the nature of those promises. The same can be said of our promises today. God’s promises were:

Unconditional – These promises were not based on David’s actions or behavior. Verses 12-15 are dealing with Solomon, David’s son. Even if Solomon sinned, it wouldn’t change God’s promises.

- Today, we, as believers have unconditional promises from the heart of God. **Examples:** forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14, 2:13), God’s love (Romans 8:35-39), an eternal house in the heavens (2 Corinthians 5:1)

Immutable – This means “not capable of changing.” If David died, if Solomon sinned, if centuries went by, it would not change God’s promises (vs. 16). Centuries later, the angel Gabriel confirmed this covenant again to Mary. Luke 1:31-33

- Likewise, our promises today from God are immutable (Titus 1:2). We have the promise of life and righteousness the moment we get saved, and that promise rests upon Christ’s faithfulness, not ours. Galatians 3:22; 2 Timothy 1:1

Eternal – Notice the eternity of God’s promises to David. vs. 16

- Likewise, the moment we get saved today, God has eternal plans for us (Ephesians 2:6-7). Notice the way verse 6 is worded – God has already done it!
- **Illustration:** They say, “I’m going to give you tickets to the race.” Or, they put an envelope in your hand, then say, “I’m going to give you tickets to the race.” Now the promise is in hand! This is what God has done for us.

4. God’s desire is for your heart to be established by His promises. God wants you to be stable. As you become established in understanding your position in Christ, you become established in the faith, because all the promises of God are in Christ. Colossians 2:6-7

His heart was humbled in prayer.

1. After Nathan told David this wonderful message from God and all those glorious promises, what did David do? He immediately went to prayer. vs. 18
2. There is no better way to know a person’s heart than to spend time with them in prayer.
3. Do you want to know God’s heart? Spend time in His Word learning of His promises, but then take those promises and internalize them by talking to Him in prayer. Notice how David does this. vs. 21-22, 27-28
4. God loves it when we stand upon His Word and pray His Word back to Him. vs. 24-25
 - Of course we must rightly divide God’s Word, and stand on God’s Word to us.
 - The entire Bible is written **for us**, but it is not all written directly **to us**.
5. If you want to know your direct mail, study Paul’s epistles (Romans through Philemon) that he wrote directly to the body of Christ, and study God’s promises to you, and then pray those back to God and stand upon them in prayer.
6. Do you know what David’s heart was when he prayed (vs. 26)? He wanted the Lord to be magnified! This is why he was a man after God’s own heart.

In Conclusion:

1. David was a man after God’s own heart. How about you? What is your heart seeking after?
2. People spend a lot of time chasing after earthly things that will fade away and will not matter in light of eternity. It’s like chasing after the wind. Ultimately, you come up empty.
3. This is why Paul told believers to “*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*” **Colossians 3:2**
4. If you are a person after God’s heart, you will never regret this when it comes time to die and enter eternity.

Understanding the Davidic Covenant – Part 1 2 Samuel 7

Introduction:

1. This chapter contains one of the most important covenants in the Bible. Because God made this covenant with King David, it has been called the Davidic covenant.
2. Although the word “covenant” is not used in this chapter, other portions of Scripture identify these promises from God to David as a covenant.
2 Samuel 23:5; 2 Chronicles 21:7; Psalm 89:3-4, 28-29, 34-37
3. This covenant has eternal ramifications. The words “for ever” are used **nine** times in this one chapter. So, clearly, this is an extremely important passage of Scripture.
4. There is no way to understand prophecy without understanding this covenant that God made with David. The entire prophetic program hinges on the promises that God made to David in this covenant.
5. The actual promises and covenant are found in verses 8-16. God made promises concerning:
 - The nation of Israel - vs. 10-11
 - Solomon (David’s son) – vs. 12-15
 - David – vs. 16
6. In this lesson, we want to focus on the promises that God made specifically to David. There are three major promises that God gave to David in verse 16.

First promise – *“Thine house... shall be established for ever before thee...”*

1. The word “house” in the Bible can mean a physical abode, but it also means a physical line of descent.
 - **Example:** 2 Samuel 9:1 – Mephibosheth lived physically in the house of Machir (vs. 5), but he was physically descended from the house of Saul.
cf. 2 Samuel 3:1
 - **Example:** Luke 1:27, 2:4 - Joseph was of the house and lineage of David.
2. So, God was promising David that his line of descent (his seed) would endure for ever. vs. 23-24; cf. Psalm 89:34, 29, 36
3. Even when Jehoram did great evil as the king of Judah, God would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David.
2 Chronicles 21:7

Second promise – *“Thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee...”*

1. God promised David an eternal kingdom that would stretch into eternity.
2. Although it may not be functional at all times (due to sin and disobedience), it would always have the potential of restoration.

- **Example:** God has promised us eternal, incorruptible bodies. They will cease to function for a time when we die. But, at any moment (the Rapture), we could receive those eternal bodies.
3. God would send chastisement upon Israel and may have temporarily stripped them of their kingdom, but God would never abandon the promise that He made to David – the promise that He would make David’s kingdom an eternal kingdom.
 4. This is why, as the centuries went by, believers in Israel clung to the hope of a Messiah that would come and restore the Davidic kingdom. Luke 1:67-70, 2:25-26, 38
 5. This is why, just before Jesus ascended to heaven, the disciples asked Him if He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel. They knew Christ was the prophesied Messiah, and they knew that this meant the possible restoration of the kingdom. Acts 1:6
 6. In fact, Jesus had taught them to pray for this: *“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* **Matthew 6:10**
 7. Prophecy points to the day when this eternal kingdom is established on the earth.

Third promise – *“Thy throne shall be established for ever.”*

1. The word “throne” speaks of ruling authority (2 Samuel 3:10). David would not simply have an eternal kingdom, but complete earthly dominion and authority.
2. Psalm 72 is a prophetic Psalm (a prayer of David) that anticipates this great day, when the Davidic throne is established over all the earth. vs. 6-9, 11, 17-19
3. Again, David’s throne may not have been functional at all times (due to sin and disobedience), but it would always have the potential of eternal restoration.

Eating at the King's Table

2 Samuel 9

Introduction:

1. This chapter contains the heartwarming story of David and Mephibosheth. It all started when, one day, King David decided to see if there was any relatives left of the old king, King Saul.
2. Typically, new kings wanted to find and kill anybody who was left of the former king's house. But this was not the case at all.
3. David wanted to find them so that he could show them kindness. Why? For Jonathan's sake (vs. 1). Jonathan was King Saul's son, and David's best friend. Jonathan was dead, but David wanted to do something nice in his memory.
4. It ends up that they can only find one person – it was one of Jonathan's sons. His name was Mephibosheth, and he was lame on both feet. He was crippled. vs. 3
5. This young man was in a totally alienated position before David sought him. Because of his association with the former regime, in normal cases he would have been considered an enemy of the throne. Mephibosheth in and of himself had no hope.
6. Yet, this man was taken from an alienated position and restored fully to the king, and was given an exalted position at the king's table (vs. 5-7, 11, 13). Wow! What a story.
7. But, did you know that if you have placed your faith in Christ, you have basically the same story? Every person can overcome his or her alienated position from God Almighty, and find total acceptance with the King of kings. We can eat at the King's table!
8. How? Let's examine this story and make application to our lives.

First, we must accept the fact of our alienation.

1. Just like Mephibosheth, we were born into the wrong family.
 - He was born into the house of Saul. Saul was, of course, a picture of Satan - full of rebellion and disobedience to God. Saul and his family were rejected by God because of their sin and rebellion. Mephibosheth was born into a rejected family.
 - But guess what - so were all of us (not physically, but spiritually)! The Bible teaches that all of us were born into Adam's family (Romans 5:12), and Satan was our father (John 8:44). We were children of disobedience. Ephesians 2:2
 - Like Mephibosheth, we were alienated from God because we were born into the wrong family.
2. Just like Mephibosheth, we were crippled from a fall.
 - Mephibosheth was lame on both feet. He could not walk.
 - The first man, Adam, experienced a fall in the Garden of Eden. We call it the fall of man. Adam passed that fallen nature down to mankind. Paul said, "*By man came death...in Adam all die.*" 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

- We experienced a fall in Adam. We have been crippled spiritually by a fall. Romans 3:23, 6:23
 - We cannot achieve or attain heaven by pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps through our own self-effort. We've been crippled by a fall.
3. Just like Mephibosheth, we had nowhere to go.
 - He lived in Lo-debar (vs. 4-5). This means "no pasture." Mephibosheth was left to scour barren, dry wasteland to try to meet his needs.
 - What a description this is of this present, evil world! It promises people pleasure, peace, and prosperity, but it can do nothing to remedy our sin problem and give us peace with God. The world can do nothing to fill the innermost spiritual needs of our soul.
 4. Just like Mephibosheth, what an alienated position we were in. We were born into the wrong family, crippled from a fall, with nowhere to go.

Second, we must realize that mercy is being offered from the King.

1. David went seeking for Mephibosheth. vs. 3-5
 - David called for the servant (Ziba), and sent him out to find Mephibosheth. David made the first move. Without David taking the initiative, Mephibosheth would have remained in an alienated position.
 - This reminds me of 2,000 years ago, when God sent the Son into this world. Why did God the Father do this? 1 John 4:9-10 provides the answer - *"That we might live!"*
 - You may wonder, "Does God love me? Does God want me in His family?" My friend, God has already made the first move. Christ gave Himself a ransom for all on the cross. He said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." John said that Jesus was *"...the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."*
 - God has sent His Son and given His Word to seek you, and invite you to His table!
 - Mephibosheth could have rejected David's invitation, but how foolish that would have been. How foolish for us to reject God's invitation.
2. David accepted Mephibosheth just the way he was.
 - Notice Mephibosheth's words in vs. 8. But notice David's words in vs. 7. Mephibosheth was crippled, yet David took him in.
 - Some people think, "God would never want me or accept me in His family. I'm too bad. I'm too unlovable. I've done too many sinful things." Paul said that *"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*
Illustration: Maniac of Gadara – Jesus passed by!
 - Ziba said, "David, there's one son, but he's crippled." David said, "Go get him and fetch him to me. I want him at my table!"
3. David showed Mephibosheth kindness for Jonathan's sake. vs. 1, 7
 - David didn't do this because of what Mephibosheth had to offer him. He did it because of Jonathan, his best friend. They had made a covenant (1 Samuel 18:3), and because of that covenant David showed Mephibosheth kindness.

- Two thousand years ago, another covenant was made between God the Father and the Son. It was sealed through the blood that Jesus shed on the cross for our sins. This covenant provides for the forgiveness of sins to all those who will place their faith in Christ and what He has done.
- Just like David had mercy on Mephibosheth because of Jonathan, God the Father has mercy on us, and receives us based on that covenant made on the cross at Calvary. Ephesians 4:32 (“*for Christ’s sake*”); Colossians 1:14

In Conclusion:

- Mephibosheth was shown mercy by the king, but it didn’t stop there. It wasn’t simply that he received mercy instead of judgment from the king. He also received an exalted position from David.
 1. David restored to Mephibosheth all the land of Saul. vs. 7
 - Through Christ, God has restored to me all that I lost in Adam. In Adam, I lost life, in Christ, I have gained life. In Adam, I lost fellowship with God, in Christ, I have been made acceptable to God, and can now live daily in His presence.
 2. David had someone provide for Mephibosheth all that he needed. vs. 9-10
 - Just like David sent servants to do the work for Mephibosheth, God sent His Holy Spirit to indwell me and do the work of God through me!
 - I don’t have to serve God through my own fleshly effort. Colossians 1:29
 3. David gave Mephibosheth a place at the king’s table. vs. 13
 - If you are saved today, God has given you an exalted position in Christ. Ephesians 2:6
 - You were once alienated with no hope, but now you are seated in heavenly places for all eternity!

Understanding the Davidic Covenant – Part 2 2 Samuel 7

Introduction:

1. This chapter contains one of the most important covenants in the Bible. Because God made this covenant with King David, it has been called the Davidic covenant.
2. Although the word “covenant” is not used in this chapter, other portions of Scripture identify these promises from God to David as a covenant. 2 Samuel 23:5; 2 Chronicles 21:7; Psalm 89:3-4, 28-29, 34-37
3. This covenant has eternal ramifications. The words “for ever” are used **nine** times in this one chapter. So, clearly, this is an extremely important passage of Scripture.
4. There is no way to understand prophecy without understanding this covenant that God made with David. The entire prophetic program hinges on the promises that God made to David in this covenant.
5. The actual promises and covenant are found in verses 8-16. God made promises concerning:
 - The nation of Israel - vs. 10-11
 - Solomon (David’s son) – vs. 12-15
 - David – vs. 16
6. In this lesson, we want to focus on the promises that God made specifically to David. There are three major promises that God gave to David in verse 16.

First promise – *“Thine house... shall be established for ever before thee...”*

1. The word “house” in the Bible can mean a physical abode, but it also means a physical line of descent.
 - **Example:** 2 Samuel 9:1 – Mephibosheth lived physically in the house of Machir (vs. 5), but he was physically descended from the house of Saul. cf. 2 Samuel 3:1
 - **Example:** Luke 1:27, 2:4 - Joseph was of the house and lineage of David.
2. So, God was promising David that his line of descent (his seed) would endure for ever. vs. 23-24; cf. Psalm 89:34, 29, 36
3. Even when Jehoram did great evil as the king of Judah, God would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David. 2 Chronicles 21:7

Second promise – *“Thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee...”*

1. God promised David an eternal kingdom that would stretch into eternity.
2. Although it may not be functional at all times (due to sin and disobedience), it would always have the potential of restoration.

- **Example:** God has promised us eternal, incorruptible bodies. They will cease to function for a time when we die. But, at any moment (the Rapture), we could receive those eternal bodies.
3. God would send chastisement upon Israel and may have temporarily stripped them of their kingdom, but God would never abandon the promise that He made to David – the promise that He would make David’s kingdom an eternal kingdom.
 4. This is why, as the centuries went by, believers in Israel clung to the hope of a Messiah that would come and restore the Davidic kingdom. Luke 1:67-70, 2:25-26, 38
 5. This is why, just before Jesus ascended to heaven, the disciples asked Him if He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel. They knew Christ was the prophesied Messiah, and they knew that this meant the possible restoration of the kingdom. Acts 1:6
 6. In fact, Jesus had taught them to pray for this: *“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* **Matthew 6:10**
 7. Prophecy points to the day when this eternal kingdom is established on the earth.

Third promise – *“Thy throne shall be established for ever.”*

1. The word “throne” speaks of ruling authority (2 Samuel 3:10). David would not simply have an eternal kingdom, but complete earthly dominion and authority.
2. Psalm 72 is a prophetic Psalm (a prayer of David) that anticipates this great day, when the Davidic throne is established over all the earth. vs. 6-9, 11, 17-19
3. Again, David’s throne may not have been functional at all times (due to sin and disobedience), but it would always have the potential of eternal restoration.

A key question: Are these literal promises from God to David? Will God fulfill these promises in a literal fashion?

1. Did you notice the wording in Psalm 72? This is a throne over the literal earth, with literal nations, not a spiritual throne in heaven.
2. The Davidic covenant involves a literal, physical, earthly kingdom and throne, with a literal, physical descendant from David ruling on the throne.
 - This was not a conditional covenant that God established with David. There were no stated conditions that David or his descendants had to meet in order for God to keep His covenant promises. It was unconditional in nature. It depends totally on the faithfulness of God to keep His promises.
3. Centuries later, after David’s ruling authority had been suspended due to Israel’s sin, the angel Gabriel came to Mary with glorious promises concerning her baby (Luke 1:30-33). Every one of the promises in the Davidic covenant were reiterated and confirmed.
 - The promise of a seed – *“...his father David...over the house of Jacob...”*
 - The promise of a kingdom – *“...and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”*
 - The promise of a throne – *“...the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.”*

4. While David's ruling authority may have been inactive for centuries, it had not passed away permanently. God would become flesh, and be born of David's seed (Matthew 1:1), and all three promises contained in the Davidic covenant would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
5. Some teach that God's promises to David were allegorical and figurative. They teach that Christ has already fulfilled this covenant by resurrecting and ascending to heaven.
 - They teach that He sits on a spiritual throne in heaven ruling over a spiritual kingdom (over the church, or human hearts).
 - According to this view (it's called the amillennial view), the kingdom over which Christ rules in fulfillment of the Davidic covenant is solely a spiritual kingdom. It is not a literal, earthly, political kingdom.
 - The prefix "a" means "no." Thus, amillennialism is the view which states that there will be no literal, political kingdom of God on this earth.
6. But the Bible is quite clear that Christ will one day return to the earth and reign over a literal, physical, earthly kingdom. We call this the premillennial view. The prefix "pre" means "before." Thus, Christ will return to earth **before** the kingdom of God on earth. Christ will return to this earth for the purpose of establishing the kingdom on earth.
 - Peter knew that all of prophecy pointed to this day. Notice (Acts 3:19-21), Peter made it clear that the "*times of refreshing*" will not come while Jesus is in heaven. He indicated that they will come when Jesus has returned to be present on earth, and when Israel has repented as a nation.
 - Christ Himself believed He would return to establish a literal kingdom. Matthew 24:27-30, 25:31-32
 - The disciples believed that a literal kingdom would come to earth (Acts 1:6) because of the clear words that Christ had told them. Luke 22:28-30; Matthew 19:27-29
 - Paul believed that Christ would return and fulfill His covenant with Israel. Romans 11:26-27
7. Christ will return to this earth, and after His feet touch on the Mount of Olives He will reign on the Davidic throne, and establish a righteous political government over all the earth. Zechariah 14:4, 9; Jeremiah 23:5-8; Isaiah 9:6-7

UNDERSTANDING THE DAVIDIC COVENANT



How to be an Effective Ambassador for Christ

2 Samuel 10

Introduction:

1. Last week, we studied the touching story of how David showed great kindness and grace towards a lame man by the name of Mephibosheth.
2. Here, in chapter 10, David continued his deeds of kindness. David heard that the king of the Ammonites had died, and that his son was reigning in his father's stead. vs. 1
3. Obviously, at some time in the past, the former king had showed kindness unto David, so David desired to return the favor. He sent a group of ambassadors to the land of Ammon to comfort and probably bring gifts to the son of the former king. vs. 2
4. The new king did not appreciate or value David's kindness and grace. He openly spurned it and rejected it. They took David's ambassadors, treated them with disrespect and sent them on their way. vs. 3-4
 - He didn't exactly roll out the red carpet. Even today, in certain cultures, shaving off a man's beard is regarded as a great insult and indignity.
5. Just as David had ambassadors that he sent out, did you know that God has ambassadors to this world today? Turn to 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. If you are **in** Christ, you are an ambassador **for** Christ. An ambassador is a representative.
6. The question is, "How are you doing representing the King of heaven on earth?"

How can you be an effective ambassador for Christ to this world?

First, understand clearly your position as an ambassador.

1. These men were ambassadors for David. These men were representing David. If our country sends ambassadors to Mexico, they speak and act on behalf of our government.
2. Being an ambassador for King David was a high and noble calling. But, this morning, if you are a believer, you have a much higher and nobler calling. You hold the distinct honor, privilege, and position of being an ambassador for the King of kings, Jesus Christ. Many people don't understand their position and its importance.
3. Jesus Christ is not here on this earth any longer. He ascended to heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God the Father. Today, Christ is speaking His Word through His appointed ambassadors. For good or bad – we're it! What a calling! There is no "plan B."
4. Do you realize that you are Christ's representative on earth? When you speak His Word to others, you are speaking in Christ's stead (place). 2 Corinthians 5:20
5. Do you know people that do not know Christ as their Savior? You are Christ's representative to them. This is your spiritual position on earth. You speak His Word and you live out His Word in your daily life. Ephesians 5:8, 11; Philippians 2:15

6. People say, "I'm just an old sinner saved by grace." You are more than just that. You are now a saint of God in Christ, called to be Christ's ambassador on earth!

Second, understand clearly your message as an ambassador.

1. These ambassadors were not sent without a message. They were sent with a message of comfort and kindness. In sending these ambassadors, David was sending a message of comfort, love, and peace.
2. As ambassadors for Christ, did you know that Christ has given to us a glorious message to take to this world? It is the message of reconciliation.
2 Corinthians 5:18-19
 - To "reconcile" simply means to "restore two parties to union or agreement after being previously alienated."
 - Biblically, it means "restoration to divine favor."
3. This is our message that we have been commissioned to share as ambassadors. It's the good news that individuals anywhere can be restored to God's favor. God is no respecter of persons.
4. Christ appeared to and saved His chief enemy, Saul of Tarsus. At that point in history, the entire world deserved the wrath of God. Instead, Christ saved Paul and revealed to him a message of grace to share with the whole world.
1 Timothy 1:11, 13-15
5. Those of us who were alienated from God by wicked works (Colossians 1:21), and without hope (Ephesians 2:12), could now be reconciled to God through the cross work of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13). What a message we have been given!
6. No matter who you are, what you have done, what your cultural or ethnic background may be, through simple faith in Jesus Christ, you can have an eternal position of reconciliation with the God of heaven!
7. As ambassadors, it is our privilege and responsibility to take this glorious message to those who need it (your neighbor, co-worker, friend, relative, waitress, etc.).

Third, understand clearly your strategy as an ambassador.

1. Notice in verse 2, David sent these ambassadors out and they "*came into the land.*" They carried the message to them. They didn't wait for the Ammonites to come to them; they took the message of grace from their king to the Ammonites.
2. We employ the same strategy as ambassadors for Christ. The strategy is not "Wait for people to come and knock down our door trying to hear the gospel of Christ." We may be waiting a long time for that to happen. The strategy is for us to go to them!
3. A great example of this is the local church at Thessalonica. They were once idolatrous Gentiles that had heard the gospel from Paul and had gotten saved. As ambassadors for Christ, what did they do? Did they put up a sign that said, "Come and see us some time."
4. No, 1 Thessalonians 1:8 explains their strategy. They sounded out the Word of the Lord and spread their faith everywhere. This is God's plan for us.

Illustration of Christ: He didn't camp out in a cave waiting for needy people to come to Him. He went where the needy people were and ministered and taught!

Fourth, understand clearly your mission as an ambassador.

1. These ambassadors for David had a mission. Their mission was to take David's message of grace and love to the land of Ammon. Once they got there, they were rejected, persecuted, and sent on their way. Their message was spurned and rejected.
2. Did they fulfill their mission? Absolutely! Their mission was not to **force** the king of Ammon to accept their message. It was simply to take it and offer it. He wasn't rejecting **them**. He was rejecting the King of Israel (David) that sent the message of grace. vs. 3
3. Let this be a lesson. As an ambassador for Christ, don't be shocked if people reject your glorious message of grace from the lips of Christ. Matthew 10:14
 - Remember, they aren't rejecting you, but Christ (our leader).
1 Thessalonians 4:8
4. Our mission is to take Christ's message to them. At that point, the responsibility is now theirs. They have a free will to accept or reject the message. Acts 18:6
5. Once you give out the message, you have done your part as a faithful ambassador. Now the decision is theirs. These people in 2 Samuel 10 rejected King David's message.
6. What was the result of their decision? Defeat, death, judgment, and servanthood!
7. Let this also be a lesson. Today, we live in a time of grace in which Jesus Christ is offering to you a message of grace, peace, and reconciliation.
8. But, the Bible tells us that God is righteous, and one day God will bring wrath and judgment on those who have spurned and rejected His message. Matthew 10:15
9. Will you receive God's offer of grace today?

How to be an Effective Ambassador for Christ **2 Samuel 10**

Introduction:

1. Last week, we studied the touching story of how David showed great kindness and grace towards a lame man by the name of Mephibosheth.
2. Here, in chapter 10, David continued his deeds of kindness. David heard that the king of the Ammonites had died, and that his son was reigning in his father's stead. vs. 1
3. Obviously, at some time in the past, the former king had showed kindness unto David, so David desired to return the favor. He sent a group of ambassadors to the land of Ammon to comfort and probably bring gifts to the son of the former king. vs. 2
4. The new king did not appreciate or value David's kindness and grace. He openly spurned it and rejected it. They took David's ambassadors, treated them with disrespect and sent them on their way. vs. 3-4
 - He didn't exactly roll out the red carpet. Even today, in certain cultures, shaving off a man's beard is regarded as a great insult and indignity.
5. Just as David had ambassadors that he sent out, did you know that God has ambassadors to this world today? Turn to 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. If you are **in** Christ, you are an ambassador **for** Christ. An ambassador is a representative.
6. The question is, "How are you doing representing the King of heaven on earth?"

How can you be an effective ambassador for Christ to this world?

First, understand clearly your position as an ambassador.

1. These men were ambassadors for David. These men were representing David. If our country sends ambassadors to Mexico, they speak and act on behalf of our government.
2. Being an ambassador for King David was a high and noble calling. But, this morning, if you are a believer, you have a much higher and nobler calling. You hold the distinct honor, privilege, and position of being an ambassador for the King of kings, Jesus Christ. Many people don't understand their position and its importance.
3. Jesus Christ is not here on this earth any longer. He ascended to heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God the Father. Today, Christ is speaking His Word through His appointed ambassadors. For good or bad – we're it! What a calling! There is no "plan B."
4. Do you realize that you are Christ's representative on earth? When you speak His Word to others, you are speaking in Christ's stead (place). 2 Corinthians 5:20
5. Do you know people that do not know Christ as their Savior? You are Christ's representative to them. This is your spiritual position on earth. You speak His Word and you live out His Word in your daily life. Ephesians 5:8, 11; Philippians 2:15

6. People say, "I'm just an old sinner saved by grace." You are more than just that. You are now a saint of God in Christ, called to be Christ's ambassador on earth!

Second, understand clearly your message as an ambassador.

1. These ambassadors were not sent without a message. They were sent with a message of comfort and kindness. In sending these ambassadors, David was sending a message of comfort, love, and peace.
2. As ambassadors for Christ, did you know that Christ has given to us a glorious message to take to this world? It is the message of reconciliation.
2 Corinthians 5:18-19
 - To "reconcile" simply means to "restore two parties to union or agreement after being previously alienated."
 - Biblically, it means "restoration to divine favor."
3. This is our message that we have been commissioned to share as ambassadors. It's the good news that individuals anywhere can be restored to God's favor. God is no respecter of persons.
4. Christ appeared to and saved His chief enemy, Saul of Tarsus. At that point in history, the entire world deserved the wrath of God. Instead, Christ saved Paul and revealed to him a message of grace to share with the whole world.
1 Timothy 1:11, 13-15
5. Those of us who were alienated from God by wicked works (Colossians 1:21), and without hope (Ephesians 2:12), could now be reconciled to God through the cross work of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13). What a message we have been given!
6. No matter who you are, what you have done, what your cultural or ethnic background may be, through simple faith in Jesus Christ, you can have an eternal position of reconciliation with the God of heaven!
7. As ambassadors, it is our privilege and responsibility to take this glorious message to those who need it (your neighbor, co-worker, friend, relative, waitress, etc.).

Third, understand clearly your strategy as an ambassador.

1. Notice in verse 2, David sent these ambassadors out and they "*came into the land.*" They carried the message to them. They didn't wait for the Ammonites to come to them; they took the message of grace from their king to the Ammonites.
2. We employ the same strategy as ambassadors for Christ. The strategy is not "Wait for people to come and knock down our door trying to hear the gospel of Christ." We may be waiting a long time for that to happen. The strategy is for us to go to them!
3. A great example of this is the local church at Thessalonica. They were once idolatrous Gentiles that had heard the gospel from Paul and had gotten saved. As ambassadors for Christ, what did they do? Did they put up a sign that said, "Come and see us some time."
4. No, 1 Thessalonians 1:8 explains their strategy. They sounded out the Word of the Lord and spread their faith everywhere. This is God's plan for us.

Illustration of Christ: He didn't camp out in a cave waiting for needy people to come to Him. He went where the needy people were and ministered and taught!

Fourth, understand clearly your mission as an ambassador.

1. These ambassadors for David had a mission. Their mission was to take David's message of grace and love to the land of Ammon. Once they got there, they were rejected, persecuted, and sent on their way. Their message was spurned and rejected.
2. Did they fulfill their mission? Absolutely! Their mission was not to **force** the king of Ammon to accept their message. It was simply to take it and offer it. He wasn't rejecting **them**. He was rejecting the King of Israel (David) that sent the message of grace. vs. 3
3. Let this be a lesson. As an ambassador for Christ, don't be shocked if people reject your glorious message of grace from the lips of Christ. Matthew 10:14
 - Remember, they aren't rejecting you, but Christ (our leader).
1 Thessalonians 4:8
4. Our mission is to take Christ's message to them. At that point, the responsibility is now theirs. They have a free will to accept or reject the message. Acts 18:6
5. Once you give out the message, you have done your part as a faithful ambassador. Now the decision is theirs. These people in 2 Samuel 10 rejected King David's message.
6. What was the result of their decision? Defeat, death, judgment, and servanthood!
7. Let this also be a lesson. Today, we live in a time of grace in which Jesus Christ is offering to you a message of grace, peace, and reconciliation.
8. But, the Bible tells us that God is righteous, and one day God will bring wrath and judgment on those who have spurned and rejected His message. Matthew 10:15
9. Will you receive God's offer of grace today?

How to be an Effective Ambassador for Christ

2 Samuel 10

Introduction:

1. Last week, we studied the touching story of how David showed great kindness and grace towards a lame man by the name of Mephibosheth.
2. Here, in chapter 10, David continued his deeds of kindness. David heard that the king of the Ammonites had died, and that his son was reigning in his father's stead. vs. 1
3. Obviously, at some time in the past, the former king had showed kindness unto David, so David desired to return the favor. He sent a group of ambassadors to the land of Ammon to comfort and probably bring gifts to the son of the former king. vs. 2
4. The new king did not appreciate or value David's kindness and grace. He openly spurned it and rejected it. They took David's ambassadors, treated them with disrespect and sent them on their way. vs. 3-4
 - He didn't exactly roll out the red carpet. Even today, in certain cultures, shaving off a man's beard is regarded as a great insult and indignity.
5. Just as David had ambassadors that he sent out, did you know that God has ambassadors to this world today? Turn to 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. If you are **in** Christ, you are an ambassador **for** Christ. An ambassador is a representative.
6. The question is, "How are you doing representing the King of heaven on earth?"

How can you be an effective ambassador for Christ to this world?

First, understand clearly your position as an ambassador.

1. These men were ambassadors for David. These men were representing David. If our country sends ambassadors to Mexico, they speak and act on behalf of our government.
2. Being an ambassador for King David was a high and noble calling. But, this morning, if you are a believer, you have a much higher and nobler calling. You hold the distinct honor, privilege, and position of being an ambassador for the King of kings, Jesus Christ. Many people don't understand their position and its importance.
3. Jesus Christ is not here on this earth any longer. He ascended to heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God the Father. Today, Christ is speaking His Word through His appointed ambassadors. For good or bad – we're it! What a calling! There is no "plan B."
4. Do you realize that you are Christ's representative on earth? When you speak His Word to others, you are speaking in Christ's stead (place). 2 Corinthians 5:20
5. Do you know people that do not know Christ as their Savior? You are Christ's representative to them. This is your spiritual position on earth. You speak His Word and you live out His Word in your daily life. Ephesians 5:8, 11; Philippians 2:15

6. People say, "I'm just an old sinner saved by grace." You are more than just that. You are now a saint of God in Christ, called to be Christ's ambassador on earth!

Second, understand clearly your message as an ambassador.

1. These ambassadors were not sent without a message. They were sent with a message of comfort and kindness. In sending these ambassadors, David was sending a message of comfort, love, and peace.
2. As ambassadors for Christ, did you know that Christ has given to us a glorious message to take to this world? It is the message of reconciliation.
2 Corinthians 5:18-19
 - To "reconcile" simply means to "restore two parties to union or agreement after being previously alienated."
 - Biblically, it means "restoration to divine favor."
3. This is our message that we have been commissioned to share as ambassadors. It's the good news that individuals anywhere can be restored to God's favor. God is no respecter of persons.
4. Christ appeared to and saved His chief enemy, Saul of Tarsus. At that point in history, the entire world deserved the wrath of God. Instead, Christ saved Paul and revealed to him a message of grace to share with the whole world.
1 Timothy 1:11, 13-15
5. Those of us who were alienated from God by wicked works (Colossians 1:21), and without hope (Ephesians 2:12), could now be reconciled to God through the cross work of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13). What a message we have been given!
6. No matter who you are, what you have done, what your cultural or ethnic background may be, through simple faith in Jesus Christ, you can have an eternal position of reconciliation with the God of heaven!
7. As ambassadors, it is our privilege and responsibility to take this glorious message to those who need it (your neighbor, co-worker, friend, relative, waitress, etc.).

Third, understand clearly your strategy as an ambassador.

1. Notice in verse 2, David sent these ambassadors out and they "*came into the land.*" They carried the message to them. They didn't wait for the Ammonites to come to them; they took the message of grace from their king to the Ammonites.
2. We employ the same strategy as ambassadors for Christ. The strategy is not "Wait for people to come and knock down our door trying to hear the gospel of Christ." We may be waiting a long time for that to happen. The strategy is for us to go to them!
3. A great example of this is the local church at Thessalonica. They were once idolatrous Gentiles that had heard the gospel from Paul and had gotten saved. As ambassadors for Christ, what did they do? Did they put up a sign that said, "Come and see us some time."
4. No, 1 Thessalonians 1:8 explains their strategy. They sounded out the Word of the Lord and spread their faith everywhere. This is God's plan for us.

Illustration of Christ: He didn't camp out in a cave waiting for needy people to come to Him. He went where the needy people were and ministered and taught!

Fourth, understand clearly your mission as an ambassador.

1. These ambassadors for David had a mission. Their mission was to take David's message of grace and love to the land of Ammon. Once they got there, they were rejected, persecuted, and sent on their way. Their message was spurned and rejected.
2. Did they fulfill their mission? Absolutely! Their mission was not to **force** the king of Ammon to accept their message. It was simply to take it and offer it. He wasn't rejecting **them**. He was rejecting the King of Israel (David) that sent the message of grace. vs. 3
3. Let this be a lesson. As an ambassador for Christ, don't be shocked if people reject your glorious message of grace from the lips of Christ. Matthew 10:14
 - Remember, they aren't rejecting you, but Christ (our leader).
1 Thessalonians 4:8
4. Our mission is to take Christ's message to them. At that point, the responsibility is now theirs. They have a free will to accept or reject the message. Acts 18:6
5. Once you give out the message, you have done your part as a faithful ambassador. Now the decision is theirs. These people in 2 Samuel 10 rejected King David's message.
6. What was the result of their decision? Defeat, death, judgment, and servanthood!
7. Let this also be a lesson. Today, we live in a time of grace in which Jesus Christ is offering to you a message of grace, peace, and reconciliation.
8. But, the Bible tells us that God is righteous, and one day God will bring wrath and judgment on those who have spurned and rejected His message. Matthew 10:15
9. Will you receive God's offer of grace today?

Understanding the Davidic Covenant – Part 3 2 Samuel 7

Introduction:

1. This chapter contains one of the most important covenants in the Bible. Because God made this covenant with King David, it has been called the Davidic covenant.
2. Although the word “covenant” is not used in this chapter, other portions of Scripture identify these promises from God to David as a covenant.
2 Samuel 23:5; 2 Chronicles 21:7; Psalm 89:3-4, 28-29, 34-37
3. This covenant has eternal ramifications. The words “for ever” are used **nine** times in this one chapter. So, clearly, this is an extremely important passage of Scripture.
4. There is no way to understand prophecy without understanding this covenant that God made with David. The entire prophetic program hinges on the promises that God made to David in this covenant.
5. The actual promises and covenant are found in verses 8-16. God made promises concerning:
 - The nation of Israel - vs. 10-11
 - Solomon (David’s son) – vs. 12-15
 - David – vs. 16
6. In this lesson, we want to focus on the promises that God made specifically to David. There are three major promises that God gave to David in verse 16.

First promise – *“Thine house... shall be established for ever before thee...”*

1. The word “house” in the Bible can mean a physical abode, but it also means a physical line of descent.
 - **Example:** 2 Samuel 9:1 – Mephibosheth lived physically in the house of Machir (vs. 5), but he was physically descended from the house of Saul.
cf. 2 Samuel 3:1
 - **Example:** Luke 1:27, 2:4 - Joseph was of the house and lineage of David.
2. So, God was promising David that his line of descent (his seed) would endure for ever. vs. 23-24; cf. Psalm 89:34, 29, 36
3. Even when Jehoram did great evil as the king of Judah, God would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David.
2 Chronicles 21:7

Second promise – *“Thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee...”*

1. God promised David an eternal kingdom that would stretch into eternity.
2. Although it may not be functional at all times (due to sin and disobedience), it would always have the potential of restoration.

- **Example:** God has promised us eternal, incorruptible bodies. They will cease to function for a time when we die. But, at any moment (the Rapture), we could receive those eternal bodies.
3. God would send chastisement upon Israel and may have temporarily stripped them of their kingdom, but God would never abandon the promise that He made to David – the promise that He would make David’s kingdom an eternal kingdom.
 4. This is why, as the centuries went by, believers in Israel clung to the hope of a Messiah that would come and restore the Davidic kingdom. Luke 1:67-70, 2:25-26, 38
 5. This is why, just before Jesus ascended to heaven, the disciples asked Him if He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel. They knew Christ was the prophesied Messiah, and they knew that this meant the possible restoration of the kingdom. Acts 1:6
 6. In fact, Jesus had taught them to pray for this: *“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* **Matthew 6:10**
 7. Prophecy points to the day when this eternal kingdom is established on the earth.

Third promise – *“Thy throne shall be established for ever.”*

1. The word “throne” speaks of ruling authority (2 Samuel 3:10). David would not simply have an eternal kingdom, but complete earthly dominion and authority.
2. Psalm 72 is a prophetic Psalm (a prayer of David) that anticipates this great day, when the Davidic throne is established over all the earth. vs. 6-9, 11, 17-19
3. Again, David’s throne may not have been functional at all times (due to sin and disobedience), but it would always have the potential of eternal restoration.

A key question: Are these literal promises from God to David? Will God fulfill these promises in a literal fashion?

1. Did you notice the wording in Psalm 72? This is a throne over the literal earth, with literal nations, not a spiritual throne in heaven.
2. The Davidic covenant involves a literal, physical, earthly kingdom and throne, with a literal, physical descendant from David ruling on the throne.
 - This was not a conditional covenant that God established with David. There were no stated conditions that David or his descendants had to meet in order for God to keep His covenant promises. It was unconditional in nature. It depends totally on the faithfulness of God to keep His promises.
3. Centuries later, after David’s ruling authority had been suspended due to Israel’s sin, the angel Gabriel came to Mary with glorious promises concerning her baby (Luke 1:30-33). Every one of the promises in the Davidic covenant were reiterated and confirmed.
 - The promise of a seed – *“...his father David...over the house of Jacob...”*
 - The promise of a kingdom – *“...and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”*
 - The promise of a throne – *“...the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.”*

4. While David's ruling authority may have been inactive for centuries, it had not passed away permanently. God would become flesh, and be born of David's seed (Matthew 1:1), and all three promises contained in the Davidic covenant would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
5. Some teach that God's promises to David were allegorical and figurative. They teach that Christ has already fulfilled this covenant by resurrecting and ascending to heaven.
 - They teach that He sits on a spiritual throne in heaven ruling over a spiritual kingdom (over the church, or human hearts).
 - According to this view (it's called the amillennial view), the kingdom over which Christ rules in fulfillment of the Davidic covenant is solely a spiritual kingdom. It is not a literal, earthly, political kingdom.
 - The prefix "a" means "no." Thus, amillennialism is the view which states that there will be no literal, political kingdom of God on this earth.
6. But the Bible is quite clear that Christ will one day return to the earth and reign over a literal, physical, earthly kingdom. We call this the premillennial view. The prefix "pre" means "before." Thus, Christ will return to earth **before** the kingdom of God on earth. Christ will return to this earth for the purpose of establishing the kingdom on earth.
 - Peter knew that all of prophecy pointed to this day. Notice (Acts 3:19-21), Peter made it clear that the "*times of refreshing*" will not come while Jesus is in heaven. He indicated that they will come when Jesus has returned to be present on earth, and when Israel has repented as a nation.
 - Christ Himself believed He would return to establish a literal kingdom. Matthew 24:27-30, 25:31-32
 - The disciples believed that a literal kingdom would come to earth (Acts 1:6) because of the clear words that Christ had told them. Luke 22:28-30; Matthew 19:27-29
 - Paul believed that Christ would return and fulfill His covenant with Israel. Romans 11:26-27
7. Christ will return to this earth, and after His feet touch on the Mount of Olives He will reign on the Davidic throne, and establish a righteous political government over all the earth. Zechariah 14:4, 9; Jeremiah 23:5-8; Isaiah 9:6-7

The key to understanding the Davidic Covenant:

1. The key is in rightly dividing God's Word, and understanding that God has two distinct and separate programs in the Bible that are both designed for a special purpose.
 - There is a **prophetic program** that has been prophesied since the world began which involves God's purpose to establish His ruling authority throughout the entire earth. This is the subject of the covenant that God made with David, and will be fulfilled literally through the physical seed of David. Acts 3:19-21

- There is a **mystery program** that has been kept secret since the beginning of the world which involves God's purpose to establish His ruling authority in the heavens (Colossians 1:25-26; Ephesians 3:3-5). This is accomplished through a new spiritual organism that He is forming called the church, the body of Christ. Believers in this dispensation will extend Christ's glory throughout the heavenlies in the ages to come. Ephesians 2:6-7
 - The **earth** would involve the subject of **prophecy**, that is, Christ one day ruling and reigning over a visible kingdom on the literal earth in Jerusalem.
 - The **heaven** would involve the subject of the **mystery**, that is, a people whose citizenship is in heaven and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Ephesians 1:3
 - The Bible is basically divided into these two great subjects.
2. So today, the earthly kingdom program has been temporarily suspended.
- God set Israel aside as a nation in Acts 28:28. When this happened, the subject of prophecy ceased, but will be resumed after the body of Christ is called out at the end of the church age.
 - There is currently an interruption in the prophetic program. God is not dealing with the world through Israel and the nations.
 - Today, Christ is establishing a spiritual kingdom within the hearts of **individual** believers. Romans 14:17
 - **When** God set aside Israel, He offered salvation to all of His enemies in the entire world through faith in Christ's shed blood. Any individual in the world can be reconciled to God through faith in Christ.
3. But God has not abandoned and scrapped His earthly kingdom program and His earthly promises to David. He is faithful, and will fulfill them yet in the future when this current dispensation of grace is over. Christ, the seed of David, will reign over an earthly kingdom and sit on the Davidic throne as promised in 2 Samuel 7.
- This is how a Bible believer reconciles passages such as Romans 14:17, and Luke 22:29-30.
 - As we recognize these two programs, we can allow both passages to say what they mean and mean what they say without trying to change them or twist them to say the same thing.
4. By simply rightly dividing and recognizing God's two programs, we can allow all of Scripture to be interpreted literally.
5. But when we don't recognize these two distinct programs, the amillennialist must allegorize hundreds of passages and change the literal meaning of words such as "Israel, land, nations, thrones, governments, kings," and make them say something else.

The Key – "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth!"

UNDERSTANDING THE DAVIDIC COVENANT



David's Downfall: Making Provision for the Flesh 2 Samuel 11:1-5

Introduction:

1. Are there things in your past that you wish you could go back and somehow undo? Would you make a better decision if you had a second chance?
2. Here in our text, David, a man after God's own heart, experiences a serious, devastating moral downfall. He falls into deep immoral sin. Let's read verses 1-5.
3. David committed adultery with Bathsheba, another man's wife.
4. I know that Hollywood makes light of sexual sin, but God Almighty is emphatically against it. Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Proverbs 6:32-33, 7:22-27 (very descriptive terms of a man getting involved with a woman not his wife)
 - Hollywood portrays it as common, ordinary, fun, and exciting. They seldom show a person dying with a sexually transmitted disease, or a child weeping because mom and dad are divorcing, or a person plagued with guilt because they've been unfaithful, or a 14-year-old girl pregnant.
5. After David's "fun" (sin), there were terrible and devastating aftereffects. The price tag was much higher than David thought it would be. It always is.
6. You may say, "But I thought David was a strong believer, a man that loved the Lord?" He was, but he wasn't above a downfall, nor is any of us. Here was David's problem – he made provision for the flesh.
 - The flesh is that part of you that desires to walk independently of God and His Word. The flesh is all about self-gratification, and the Bible says that sin is pleasurable for a season.
7. The flesh desires immediate gratification without any thought of long-term consequences. As a believer, the Holy Spirit within you knows better, and desires to obey God and follow His commands. Galatians 5:17
 - Paul says that "*the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh...*"
 - The word "*lusteth*" means "to set the heart upon; to long for."
 - So the flesh has its heart set upon things that are against the Spirit, and the Spirit is longing for things that are against the flesh.
 - "*These are contrary the one to the other.*" The word "*contrary*" means "to lie opposite; to be adverse." It is translated "*adversary*" in other places.
8. In lieu of this struggle, Paul admonishes believers to "*...make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof*" (Romans 13:14). This was David's problem. He supplied his flesh with the opportunity to sin. I want to examine this text and from it answer this question, "How can we keep from making provision for our flesh?"

First, remain alert despite recent victories.

1. The farther up you are on the mountain, the longer and harder you are capable of falling. David was on that mountain, and had experienced a series of great victories.
 - He had been anointed king of all Israel (chapter 5), won some great military victories (chapters 5, 8, and 10), brought the ark of God to Jerusalem (chapter 6), received incredible promises from God (chapter 7), showed great kindness to a lame man, and his kingdom was fully established. He was a man basking in the blessings of God.
2. In chapter 11, David was a man who obviously had let his spiritual guard down. In past chapters, we see David enquiring of the Lord over and over again. Notice verse 3, however: *“David sent and enquired after the woman.”*
3. When we are walking in victory in our Christian life and serving the Lord, one of the worst mistakes we can make it is to get comfortable, complacent and self-confident, and think that we are above a giant fall. 1 Corinthians 10:12; Proverbs 16:18; Matthew 26:33-34 (**Illustration:** Peter)
4. When David sent for Bathsheba, maybe he thought, “I can handle this. I’m spiritually strong. I’m just going to talk to her and find out about her.” He didn’t stay alert, but let down his spiritual guard. We must always stay alert. 1 Peter 5:8
5. A victory over Satan and the flesh today does not insure one tomorrow.

Second, remain faithful in the place where you should be.

1. Have you ever heard of being in the wrong place at the wrong time? Verse 1 says that it was the time when kings go forth to battle. But David sent Joab and his servants to battle while *“David tarried still at Jerusalem.”*
2. David was at home when he should have been on the battlefield. Had he been where he was supposed to be, this dreadful event would never have occurred. David’s disobedience and lack of faithfulness cost him dearly.
3. It is dangerous when you allow yourself to be lured away from where you should be, because, just like David, we are in a battle. 2 Timothy 2:3-4
4. As a believer living in this time of grace, where should you be?
 - You should be in the Word of God. Psalm 119:9, 11
 - You should be in prayer. Ephesians 6:18
 - You should be in fellowship at your local church (accountability). Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 10:24-25
5. When you allow yourself to be moved away from these three places, you become a big bull’s-eye for Satan, and you make provision for your flesh.

Third, remain active in your service for the Lord.

1. As we read verse 2, David is the picture of an idle man. He was lazing around, dozing away the afternoon, just taking it easy. He was idle when he should have been busy.

- It's been said, "Idle waters gather filth." This is also true in the Christian life.
2. Paul admonished believers to not be "*slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.*" **Romans 12:11**
 - **Illustration:** Why do people become involved in gossip? They are idle, with too much time on their hands. 2 Thessalonians 3:11; 1 Timothy 5:13
 3. God created us with a built-in need to be busy and productive. When we cease to be productive, we feel worthless and unneeded. We then turn to sinful activities to occupy our time.
 4. If you want to stay spiritually healthy, remain active in your service for the Lord. You say, "But I'm retired. I'm a senior citizen." Great! That means you have more time to serve the Lord and impact lives with the years you have left on this earth! You have the opportunity to finish strong for the Lord.
 5. As David began to get older, he got complacent and comfortable, and it cost him dearly.

In Conclusion:

1. Things could have been different. David did not have to experience this terrible downfall.
2. But, very seldom does a downfall like this ever happen overnight, or suddenly. It usually happens as a result of a series of bad decisions. We make decisions that make provision for our flesh, and then it comes back to bite us.
3. Let's take a lesson from David and, as Paul said, "*Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.*"

The Steps that Always Lead to a Fall 2 Samuel 11

Introduction:

1. Have you ever tripped while walking down steps? Being from Missouri, and having grown up in a tri-level house, I know the meaning of tumbling down steps!
2. Here in our text, King David took a terrible fall – not a physical fall, but a spiritual fall. He committed adultery with another man’s wife. How could a man with such a heart for God fall into such gross, immoral sin?
3. I don’t believe David premeditated this sin in the sense that he woke up that morning and said, “I think I’ll commit adultery, today.”
4. There were definite steps that led to David’s downfall. **Choice, not chance** determines human destiny. David made some definite choices. It didn’t just “happen.” There was a path of progression that led to David’s demise. David paid a tremendous price for this.
5. Let’s examine the steps that led to David’s great fall so that we can recognize these steps, and stay off the path to sin and destruction.

The first step – Enticement

1. Notice verse 2. David was walking on the roof of his house and “*he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.*”
2. The first step that led to David’s downfall was that he allowed himself to be enticed. James speaks of a man being drawn away and enticed. James 1:14
 - To entice means “to entrap; delude.”
 - It is a hunting term that carries the idea of a hunter or fisherman using bait to lure his prey.
3. The devil is quite the hunter. He sets the bait, and tries to catch our eye, and get us enticed with evil. This is what he did with David and it worked.
 - **Illustration:** Samson was strong by virtue of his hair. How did his enemies find out the secret to his strength? They used a woman to entice him. Judges 14:15, 16:5
4. Satan can entice us, others can try to entice us to sin (Proverbs 1:10), and our own flesh can lead us down the road of enticement. Colossians 2:4
 - Satan uses enticing words to beguile you. He wants to get your curiosity up and get you interested.
5. This was David’s first step. He allowed himself to be enticed. When he saw the woman, he should have immediately bounced his eyes in another direction, and he would have never taken that first step of enticement.

The second step – Lust

1. Notice verse 2 again – “*he saw a woman washing herself, and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.*”

2. David's enticement led to lust. He not only saw the woman, he allowed his eyes to dwell on her, lusting after her beauty.
3. James tells us that man is drawn away and enticed, "*then when lust hath conceived...*"
 - To lust for something means that "you desire or long for something."
 - In the Bible, the word is almost always associated with the flesh, lusting after something that is forbidden. 1 Corinthians 10:6; Galatians 5:16; James 4:5; Titus 2:12, 3:3
 - Go back to the fishing illustration – the fish is enticed by the bait, and then longs for it.
4. You may say, "But, what is the harm in a man lusting after a pretty woman? That's normal. We are made that way."
5. The problem is the object of your lust, your desires, and your longing. God wants a man to long for and desire his wife. Desires aren't wrong, but the question is, "What do you desire?"
6. Lust is like a fire. In a fireplace, it is warm and beautiful. But, when it gets outside of the hearth, it is destructive and uncontrollable. 2 Timothy 2:22
7. Sure, it is normal for your flesh to desire a woman who is not your wife, but that doesn't make it right. Our flesh wants to lust after wrong things. Ephesians 4:22; cf. Matthew 5:28; Proverbs 6:24-26
8. Yes, it is normal for your flesh to lust after the wrong things, but the Christian is commanded to abstain from fleshly lusts. 1 Peter 2:11; cf. Titus 2:12
 - The Christian is commanded to walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Galatians 5:16
9. This was David's second step – he allowed himself to get caught up in lust.

The third step – Drawing close to that which tempts you

1. Notice verse 3, "*And David sent and enquired after the woman...*" Then notice verse 4, "*And David sent messengers and took her; and she came in unto him...*" He brought her into the palace.
2. David's third step is that he drew close to that which tempted him. Maybe at this point, he still didn't think that he would actually sin. Maybe he thought, "I'll just talk to her and get to know her. I'm lonely. There is no harm in that."
3. But, this is where David made his mistake. He was playing with fire. We must stay away from what tempts us.
4. If you know there is a piece of dynamite in you waiting to be ignited, stay away from that which will set it on fire. Romans 13:14
5. David did not do this, and look what happened (vs. 4). Enticement led to lust, his lust led him to draw close to that which tempted him, and the end result – he fell into sin.
 - We see this same progression in Eve in the Garden. Genesis 3:6
 - Also, we see this in the story of Achan. Joshua 7:21
6. What came after the sin in all these cases (David, Eve, Achan)? Death! James 1:14-15; Romans 6:23

7. Are you on the steps that lead to a downfall? Get off today! It's not worth the price you have to pay in the end.
- There is a song that says, "Sin will take you farther than you want to go, slowly but wholly taking control. Sin will leave you longer than you want to stay, and sin will cost you far more than you want to pay."
 - There is a lot of biblical truth in those words. Let's stay off the steps that lead to a fall!

The Aftereffects of Sin 2 Samuel 11

Introduction:

1. I remember, several years ago, we had some terrible storms here in Daytona and a lot of flooding. Our housing subdivision was one of those that flooded. Our entire front yard and back yard were lakes. You couldn't see our driveway at all.
 - People were canoeing up and down the streets. The water was one centimeter from entering our house. Others in our neighborhood were on slightly lower ground, and the water went through their entire houses.
 - That morning, kids were playing out in the rain, running around, and laughing. But, by nightfall, the laughing had turned to crying for so many. The next day, many were in shock. Most of the water had receded, but it left behind its ravaging marks.
 - Cars wouldn't start, homes were completely destroyed, furniture was damaged, and - worst of all - our neighbor lost her husband in the flood.
2. What started out as something unique, different, and even fun for some, ended up a disaster. The aftereffects were devastating.
3. Here, in chapter 11, we are going to see the aftereffects of David's great sin with Bathsheba. What started out as a simple, one-time, adulterous act ended up causing David so much heartache.
4. What were the aftereffects of David's sin? Let's examine it, and may it encourage us all to avoid sin at all cost.

First, sin brings worry and anxiety.

1. David has peace in 2 Samuel 10:19, and just six verses later, David is in a tizzy. Why is this? Because in verses 1-4, David got caught up in sin, and then notice verse 5. You talk about stress and high blood pressure! Isn't it amazing how quickly sin can take away our peace?
2. Sin and peace are antonyms. They cannot dwell together in the same place. It is impossible. Oh, the devil can give a **false** peace, but not a genuine, real, lasting peace.
3. This is why so many marriages and homes are falling apart, today. They are full of stress, anger, and raging tempers. It is for the same reason that David's home became full of these things. He allowed sin to creep through the door. When sin creeps in, peace slips out.
4. So many people are hungering for an internal peace today, but they are going to all the wrong places to try to find it. They turn to sinful pleasures, and they come away empty. Why? It is because sin doesn't give peace; it takes away peace.
5. Mark it down, there is only one source of peace, and only one place to go to get lasting, real, genuine peace, and that is a person – Jesus Christ.

6. This is true before salvation. I remember I had no peace. I knew something was missing. What was it? I had a good family, plenty to eat, loving parents, a good school, friends, and I even went to church and been through confirmation classes and was baptized!
 - What was I missing? It was a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I was not at peace with God. Romans 5:1
 - 1 Peter 5:14 - Being at peace with God has nothing to do with the things I just mentioned. It is determined by one thing – whether you are in Christ or out of Christ. Peace has been made possible by Jesus Christ’s work on the cross. Colossians 1:20
7. But, it is also true after salvation. After you come to Christ and you are made at peace with God, God’s plan is that you walk in fellowship with Christ. Colossians 2:6
8. Peace isn’t something that comes to a person by chance or luck. It is a choice (Colossians 3:15). Will I let the peace of God rule my heart, or allow sin to rule my heart?

Second, sin brings a bitter harvest.

1. David thought, “I can sin and nobody will ever know. It won’t be any big deal. After all, I’m the king.” But, notice verse 5. His sin found him out. It caught up with him.
2. There is a law in the Bible, and it is found in Galatians 6:7-8: When we sow seeds that are fleshly, we reap corruption. When we sow to the Spirit, we reap life.
3. Because of this law, Numbers 32:23 exclaims, “*Be sure your sin will find out.*” Sin that is not dealt with will eventually catch up to you, find you out, and you will reap its penalty and destruction.
 - It has been said, “The seed of wrongdoing may be sown in secret, but the harvest cannot be concealed.”
4. Planting the seeds of sin may seem pleasurable, but it is only for a season. When harvest time comes, it is not a pretty sight. **Illustration:** Moses in Hebrews 11:24-25 – Why did he make this choice? He was looking ahead to the harvest. vs. 26
5. There are some principles about sowing and reaping that we need to remember. We always reap what we sow, we always reap more than we sow, and we always reap later than we sow. We need to remember these principles.
 - Sowing to the flesh brings the crop of corruption, but sowing to the Spirit yields a harvest of life. David found this out.
6. The Christian does not have to sow to the flesh. Romans 8:2 declares that “*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*”
 - The new “*law of the Spirit of life*” supersedes the old, fleshly “*law of sin and death.*”
7. The Christian can choose to sow to the flesh or the Spirit, but the consequences are clear and will never change. Romans 8:5-6, 12-13

Third, sin brings shame.

1. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden, what happened? They realized that they were naked, and they were ashamed, and tried to cover themselves with home-made fig leaves. Not only this, they attempted to hide from God's presence.
2. When David sinned, do you know what he did? Operation Fig Leaf! He tried to cover it. This chapter is the sad account of David shamed by his sin, trying desperately to cover it.
3. First, David called Uriah from battle and tried to convince Uriah (Bathsheba's husband) to go to his house (vs. 6-11). Then, David got Uriah drunk in an attempt to get him to go and lie with his wife. vs. 12-13
4. When that didn't work, David manipulated people and circumstances in such a way that Uriah was killed in battle. vs. 14-25
5. Sin brings shame, and in an effort to try to cover his shame, David's sin just kept getting bigger and bigger. First rule of holes: when you're in one, quit digging!
6. When Uriah was killed, David probably breathed a sigh of relief and thought, "I got away with that one – all covered up!" But, notice verses 26-27. May this be a lesson to us. You may be able to cover your sin and hide it from spouse, friend, parents, pastor, etc. But, we can never hide it from God. God saw everything and was displeased.

In Conclusion:

1. Sin is pleasurable for a season, but Satan doesn't tell you about the ravaging aftereffects.
2. He doesn't advertise the shame, the worry, the stress, and the anxiety that it brings. He doesn't show the bitter harvest.
3. But, aren't you glad that God's Word does show us? God's Word shoots straight and tells you the truth. But, will we believe God's Word, or Satan's lies? This is one of the major themes of the Bible.
4. Will people choose to believe what God has said, or will they believe that they can prove God a liar, and do things their own way. Remember Galatians 6:7, "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*"

Fleeing from the Rattlesnake of Sin

Psalm 38

Introduction:

1. If you are in your back yard and you see a rattlesnake a few feet away, what is your response? Do you talk to him and try to convince him that you are no danger to him? Do you stand there as he gets closer to you and weigh out your options?
2. What is the safest and most logical thing to do? Run! Flee! Get out of there!
3. Did you know the Bible teaches that you must deal with sin the same way you would a rattlesnake? You don't get close to it so you can check it out. You don't weigh your options. When faced with temptation, you flee. You run. 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:22
 - **Illustration:** Joseph and Potiphar's wife
4. In 2 Samuel 11, King David did not do this, and it cost him dearly. What happens when you play around with fire? You get burnt. David played with fire. He toyed with sin. He thought he could handle temptation.
5. The price tag was far higher than David thought it would be. Bathsheba ended up pregnant, and David got involved in a murderous plot to kill her husband. David was a man plagued with guilt. Psalm 38 records for us a prayer of David after his great sin.
6. If there is one lesson we should learn from David, it is this – flee from sin like you would a rattlesnake. This psalm - the prayer of a pitiful, guilt-laden man - reveals to us why it is crucial that we flee from sin and temptation.

First, because our sin displeases God - vs. 1-2

1. Do you know what the very last words are of 2 Samuel 11? *“But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.”*
2. David thought he had covered all his tracks, but there were two issues that he could not get away from: God and his own guilty conscience.
3. God loves us so much that when we sin He sends an arrow of conviction into our hearts (vs. 2a). When you trusted Christ, the Holy Spirit of God came to dwell within you. When a believer sins, it grieves the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) and produces conviction.
4. God doesn't cast us off as His children, but He does convict us and correct us as a loving Father. Isn't this the picture we see in verses 1-2? Did you notice the words David used here? *“rebuke... chasten... displeasure... presseth...”*
5. If you are a parent, you can associate with those words, can't you? We never quit loving our children, but there are times when their behavior displeases us and the words “rebuke, chasten,” etc., apply to our parenting.

Second, because our sin robs us of our strength – vs. 3-8

1. Sin and guilt wearies us. vs. 3
 - Have you ever noticed, when you are involved in sin, it is hard to rest peacefully? It is hard to concentrate. No wonder we can't get things done. No wonder we are so tired.
2. Sin and guilt weighs us down. vs. 4
 - **Illustration:** When I got saved, I felt like a weight had been taken off my shoulders.
 - After salvation, if we get caught up in sin, we carry a load that God never intended for us to carry. God has given us new life in Christ. Sin is now against our new nature.
3. Sin and guilt wounds us. vs. 5
 - The arrow of guilt had stricken David, and spiritually wounded him. David had brought this on himself. It was a self-inflicted wound – a festering, stinking wound. When sin and guilt wounds us, if allowed to continue, it will fester and get very grotesque.
4. Sin and guilt worries us. vs. 6
 - In 2 Samuel 11, David is a man who has lost his joy and is full of fear and panic. “What do I do now? Will anybody find out?” Sin robs us of true joy. You can't enjoy life.
 - There is no joy in a backslidden, sinful life. The most miserable person in the world is not a lost person, but a believer who is out of fellowship with his heavenly Father.
5. Sin and guilt wastes us. vs. 7
 - David had physical repercussions because of his sin. Some believe he may have contracted a sexually transmitted disease (vs. 7 - “*a loathsome disease*”).
 - Can this happen to a believer? Absolutely! You reap what you sow. God will forgive, but nature will not. Forgiveness won't take away the disease. There are physical consequences and repercussions attached to our sin.
6. Sin and guilt weakens us. vs. 8
 - The mighty warrior king is now turning, twisting, groaning, and crying out in pain. What might others have thought and said as they passed by his room, and heard his groaning?
7. Do you see why God says to flee sin like a rattlesnake? The guilt of sin weakens us physically, morally, and spiritually. It drains us completely.

Third, because our sin hardens our hearts – vs. 9-10, 12-14

1. I think one of the most dangerous aspects of sin is the way that it affects us internally. Sin creates a callous on our heart, and this affects everything about us and the way we relate to others.
2. As a believer knowingly in sin, you lose that sensitivity to the Spirit working within you, and working through others. We see this in David's life.

3. David became spiritually blind. vs. 9-10
 - As a king, he needed guidance and insight, but instead he was stumbling around in darkness. Have you ever noticed that when you are involved in sin, your Bible reading isn't as fruitful? You make bad decisions because sin has blinded you.
4. David became spiritually deaf. vs. 12-13a
 - David needed ears to hear (vs. 12), yet he was deaf to the danger around him. Sin makes us so vulnerable to the enemy. Sin deafens us to where we can't hear the words of wisdom and godly advice from others.
5. David became spiritually dumb. vs. 13b
 - David was Israel's leader and should have been speaking out for God, but sin and guilt had shut his mouth. Have you ever noticed that you don't feel like talking to others about Jesus when you are living in sin?
 - Sin had hardened David' heart and put him in a rather pitiful state. vs. 14

Fourth, because our sin distances us from our friends - vs. 11

1. David's friends did not want to be around him because he was not a pleasant person to be around. Look at David dealing with his friend Nathan in 2 Samuel 12:1-7.
2. David had become a hypocritical, judgmental, angry person. He was quick to judge someone else for a much lesser offence than his.
3. When believers are in sin, they can become quite miserable to be around. They are ill at ease, critical of others, paranoid, and pushing friends and loved ones away from them.
4. Sin and a guilty conscience will distance us from our friends.

In Conclusion:

1. There is nothing worse than when the window of our soul is covered with the grime of a guilty and condemning conscience.
2. The price tag on sin is always higher than we anticipated. This is why God's command is to flee, abstain, and run from sin.
3. As believers, we are capable of committing any sin that a lost person can commit. The difference is that we will not be able to enjoy it. It will bring conviction and guilt.
4. Maybe some of you are dealing with some serious temptations right now, and you have actually contemplated getting involved in some sinful choices. Today, God in His grace is warning you – like a flashing yellow caution light. God says, "Flee! The price is not worth it!"

How to Overcome Guilt

Psalm 38

Introduction:

1. Guilt can be a crushing weight. Last week we saw from Psalm 38 what guilt did to King David. It nearly destroyed him. David allowed sin into his life, and that sin produced the mammoth weight of a guilty conscience. It had David down for the count. vs. 1-8
2. Because of guilt, we are often overcome by feelings of punishment, rejection, and isolation. Even as a believer, guilt can cause us to doubt God's forgiveness, God's grace, and God's love.
3. One of the deepest needs of human beings is to know how to deal with guilt. Many become confused, frustrated, and eventually give up in trying to deal with guilt. Thankfully, God's Word instructs us in how to handle guilt.
4. But, we must understand that there are two forms of guilt:
 - Genuine guilt – This comes as a result of violating God's Word.
 - False guilt – This is derived from misconceptions or feelings that are not based upon God's Word.
5. This psalm (Psalm 38) is the prayer of a truly guilty man. This prayer came after David had committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba.
6. In last week's message, we examined this psalm and saw how David's sin had crippled him emotionally, physically, and spiritually (vs. 10, 13-14). It always does. Because of this, sin should be avoided at all cost. God's answer is to flee temptation.
7. But, what if it is too late and we have already sinned? How do we overcome the feelings of guilt and condemnation? Let's learn from Psalm 38.

First, talk to God with confidence. vs. 15

1. After fourteen rather dark and bleak verses, notice verse 15. Praise God, there is **hope** for the guilty soul! The word "*hope*" does not mean "a wishy-washy desire." It means "a bedrock assurance." We have a firm assurance that God hears us when we pray.
2. Satan will use our guilt to convince us that God no longer hears our prayers. This is where believers must be rooted and grounded in sound doctrine, or they will be tossed around and shaken.
3. In this dispensation, God does not hear our prayers because of what we have done; He hears us because of who we are!
4. If you are saved, you are God's accepted child that has been placed in Christ. You are in Christ, and He is in you. You have been made one with Him. Because of this, you have complete access to your heavenly Father. Ephesians 2:18, 3:12; 1 Timothy 2:5
5. Your access to God has nothing to do with **you**, but it has everything to do with **Jesus**.

- We have been made close to God through the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13), and it is by this same blood that we can have boldness to enter into God's presence. Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19
6. We have confidence that God hears our prayers even when we cry out in guilt and shame. God hears us not based on our **attainment**, but based on Christ's blood **atonement**.
 7. Don't ever feel like, "I've sinned. I'm guilty and I can't pray. God won't hear me."
 8. As a believer who is in Christ, you have unlimited access to God in prayer.

How to Overcome Guilt Psalm 38

Introduction:

1. Guilt can be a crushing weight. Last week we saw from Psalm 38 what guilt did to King David. It nearly destroyed him. David allowed sin into his life, and that sin produced the mammoth weight of a guilty conscience. It had David down for the count. vs. 1-8
2. Because of guilt, we are often overcome by feelings of punishment, rejection, and isolation. Even as a believer, guilt can cause us to doubt God's forgiveness, God's grace, and God's love.
3. One of the deepest needs of human beings is to know how to deal with guilt. Many become confused, frustrated, and eventually give up in trying to deal with guilt. Thankfully, God's Word instructs us in how to handle guilt.
4. But, we must understand that there are two forms of guilt:
 - Genuine guilt – This comes as a result of violating God's Word.
 - False guilt – This is derived from misconceptions or feelings that are not based upon God's Word.
5. This psalm (Psalm 38) is the prayer of a truly guilty man. This prayer came after David had committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba.
6. In last week's message, we examined this psalm and saw how David's sin had crippled him emotionally, physically, and spiritually (vs. 10, 13-14). It always does. Because of this, sin should be avoided at all cost. God's answer is to flee temptation.
7. But, what if it is too late and we have already sinned? How do we overcome the feelings of guilt and condemnation? Let's learn from Psalm 38.

First, talk to God with confidence. vs. 15

1. After fourteen rather dark and bleak verses, notice verse 15. Praise God, there is **hope** for the guilty soul! The word "*hope*" does not mean "a wishy-washy desire." It means "a bedrock assurance." We have a firm assurance that God hears us when we pray.
2. Satan will use our guilt to convince us that God no longer hears our prayers. This is where believers must be rooted and grounded in sound doctrine, or they will be tossed around and shaken.
3. In this dispensation, God does not hear our prayers because of what we have done; He hears us because of who we are!
4. If you are saved, you are God's accepted child that has been placed in Christ. You are in Christ, and He is in you. You have been made one with Him. Because of this, you have complete access to your heavenly Father. Ephesians 2:18, 3:12; 1 Timothy 2:5
5. Your access to God has nothing to do with **you**, but it has everything to do with **Jesus**.

- We have been made close to God through the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13), and it is by this same blood that we can have boldness to enter into God's presence. Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19
6. We have confidence that God hears our prayers even when we cry out in guilt and shame. God hears us not based on our **attainment**, but based on Christ's blood **atonement**.
 7. Don't ever feel like, "I've sinned. I'm guilty and I can't pray. God won't hear me."
 8. As a believer who is in Christ, you have unlimited access to God in prayer.

Second, talk to God with true repentance. vs. 17

1. Repentance means that we have had a true change of mind and thinking about our sin.
2. Biblical repentance means that we now view our sin as God views it. We now think about our sin like God thinks about it.
 - Verse 17 – "...my sorrow is continually before me."
 - Verse 18 – "...I will be sorry for my sin."
3. We must reach the point where we are truly sorrowful and repentant for our sin. Until we reach this breaking point, we will never overcome guilt.
4. David said he was "*ready to halt*." This means, "I'm almost done for, on the verge of collapse. I'm at the end of my rope. I've reached the end of myself."
 - Let me be clear – I am talking about sorrow for true guilt, not false guilt. Some people feel guilty over incidents that were not their fault. They were innocent victims who became caught up in another person's immoral actions.
 - David was experiencing genuine guilt.
5. Genuine guilt is meant to be a positive motivator, to bring us to our knees before God in humility and repentance. The Holy Spirit convicts us and alerts us to wrong and destructive actions that violate God's best for our lives.
6. Because we are enjoying our sin, many times we attempt to suppress our guilt. We feel guilty, but we're not really sorrowful over our sin and disobedience.
7. Mark it down, we will never experience freedom from guilt until we truly become sorrowful and repentant for our sin. Notice what Paul taught and admonished the church in 2 Corinthians 7:9-10. Notice the progression:
 - It begins with a true sorrow for sin.
 - Our sorrow worketh repentance.
 - Our repentance leads to salvation (this means deliverance from the sin and guilt).

Third, talk to God with complete honesty. vs. 18

1. Notice David's words, "*For I will declare my iniquity...*"
 - This word "*declare*" means "to manifest; to announce; to expose."
2. David said, "I'm through with the cover-up game. I'm done trying to excuse my sin. I am finished with trying to lie my way out of this."

3. When David said, “*I will declare my iniquity,*” he was saying, “I’m ready to face my sin honestly.” David was ready to deal with his sin and guilt directly and honestly. David would no longer try to justify it or explain it away.
 - “My wife wasn’t giving me enough love. Uriah wasn’t a very good husband to Bathsheba. I just had a weak moment.”
4. Pop psychology teaches people that they are not really guilty, they are just victims. They are not evil, just ill. They are not wicked, just weak. It isn’t sin, it is just a disease. It isn’t a choice, it is simply genetic. Your psyche was warped, and that is why you have all these psychological problems. You are to be pitied, not blamed.
5. We will never receive victory over guilt until we are honest with God (and ourselves) and say like David, “It is sin. It is **my** sin. It was **my** choice. I am guilty.” Before we can overcome guilt, we have to get honest.

In Conclusion:

1. Once we have gone to the Lord with true repentance and complete honesty, then God can truly help us to overcome the guilt and get victory over the sin. vs. 22
2. David prayed, “*Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me.*” vs. 21
3. Remember, David lived under the Old Testament, before the finished work of Christ on the cross. This isn’t a prayer that a believer would pray today. Why?
4. Because, in this dispensation, once you trust Christ as your Savior, you are made one with Him, you are placed in Christ, and the Holy Spirit actually indwells you and seals you forever. We are forever objects of God’s love and grace. He said He would never leave us or forsake us.
5. When we sin and do wrong, God, in love, convicts us. God desires for us to forsake sin because He knows it is destructive in our lives. When we come to God in repentance and honesty, it isn’t to secure His love or forgiveness. We already have that in Christ.
6. We do this in order to overcome the guilt and sin that is plaguing us. Oh, the joy and freedom that comes when we face our sin honestly and truthfully.

How to Keep Kids from Satan's Snares (Part 1)

2 Samuel 13

Introduction:

1. What do you think is the foundation of any society or culture? Is it small business? Is it big business? Sorry ladies, it's not the mall, and it's sure not Walmart. Is it the government? Is it the church? Actually, it is none of the above.
2. The foundation of any society or culture is the home - the family! Because of this, Satan's plans have always been to attack the home, and attempt to fracture and disintegrate it. This is exactly what happens here in our text.
3. King David's home is in shambles.
 - One of David's sons commits incest by raping his sister.
 - One of David's sons has his brother murdered.
 - One of David's sons flees from home, and is gone for three years.
4. As you read the chapter, it's chaos! David was a man of God with a heart for God, but that did not insure him a peaceful and godly home. What went wrong? There are many people who love the Lord whose kids don't turn out godly.
 - Sometimes it isn't the parent's fault at all. It is simply the free will of the child to choose evil and wrong. You can take two kids raised the same way, and one will choose to love the Lord, and one will choose to rebel against the Lord.
 - But, there are other times when the parents could have possibly prevented it by exercising greater wisdom.
5. The Bible talks about recovering people from the snares of the devil (2 Timothy 2:26), but how can we keep our children from ever being ensnared to begin with? The key, of course, is the parents. The church, youth group, school, etc., can hopefully help the parent, but ultimately it's up to parents.
6. Let's learn from David's negative example in this chapter and turn it into some positive principles for parents.

Parents:

Become a godly role model for your child. vs. 1-2

1. Amnon (David's oldest son) had a carnal, evil, sexual lust for his half-sister, Tamar. This lust would lead to rape and incest (vs. 11-14). How shameful and wicked! We cringe at this, as we should. This young man had a serious lust problem.
2. But, I wonder where Amnon learned about carnal, sinful lusts. He learned about them from dear old dad (2 Samuel 11). David's lust problem had quite an impact on his son. Only, Amnon took it a step further in his immorality.
 - One old preacher used to say, "Father, be careful, or while you're making one lap around the devil's track, your boy will make six!"
 - What he was trying to say is that, many times, the sin we allow in moderation, our kids will do in excess.

- This is why God said to “*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*” 1 Thessalonians 5:22
 - God also warned, “*Neither give place to the devil.*” Ephesians 4:27
 - When our kids act out what they watch on the Internet, should we really be shocked? When our kids live out what they see us watch on TV or at the movies, should we really wonder why? When our kids listen to our worldly music and then take it a step further in listening to utter filth, does it surprise us? When kids see parents curse and swear at each other or at others, should we be appalled when we hear them do it to us or others?
3. Have you noticed that our kids don’t imitate what we say, but rather what we do?
 4. Colossians 3:21 commands parents not to provoke their children to anger. One of the surest ways to do this is to tell them to do one thing and then you do completely opposite.
 - One of the most difficult persons to reach for Christ is a person who had parents that claimed to know the Lord and believe the Bible, but set a hypocritical example.
 5. Parents, I understand that we are not perfect and never will be, but when we fail or come up short of God’s holy standards, our kids need to see us quickly admit it and get it right. Notice I used the word “become” on this point, because we are all learning and growing.

Insure that your child chooses godly friends.

1. Sometimes, when teens get involved in a destructive lifestyle or harmful habits, you will hear this: “He got involved with the wrong crowd.” “She got in with some bad girls.”
2. Do you think the friends we choose have influence in our lives? The Bible teaches that they do. In fact, they can make or break us spiritually. Proverbs 13:20; 22:24-25
3. Amnon’s “friend” counseled him to make a decision that led to Amnon committing a gross, incestuous sin, and ultimately being murdered by his own brothers. That is some friend! vs. 3-5, 28-29
4. Here are some questions to ask about any friendship (that you or your children may have):
 - Does this friendship draw me closer to the Lord, or does it hurt me spiritually?
 - When I’m with this person, do we end up discussing things or doing things that we shouldn’t do?
 - Has this friendship influenced me to get my priorities out of line?
 - Does this friendship hurt or help my marriage relationship?
5. What does the Bible teach we should do if we find ourselves in a friendship with an ungodly person? 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14
6. God’s warnings and instructions concerning friendships lead us to two practical conclusions in regards to the home:

- Parents had better know who their children's friends are, and should guide them in choosing the right kind of friends. I am amazed at how many parents do not know who their children's friends are. They are clueless.
- Parents should set a godly example by carefully choosing their own friendships (Jesus should be #1, and your spouse #2).

In Conclusion:

1. Parents, Satan would love to destroy your child's life. You have to be sober and vigilant. Be on guard! Nobody else is going to protect your child.
2. You must be an active part of their daily life. How else can you be a role model and help them choose godly friends?
3. Next week we will examine two more vital principles in keeping ourselves and our children from Satan's snares.

How to Keep Kids from Satan's Snares (Part 2)

2 Samuel 13

Introduction:

1. What do you think is the foundation of any society or culture? Is it small business? Is it big business? Sorry ladies, it's not the mall, and it's sure not Walmart. Is it the government? Is it the church? Actually, it is none of the above.
2. The foundation of any society or culture is the home - the family! Because of this, Satan's plans have always been to attack the home, and attempt to fracture and disintegrate it. This is exactly what happens here in our text.
3. King David's home is in shambles.
 - One of David's sons commits incest by raping his sister.
 - One of David's sons has his brother murdered.
 - One of David's sons flees from home, and is gone for three years.
4. As you read the chapter, it's chaos! David was a man of God with a heart for God, but that did not insure him a peaceful and godly home. What went wrong? There are many people who love the Lord whose kids don't turn out godly.
 - Sometimes it isn't the parent's fault at all. It is simply the free will of the child to choose evil and wrong. You can take two kids raised the same way, and one will choose to love the Lord, and one will choose to rebel against the Lord.
 - But, there are other times when the parents could have possibly prevented it by exercising greater wisdom.
5. The Bible talks about recovering people from the snares of the devil (2 Timothy 2:26), but how can we keep our children from ever being ensnared to begin with? The key, of course, is the parents. The church, youth group, school, etc., can hopefully help the parent, but ultimately it's up to parents.
6. Let's learn from David's negative example in this chapter and turn it into some positive principles for parents.

Parents:

Become a godly role model for your child. vs. 1-2

Insure that your child chooses godly friends.

Resolve conflict - don't just get angry.

1. When David heard of the ungodly, wicked behavior in his family, he got angry, which he should have (vs. 21). But here is the problem: he didn't do anything about it! He is the leader and head of this family, and he did nothing at all.
 - Amnon had done a wicked, evil deed, and even used his father to help in carrying it out. Amnon needed severe reproof, discipline, and correction. He needed to suffer the consequences of his crime.
 - David just got angry, but did nothing to correct the situation.

2. Anyone can get angry. That is easy. But to be angry with the right **person**, to the right **degree**, at the right **time**, and in the right **way** - that is not so easy.
3. David's anger was not guided by correct biblical action. This happens so often in our homes. Anger runs rampant, people scream and holler, but nothing is done to correct the problem.
 - There are just sudden outbursts of anger, but nothing is ever done to resolve the situation. This destroys homes, marriages, and children. Anger without correct biblical action is like a tornado. It destroys and tears down.
 - It is like a bulldozer with nobody at the steering wheel.
4. The Bible teaches that there is a time for anger (God gets angry - Isaiah 30:27, 30). It is possible to be angry and not sin, but so many times our anger is out of control and directed in the wrong place. This gives room for Satan to work and destroy. Ephesians 4:26-27
 - Many great people in the Bible exhibited righteous anger (Moses, Nehemiah, many of the prophets, etc.). Even Jesus Christ himself had righteous anger. Mark 3:5
 - Godliness is not the absence of anger, as long as you are filled with the right kind of anger - the kind of anger that leads us to sit down and apply biblical solutions to our problems. This kind of anger is productive, not destructive.
 - Without this, anger simply stirs up strife and leads to more sin. Proverbs 29:22
5. Every time you get angry with your children (or spouse) and don't do a thing to correct the situation, you are setting their hearts more and more to do wrong. Parents who just yell and scream at their kids aren't solving any problems. Their children just rebel more.
6. When things are not good in the home and everybody's blood is boiling, somebody has to take the spiritual leadership and take some positive, correct, biblical action. This should be the parents! Proverbs 15:1

Guard your family from bitterness.

1. Absalom was Tamar's full blood brother. Amnon was his half brother. Absalom allowed bitterness and hatred to root in his heart against Amnon. This caused a craving for revenge and eventually manifested itself in the murder of his brother. vs. 22
 - There were two years of internal bitterness - vs. 23.
 - We see his murder plot - vs. 28.
 - Absalom runs away from home and is gone for three years - vs. 36-38.
2. This issue of bitterness is far too common an occurrence in homes today. Husbands and wives get bitter at each other. Children are bitter at their parents or their siblings. The bitterness then turns to revenge, with family members lashing out at each other.
 - This can turn ugly, and even believers can end up saying and doing things unimaginable.

- Colossians 3:19 admonishes husbands to “*love your wives, and be not bitter against them.*” Ephesians 6:4 also teaches that parents can provoke wrath and bitterness in their children.
3. Hebrews 12:15 warns about the root of bitterness. This root just keeps growing unless it is rooted out. In the end, this deadly root will choke your marriage, your children, your spiritual growth, and most of all, it will destroy you.
 4. Absalom hid his hatred and bitterness for two years. He let it fester and nursed that root of bitterness for two years. He never confronted Amnon. Amnon did not even know how bitter and angry his brother was at him.
 - Should Amnon have been confronted with his sin and held accountable? Absolutely. Should justice have been served to Amnon? Absolutely!
 - But Absalom just allowed bitterness to eat him alive internally, and then he lashed out in anger.
 5. Bitterness and hatred have no part in your new life in Christ. Those belong to the old man. Once you experience the total and complete forgiveness of Christ of all your sins, it changes everything. We can now let all that old baggage and garbage go! Ephesians 4:30-32
 6. In regards to the home and family, the key word in preventing bitterness from taking root is “communication.” If you have a problem with your spouse or your children or your parents, go to them, talk to them, and attempt to work it out.
 - Many times, we have situations like Absalom and Amnon. One family member is full of bitterness at another family member, but that person doesn’t even know it.
 - Finally, an explosion takes place and it is like taking the kitchen garbage can and dumping it on the dining room table. It is ugly and very damaging.
 - Or one person just walks out and doesn’t come back. The other person can’t figure out what happened. It is most likely due to years of internal bitterness.
 7. Keep the lines of communication open between you and your children, and between you and your spouse. Reconciliation is so much sweeter than bitterness.

In Conclusion:

1. This is such a sad story in God’s Word, but it is real life. Maybe we aren’t dealing with these same issues, but some of the same principles definitely apply.
2. Every day with our children and in our homes, we are dealing with these issues of friendships, anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. Every day we are striving as parents to be the role models we need to be for our kids.
3. Through Christ we can implement these principles, and protect our children from Satan’s snares.

Lessons Learned in the Valley – Part 1 **2 Samuel 12:13-25**

Introduction:

1. After the king of Israel (David) had committed adultery with Bathsheba, he hid his sin for over a year, hoping that God would forget it.
2. As we have seen, God didn't forget it, but rather sent the prophet (Nathan) to rebuke David for his sin. What was David's response? vs. 13
3. David acknowledged his sin and God forgave him, but David was about to enter one of the lowest valleys of his life.
4. Nobody enjoys the valleys of life, but life is not a continuous mountaintop experience - not even for the believer. A Christian has his share of struggles, heartaches, and valleys just like everybody else. We are not immune to the valleys, nor are we immune to the feelings and emotions that come with the valleys (despair, discouragement, loneliness, fear, depression).
5. But, those of you who have been through valleys could probably attest to one thing - the most powerful lessons you have learned in life have been taught to you through the valleys of life. This is true of King David and the valley he went through.
6. You may be in a valley right now, and you feel like things are about as low as they can get. Let's look at David and the lessons he learned while in the valley, and allow these things to help us and encourage us today.

First lesson learned – there are consequences when I disobey God.

1. Sometimes, our valleys and problems in life are self-inflicted. It is because of our own stubborn disobedience. This is certainly not always true, but if we were really honest, we would have to admit that it sometimes is true.
2. Nathan told David, "You are not going to die (vs. 13), but because you've done this deed, and because you have been such a terrible testimony for God, the baby that you have had with Bathsheba is going to die." vs. 14
3. After Nathan departed, notice what happened (vs. 15). God brought David into this valley to teach him the valuable lesson that there are consequences when we disobey and sin against God. Sometimes we can read a story like this - that only happened one time in the Bible - and think that this is the standard way God operates in every situation.
4. This was a unique situation in that very little of the Bible had been written at that point. Believers in the Old Testament did not have the Holy Spirit indwelling them, and David was held to a very high standard because he was the leader (the King) of God's people.
 - Please do not read this and think, "Oh no, I sinned, God is going to take my child," or think that if you had a child die in the past, God was punishing you.
 - This was a unique, one-time event, it was a different dispensation in God's Word, and God's dealings with mankind change as more of His revelation is revealed.
 - Today, we have God's completed Word. Today, instead of God dealing with us through various circumstances, God deals with us through His Word. His Word reproves us, corrects us, and instructs us when we go astray.

5. But, please understand that today we still will suffer natural consequences for sin, and that God can **use** these times to get our attention, and get us to forsake whatever sin we may be involved in.
6. It is important to remember that forgiveness and consequences are two completely different issues. When we are saved, God's forgiveness through Christ is total and complete, but there are still consequences that come when we disobey God.
7. Many Christians live under a false delusion that they can do anything they want to do, and because they are saved and secure in Christ, it will be like nothing ever happened.
 - It is true that we are eternally secure, and it is true that we have forgiveness as a present possession in Christ, but this does not exclude consequences for our sin. These are two separate issues entirely.
 - If I tell my child not to touch the hot stove, and he touches it anyway, and disobeys and disregards what I say, do I still love him? Is he still my child? Do I forgive him? But, does this mean that there won't be any consequences? Of course not! He will suffer a burn, and maybe have a terrible scar for the rest of his life.
 - When we sin and make bad choices, there will be consequences, and possibly bad scars. We reap what we sow. This is a divine principle that we cannot escape.

Second lesson learned – closeness to God can come through the valleys.

1. When David entered into this valley, notice what effect it had on his relationship with God (vs. 16). David drew near and close to God. David had not been walking closely to God. He was far from where he should have been in his relationship with God.
2. Some of the sweetest times of fellowship with God can come while we are in the valley. We realize that we can't deal with it and that we must draw strength from Him!
3. Many times, the valleys of life will drive us to our knees, and we discover things about God we never knew – we get to know God in a more personal way. Philippians 3:10
 - Example: We see this with families, don't we? People in a family don't see each other for years, and then tragedy brings them closer together.
4. In Psalm 73, the psalmist is in a deep valley and greatly discouraged (vs. 16), but it led him to cry out to God, "*You are the strength of my heart!*" vs. 25-28

Third lesson learned – God may deliver you through the valley rather than out of the valley.

Lessons Learned in the Valley – Part 2

2 Samuel 12:13-25

Introduction:

1. After the king of Israel (David) had committed adultery with Bathsheba, he hid his sin for over a year, hoping that God would forget it.
2. As we have seen, God didn't forget it, but rather sent the prophet (Nathan) to rebuke David for his sin. What was David's response? vs. 13
3. David acknowledged his sin and God forgave him, but David was about to enter one of the lowest valleys of his life.
4. Nobody enjoys the valleys of life, but life is not a continuous mountaintop experience - not even for the believer. A Christian has his share of struggles, heartaches, and valleys just like everybody else. We are not immune to the valleys, nor are we immune to the feelings and emotions that come with the valleys (despair, discouragement, loneliness, fear, depression).
5. But, those of you who have been through valleys could probably attest to one thing - the most powerful lessons you have learned in life have been taught to you through the valleys of life. This is true of King David and the valley he went through.
6. You may be in a valley right now, and you feel like things are about as low as they can get. Let's look at David and the lessons he learned while in the valley, and allow these things to help us and encourage us today.

First lesson learned – there are consequences when I disobey God.

Second lesson learned – closeness to God can come through the valleys.

Third lesson learned – God may deliver you through the valley rather than out of the valley.

1. David is fasting, praying, and beseeching God, but notice verse 18. David prayed and besought God for seven days, but yet the child died.
2. When we are in the valley, naturally, we want God to reach down and lift us right out of the valley, and set us on the mountain. We want God to answer our prayers in a way that will eliminate any pain, suffering, and heartache.
3. Here is the problem – we don't always know what is best, and we don't always know the best thing to pray for. Romans 8:26
4. We say, "God, get me **out** of the valley." God says, "No, I'll give you my strength and grace to walk **through** the valley (2 Corinthians 12:8-10)." This brings us to our next point.

Fourth lesson learned – God gives His grace to endure the valleys of life.

1. After David discovered that the baby had died (vs. 18-19), notice David's response (vs. 20). His servants couldn't figure this out. vs. 21

2. Did God answer his prayer the way David desired? No, but God gave David the grace to bear it. David didn't get bitter at God (vs. 20). He went into the house of the Lord and worshiped.
 - Instead of focusing on what he lost, he focused on the promises of God. vs. 22-23
3. God provided David the grace to make it through this deep valley in his life. 1 Corinthians 10:13 has been greatly misunderstood, but has direct application to what we are considering right now.
 - Some use this verse to teach that God puts the believer through adverse circumstances intentionally to strengthen you and temper you like steel put through the fire.
 - They teach that God does this to prepare you or enable you to do something great later. They say, "When you are right at the breaking point, God will step in and deliver you."
 - This all sounds very intriguing, but it is not what Paul is teaching in this verse.
4. Notice, the adversity or temptation in this verse is "*common to man*." He isn't discussing things that are unique only to believers, but these adversities are common to saved and unsaved alike. They aren't some special, unique "testings" from the hand of God.
5. But, we see what **is unique** to the believer - God is faithful, and God makes the believer able to handle these things without breaking apart under the load.
6. God provides a way of escape. But, what is this way of escape? Here's what you commonly hear: "When you are right at the breaking point, God will swoop in and deliver you if you just trust Him (pray through, name and claim it, etc)."
7. There is an obvious problem with this kind of thinking. At the end of the verse Paul says, "...*that ye may be able to bear it*." The adversity doesn't go away. God enables you to **bear it**. He does this through His Word, and all the marvelous resources He's given you in Christ. 2 Corinthians 9:8
8. If adversity or sin swallows us up and destroys us, we cannot point an accusing finger at God and say, "God, you put too much on me." God has provided the way of escape that we might be able to bear it (endure it).
 - The way of escape is not God removing the circumstance so that you don't have to face it anymore, but the deliverance is God empowering you so you can go through the circumstance victoriously. 2 Timothy 3:11
 - By applying His Word and His grace to the situation, you are able to bear up under it, and it doesn't destroy you.

Fifth lesson learned – God is the God of all comfort in the valleys.

1. After their baby died, David comforted Bathsheba (vs. 24). David had experienced God's comfort when he worshiped in the house of God, so therefore he could comfort his wife.
2. What did God do? God sent them comfort by giving them another son – Solomon.
3. As we said earlier, God may not just reach down and snatch us out of the valley. It is during these times we can truly grow in our faith. But God **will** provide His

incredible comfort in the midst of the valley. In fact, did you know that God is called the God of all comfort? 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

- We have the Comforter Himself (the Holy Spirit) living inside of us. The Holy Spirit indwells us and is there for us 24/7. John 14:16, 26
- We also have the comfort of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and comforts us, and gives us what we need.

In Conclusion:

1. Are you going through a valley right now? Don't allow your valley to make you bitter. Use the valley to make you better.
2. There are some wonderful lessons that we can learn while in the valley. Many times, we can't seem to learn these lessons any other way.
3. I don't believe that God manipulated circumstances to put you in the valley. I don't believe that God is trying to make your life miserable. I believe valley times are a normal and natural part of this life we live in.
4. Everybody has trials, saved and unsaved alike. But, the believer has the Lord with him through every valley of life. The believer has the Comforter to strengthen and sustain him through every moment.

The God of the Second Chance **2 Samuel 12:26-31**

Introduction:

1. Have you noticed that we live in a very disposable society today? When it gets dirty, we throw it away (disposable razors, trash can liners, gloves, contact lens, paper plates, diapers, etc.).
 - People today are so busy, they don't want to have to take the time to clean. So, if it gets dirty, they throw it away.
2. I am so glad that God doesn't operate this way with us. When we sin and get dirty, God doesn't just throw us away. He will clean us up and use us again. He is the God of the second chance.
3. David found this out. David found himself in deep, immoral sin. David paid a great price for his sin. In this chapter, we see the consequences of David's sin.
4. But, after David repented of his sin, notice what happened (vs. 26-31). David was once again winning victories for God. What a gracious God we serve. He is the God of the second chance.
5. Maybe some of you have made some bad choices in the past, and you found yourselves entangled in sin. There is great news. God is the God of the second chance. God can still use you, and you can still win spiritual victories.
6. But how do you win mighty victories after you have fallen?

First, you must realize that God still wants to use you.

1. As I said earlier, God doesn't treat us like a disposable trash can liner – when we get dirty, He doesn't throw us in the garbage. But, Satan wants you to have this concept of God.
 - He wants to convince you that God is done with you – that you have wandered beyond His outstretched hand of mercy and grace, and there is no hope.
 - This, of course, is a lie, and is a ploy from Satan to keep you living in spiritual defeat and misery.
2. In the Bible, God is called "*the God of all grace*" (1 Peter 5:10), "*the God of all comfort*" (2 Corinthians 1:3), "*the God of patience*" (Romans 15:5), "*the God of hope*" (Romans 15:13), "*the God of peace*" (Hebrews 13:20), a God "*who is rich in mercy.*" Ephesians 2:4
 - David found out that God still wanted to use him even after he messed everything up.
 - Jonah – At the height of the storm, when the drunken sailors had thrown him overboard, and a great fish swallowed him up and spit him out, God was waiting on dry land to give him another chance.
 - Peter – He cursed and denied Christ, but later preached in Acts 2 with great power.

- All three of these men had something in common. They all repented of their sin and desired to get right with God. If we truly come to God in repentance, He will pick us up, dust us off, and use us again.
3. I didn't say there wouldn't be consequences or scars from your sin, but God will restore you and use you again because He's the God of the second chance.

Second, you must learn from past failures.

1. When Joab called for David to come to battle, this time David went! vs. 28-29
2. Remember what happened last time? It was time to go to battle, and David stayed home (11:1), and that is when he got into trouble. David had learned from his past failure.
3. If we are going to win battles for God in the present, we must learn from our failures in the past. You can't change your past, but you can learn from it!
4. David, Jonah, and Peter all had a common problem – a lack of obedience. David didn't want to go to battle, Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh, and Peter didn't want to watch and pray.
5. But, they all learned from past failures. The next time, David scurried off to battle, Jonah hightailed it to Nineveh, and Peter went into the upper room and watched and prayed like Jesus told him to do. All three won great victories.
 - “Great victories in the future are often won by graceful losses in the past.”
 - “Failure should be our teacher, not our undertaker.”
6. They all learned that God doesn't **desire** obedience, He **demand**s it. If we are to win victories after we have fallen, we must learn from past failures.

Third, you must refuse to dwell on the past.

1. We need to **learn** from the past, not **dwell** on the past. This is what David did. He didn't sit around dwelling on the past and moaning about it. He got up and kept going.
2. What a shame when we kill the present by dwelling on the past – dwelling on your own failures, or your spouse's failures, or your children's failures. We need to be like Paul. Philippians 3:13 – Forget those things which are behind, and press forward.
3. The devil will constantly throw your past in your face, and try to beat you down with it. He'll also bring up the past failures of other people, and try to fill your heart with bitterness. If you allow this, you are in for a long, rough life.
4. Do you want to win victories for God? Refuse to dwell on the past.

Fourth, you must enlist and accept the help of others.

1. Notice in verse 29 that David gathered all the people together. This is where David went wrong previously. He separated himself from the group, and was alone.
2. If we are going to win victories after we have fallen, it will take the help, encouragement, and fellowship of other believers. Galatians 6:1-2

3. Many times we fail, and the devil convinces us to quit church – “You’re nothing but a hypocrite.” Is the devil really concerned about hypocrites in the church? Of course not! He isn’t trying to do you or the church any favors. He is trying to keep you away from the very place you need the most.
4. A hypocrite is somebody pretending to be something they are not. How many of you came today with the attitude, “I am completely holy and perfect, and that is why I am here”?
 - How many came with this attitude: “I am not perfect, and I am not completely holy, and I am here because I need to hear what God’s Word has to say”?
5. We all need the fellowship and encouragement of other believers. Hopefully that is what we’ll get. God’s desire is not that you be a loner in the service of God. He wants us to work together as a team, as a body. 1 Corinthians 12:25-27

In Conclusion:

1. Notice how the story ends (vs. 30). David is back on the mountain winning victories for God.
2. Did you know our King, Jesus Christ, has already won the victory over sin and Satan? Our victory doesn’t lie in ourselves or in our own willpower or self-confidence. Our victory lies in a person – Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:57
 - This is true before salvation, and it is true after salvation.
3. God can use you after you have fallen because the victory has already been won at Calvary. We must simply rest and rely on Christ and His victorious power.

Forgiving the Banished **2 Samuel 14**

Introduction:

1. Families have problems – that is a fact of life. I don't care if it is a Christian family or a lost family; they are both going to have problems to work through from time to time.
2. In chapter 13, King David's family was ripped apart. David's son raped his step-sister. Absalom, David's other son, sought revenge on his perverted brother and killed him. And you thought your family had problems?
3. After this turn of events, Absalom fled (13:34). He fled to the land of Geshur, where his wife's family was from. He was there for three years.
 - David had a daughter that has been sexually assaulted, a son that was dead, and another son that he had no communication with at all.
4. David still loved Absalom, but there was obviously some bitterness and unforgiveness in David's heart that wouldn't allow David to send for Absalom, and reconcile with him. 13:37-39
5. Joab (David's general) perceived this (vs. 1), and devised a plan to convince David to forgive Absalom, and bring him back home (vs. 2-3). Joab had a wise woman help him tell David a fictitious story about her supposed two sons. vs. 4-11
6. After David basically cornered himself, the woman began to explain to David why he needed to forgive his son (vs. 12-14). Finally David conceded and brought Absalom back home (vs. 21), but still didn't fully forgive him until the end of this chapter. vs. 33
7. Forgiveness can be a very difficult thing to do, yet it is so needed.
8. Absalom had been banished (pushed off) for three years, and desperately needed his dad's forgiveness. Is there somebody that you have banished from your heart, or from your presence, and refuse to forgive?
 - Maybe your heart is not in a state of readiness to forgive. Hopefully this message will be like a soaking rain on your heart, and soften your heart to forgive.
9. Let's examine what this woman told David about why he needed to forgive Absalom, and apply it to our lives. Why should you forgive?

First, because our unforgiveness hurts others – vs. 13

1. She said, "David, you are hurting the people of God by not fetching home again your banished son and forgiving him."
2. Sometimes believers mistakenly think that they aren't hurting anybody but the person they won't forgive when they hold on to bitterness. But this simply isn't true.
3. The Bible likens believers to a body (1 Corinthians 12:27). We are all members of that body. Could you imagine if the members of your body had the ability to hold grudges against each other?

- **Illustration:** The legs hold a grudge against the toe because it is broken, and the legs refuse to walk. The ear causes the head to hurt, so the head holds a grudge against the ear. The tooth causes the jaw to hurt, so the jaw refuses to move so you can't talk.
 - When you are out of sorts with another person in the body of Christ, it is like an ear that is out of sorts with a head, or a toe with a foot, or a finger with a hand. 1 Corinthians 12:14-16, 20-21
4. You need to forgive so that the body of Christ can function effectively and efficiently. You hinder the cause of Christ when you harbor unforgiveness.
 - This is such a bad testimony to the lost world that does not know Christ. Philippians 1:27
 5. I wonder how many members of the body are sitting at home this morning instead of functioning as useful members in the body of Christ. Why? Because years ago, they messed up and somebody wouldn't forgive them, and it destroyed them. Or, somebody else hurt them and they refused to forgive.
 6. This can happen! In fact, in the church at Corinth, there was a young man that had gotten involved in sexual sin. It was bringing shame upon the church. The church had come down hard on him (which they should have), but the boy had repented of his sin.
 - The church was obviously having a hard time forgiving this young man, so notice what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:6-8:
 - Paul said to forgive him and comfort him – “*confirm your love toward him.*” Why? Lest he “*be swallowed up (akin to drowning) with overmuch sorrow.*”
 - Paul said, “You are going to discourage and destroy that young man. He is going to drown in sorrow.”
 7. There may be people in this condition today. They can't get over the fact that they hurt you. They are hungry for your forgiveness, and comfort, and love.
 - The word “comfort” means “to call near; invite; invoke.” It is the idea of putting your arms around them and saying, “I know you didn't mean it, and even if you did, I forgive you.”
 - This is the way the body of supposed to work. If the head hurts, the legs carry the body to the store, the arm and hands grab the medicine, the eyes read the dosage, the fingers open the package and put it in your mouth, etc.
 - But the shame of it is that this doesn't always happen in the body of Christ. Our attitude is, “They hurt me and disappointed me. They can beg for forgiveness and desire restoration all they want to, but they aren't getting it.” This is so diametrically opposite of the way grace teaches us to act. Ephesians 4:32
 8. Sometimes we will offer a half-hearted forgiveness. This is what David did to Absalom at first (vs. 23-24). Forgiveness that does not comfort and love the other person is not a true forgiveness.
 9. Do you know what this does? It opens the door to Satan. Notice Paul's admonition in 2 Corinthians 2:10-11. cf. Ephesians 4:27

- Many marriages have dissolved because of this issue of unforgiveness. One or both spouses simply won't forgive. Colossians 3:19
 - As one frustrated husband said, "Every time my wife and I get in a spat, she gets historical." His friend said, "Don't you mean hysterical." The husband said, "No historical – she is always bringing up the past and holding it against me."
 - Many times, that husband or wife is drowning in sorrow, and then Satan sends some other person to try to take away their sorrow. This is how marital infidelity can take place.
- Many children simply can't deal with the fact that they have hurt their parents and desperately need the forgiveness of their parents. Many children have been hurt by their parents deeply, and simply will not forgive them.
- Many friendships have been fractured because of unforgiveness or half-hearted forgiveness, which is not forgiveness at all.

In Conclusion:

1. Unforgiveness hurts others. That is what this wise woman told David, and how true it is!
2. You don't just hurt yourself and the person you are bitter at, but you hurt others, and you hurt the church and the cause of Christ as a whole when you harbor an unforgiving spirit.
3. Are there grudges that you need to let go of today? Just as Absalom was banished from his dad's presence, are there people you have banished from your presence, or maybe banished in your heart and spirit?
4. Let's end with Colossians 3:12-13. "*As Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*"

Next week – Part 2 of this message!

Forgiving the Banished – Part 2

2 Samuel 14

Introduction:

1. Families have problems – that is a fact of life. I don't care if it is a Christian family or a lost family; they are both going to have problems to work through from time to time.
2. In chapter 13, King David's family was ripped apart. David's son raped his step-sister. Absalom, David's other son, sought revenge on his perverted brother and killed him. And you thought your family had problems?
3. After this turn of events, Absalom fled (13:34). He fled to the land of Geshur, where his wife's family was from. He was there for three years.
 - David had a daughter that had been sexually assaulted, a son that was dead, and another son that he had no communication with at all.
4. David still loved Absalom, but there was obviously some bitterness and unforgiveness in David's heart that wouldn't allow David to send for Absalom, and reconcile with him. 13:37-39
5. Joab (David's general) perceived this (vs. 1), and devised a plan to convince David to forgive Absalom, and bring him back home (vs. 2-3). Joab had a wise woman help him tell David a fictitious story about her supposed two sons. vs. 4-11
6. After David basically cornered himself, the woman began to explain to David why he needed to forgive his son (vs. 12-14). Finally David conceded and brought Absalom back home (vs. 21), but still didn't fully forgive him until the end of this chapter. vs. 33
7. Forgiveness can be a very difficult thing to do, yet it is so needed.
8. Absalom had been banished (pushed off) for three years, and desperately needed his dad's forgiveness. Is there somebody that you have banished from your heart, or from your presence, and refuse to forgive?
 - Maybe your heart is not in a state of readiness to forgive. Hopefully this message will be like a soaking rain on your heart, and soften your heart to forgive.
9. Let's examine what this woman told David about why he needed to forgive Absalom, and apply it to our lives. Why should you forgive?

First, because our unforgiveness hurts others - vs. 13

Second, because death is a reality - vs. 14

1. This lady told David, "David, you need to forgive him because we all must die, and our lives are like water spilt on the ground."
 - **Illustration:** When you spill water in your front yard, can you retrieve it and put it back in the glass? Of course not, because the ground soaks it up.
 - This is just like our life. Every day that goes by is like water spilt on the ground. You can never go back and retrieve it.

2. Every day that you hold bitterness, grudges, and unforgiveness in your heart - you can never go back and get those days back. One day you are going to die, and then it is too late to say, "I love you, I forgive you."
 - There are not too many people out there in the graveyard forgiving and confirming their love to each other. The graveyard is still and cold.
3. Many people are living with guilt because they were too stubborn and prideful to forgive, and the object of their unforgiveness died and it was too late.
 - I have seen two people estranged when one of them dies. One weeps at the coffin and tells the other, "I love you," but it is too late. Do it while there is time.
4. There are people who destroy any quality of life they might enjoy because of unforgiveness, and when death finally comes there are so many regrets.
5. If you are a believer and you are holding on to bitterness and grudges, when you get to heaven, you **will** forgive and get it right – it will be a non-issue. So, you might as well get it right **now** so that you can enjoy some peace, joy, and quality of life down here!
6. Have you ever met a miserable person who is rude, inconsiderate, and unhappy? Mark it down, there is a lack of forgiveness somewhere in his heart. Forgiveness is one of the keys to the Christian life. It is impossible to live the Christ-life and not forgive. Colossians 3:12-14
7. To have a forbearing and forgiving heart is one of the proofs that we are living the Christ-life, and allowing Christ to live through us. 2 Corinthians 2:9-10

Third, because of God's abundant mercy and forgiveness - vs. 14

1. The wise woman said, "God devises means to bring back to Him those who have been banished. So, David, you should do the same." David could associate with this. This resonated in his heart because it wasn't that long ago he committed some gross immoral sins and needed God's forgiveness.
2. I can associate with this too. I was once a slave to Satan and sin, banished from God's presence, and exiled in the land of sin, death, and degradation. I had no hope of ever being able to earn God's forgiveness.
3. My only hope was for Him to make the first move and make provision for my restoration to His divine favor. This is exactly what God did. God did not want mankind to have to be banished, expelled, and cast off forever. So, God devised the proper means to prevent it.
4. Do you know John 3:16? How about Romans 5:6, 8? God gave His Son (Jesus) to come to this earth, and Christ willingly gave His life to die for our sins and take the penalty that we deserve.
5. As Jesus died on the cross, what did He say to those who were killing Him? *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."*
6. As Christ died, it was the Father echoing from the portals of glory, "I forgive you, I forgive you, if you will but accept my forgiveness." I remember the day I did. Every sin I had ever committed was forgiven and washed away by the blood of Jesus.

7. What should that motivate me to do (Ephesians 4:32)? How can I not forgive others when God has forgiven me so much? Wouldn't this be hypocritical? Remember the story of the unjust servant in Matthew 18:21-35?
8. David ended up forgiving his son Absalom, whom he had banished. Will you forgive that person that you have banished in your heart and mind?
9. Oh, the peace that comes when we choose the way of Christ, and forgive.

Sticking with the King **2 Samuel 15**

Introduction:

1. Have you ever felt like your life has been turned upside down? In our text, King David's world is rocked. His throne is stolen away from him. Not by an enemy, not by a Philistine, not by a heathen idol worshiper - it is stolen by his own son, Absalom.
2. Absalom was not content to wait until his father died. He wanted the throne, and he wanted it **now!** This young man had an evil and rebellious heart, and in this chapter it fully manifests itself.
3. David was forced to flee from Jerusalem and into the wilderness (vs. 14). Many of his loyal followers fled with him (vs. 17), including a group of warriors that had attached themselves to David when he lived in the Philistine territory of Gath (vs. 18).
4. One of these men really caught my attention. His name was Ittai. This man was apparently new to David, and David decided to test his loyalty by telling him to go on back to Jerusalem (vs. 19-20). Look at Ittai's response (vs. 21). I like this guy!
5. He basically says, "Look King, I know it may mean sleeping out here in the wilderness. I know it may mean hunger and pain. I know Absalom has more to offer me materially. I know I may even die with you. But, I believe I'll just stick with the King!"
6. Wow! What a picture of the dedication and commitment that we should have for our Lord and King, Jesus Christ.
7. Today, we live in a generation of quitters. If everything isn't just perfect, people's attitude is, "I quit." People quit their marriages, quit church, quit their jobs, and many believers quit on Jesus. God, give us some Ittais - people who understand commitment and will stick with the King (Acts 21:13). How can we exhibit this type of commitment?

First, never allow Satan to steal your heart. vs. 1-6, 13

1. Absalom stole the hearts of the people (vs. 1-6). The heart is the seat of emotions and affections. Absalom won the people's hearts away from David to himself (vs. 13).
2. Did you know that the Lord wants your heart, first and foremost? Matthew 22:36-38; cf. Colossians 3:2
3. Once you are saved and trust Christ, Satan cannot have your soul eternally. But, he wants to steal your heart away from the Lord while you are on the earth. He desires to steal your affections away from the Lord and His Word. He's a deceiver. 2 Corinthians 11:3
4. Satan will use seemingly "good" people and "good" things to do it. He has his Absaloms that he uses to steal the hearts of believers today.
5. Is there something or someone that has poured cold water on your passion for Christ? Is your heart as close and tender towards the Lord as it once was? What, or who, is the Absalom in your life? Decide in your heart, "I'm going to stick with the King!"

Sticking with the King – Part 2

2 Samuel 15

Introduction:

1. Have you ever felt like your life has been turned upside down? In our text, King David's world is rocked. His throne is stolen away from him. Not by an enemy, not by a Philistine, not by a heathen idol worshiper - it is stolen by his own son, Absalom.
2. Absalom was not content to wait until his father died. He wanted the throne, and he wanted it **now!** This young man had an evil and rebellious heart, and in this chapter it fully manifests itself.
3. David was forced to flee from Jerusalem and into the wilderness (vs. 14). Many of his loyal followers fled with him (vs. 17), including a group of warriors that had attached themselves to David when he lived in the Philistine territory of Gath (vs. 18).
4. One of these men really caught my attention. His name was Ittai. This man was apparently new to David, and David decided to test his loyalty by telling him to go on back to Jerusalem (vs. 19-20). Look at Ittai's response (vs. 21). I like this guy!
5. He basically says, "Look King, I know it may mean sleeping out here in the wilderness. I know it may mean hunger and pain. I know Absalom has more to offer me materially. I know I may even die with you. But, I believe I'll just stick with the King!"
6. Wow! What a picture of the dedication and commitment that we should have for our Lord and King, Jesus Christ.
7. Today, we live in a generation of quitters. If everything isn't just perfect, people's attitude is, "I quit." People quit their marriages, quit church, quit their jobs, and many believers quit on Jesus. God, give us some Ittais - people who understand commitment and will stick with the King (Acts 21:13). How can we exhibit this type of commitment?

First, never allow Satan to steal your heart. vs. 1-6, 13

1. Absalom stole the hearts of the people (vs. 1-6). The heart is the seat of emotions and affections. Absalom won the people's hearts away from David to himself (vs. 13).
2. Did you know that the Lord wants your heart, first and foremost? Matthew 22:36-38; cf. Colossians 3:2
3. Once you are saved and trust Christ, Satan cannot have your soul eternally. But, he wants to steal your heart away from the Lord while you are on the earth. He desires to steal your affections away from the Lord and His Word. He's a deceiver. 2 Corinthians 11:3
4. Satan will use seemingly "good" people and "good" things to do it. He has his Absaloms that he uses to steal the hearts of believers today.
5. Is there something or someone that has poured cold water on your passion for Christ? Is your heart as close and tender towards the Lord as it once was? What, or who, is the Absalom in your life? Decide in your heart, "I'm going to stick with the King!"

Second, refuse to rebel with the crowd. vs. 7-12

1. Absalom was able to get a crowd to follow him. He had many spies (vs. 10), 200 top men in Jerusalem (vs. 11), Ahitophel - one of David's counselors and best friends (vs. 12) - and a multitude of others (end of vs. 12).
2. But remember, numbers of people doing something does not determine whether it is right or wrong. Ever hear a teenager say, "Everybody's doing it"? Then it is probably wrong!
 - Have you ever asked your teen, "Why are you praying so much?" and he responded, "Everybody's doing it"?
 - The crowd is usually wrong. Matthew 27:20, 22
3. When you stand before the Lord one day, it is not going to work to say, "Everybody was doing it." God has warned us about this. Proverbs 11:21; Exodus 23:2
4. Don't ask yourself, "Who is doing it?" or "Who isn't doing it?" Simply ask yourself, "What would my Lord and Savior have me to do?"
5. If we are going to stick with the King, we can't just follow the crowd and float downstream. We have to be willing to stand against the crowd.

Third, be willing to follow the King regardless of the circumstances. vs. 13-23

1. David warned his servants in verse 14, "We are going to have to flee, leave the comforts of the palace, head for the wilderness, etc." How did they respond?
2. Did they say, "That's not convenient. That will be a hardship. That isn't fair. That will be uncomfortable..."? Notice their response in verse 15. This is when David also tried to discourage Ittai from going with him. But, notice his response in verse 21.
3. The servants' attitude was, "Whatever we need to do for the King, we're ready to do it. Whatever we need to sacrifice, count us in." Guess what – sacrifice **did** come. vs. 23
4. Sometimes as we pass through this life, we enter wilderness times. It's part of life. These times can test our loyalty to the King. Will we go AWOL, or stick with the King?
 - Anybody can stick with the King when you're in the palace and things are plush and comfortable. But, what about when you're in the wilderness?
5. Are you going through the wilderness of family problems, depression, financial difficulties, sickness, job stress, joblessness, etc? Are you thinking about quitting? Stick with the King and obey Him regardless of the circumstances.

Fourth, remain on the mountain of worship. vs. 30-32

1. Can you imagine the physical, mental, and emotional pain that David was going through? His entire world had been turned upside down, and his own son was the reason.

2. David was a man who was hurting in so many ways. What did he do? He went to the top of Mt. Olivet, wept, and worshipped God. When you feel like you have nowhere you can turn, remember, the Lord is always there. You can talk to Him.
3. It is the only way you will make it and survive. Keep that mountain of worship and communication with God intact. Don't forsake it. You will never stick with the King if you let it go. You'll fail. You'll quit.
 - **Illustration:** Paul and Silas in prison. Acts 16:23-25

In Conclusion:

1. Let me give you one final thought about sticking with the King. Remember Ittai's words in verse 21? "*Whether in life or death, even there will thy servant be.*"
2. His commitment must have made an impression on David, because in 2 Samuel 18:2, Joab and Abishai were each commanding one third of David's army. Guess who was commanding the other third. Ittai!
3. Joab and Abishai are both mentioned after this battle, but Ittai is not. Many believe that Ittai was killed in that battle.
4. He said, "I'm going to stick with the King even if it means death," and that is exactly what he did. May God give us some "Ittais" who will be totally committed to our King, Jesus Christ.

The Bitter, the Bold, the Beautiful **2 Samuel 16:5-14, 19:15-23**

Introduction:

1. Here in our text, David is at one of the lowest points of his life. His son has rebelled against him and stolen his throne, and David has been forced to flee with some of his loyal men from Jerusalem. Imagine how difficult this was. Talk about gut-wrenching!
2. As David was fleeing, he came through the city of Bahurim. There, a man by the name of Shimei met him. Have you ever heard of kicking a man while he is down? This is what happens. vs. 5-8, 13
3. Shimei was of the house of Saul, and had obviously nursed a deep grudge against David for years.
4. Abishai, one of David's generals, wanted to decapitate Shimei for David (vs. 9). David was amazingly merciful, and allowed Shimei to embarrass and disgrace him. vs. 10-12
5. Later on in chapter 19, these same three men meet again when David is restored back to his throne. What would happen? How would David respond to this man who offended him? Would he take revenge, or execute judgment? Would Abishai get his desired revenge?
6. Offences in life are bound to come. People will hurt you, do you wrong, or treat you unfairly. The question is, "How will you respond?"
7. We see three possible responses represented by these three men – Shimei, Abishai, and David. You decide which response you think is most like Christ.

First, you can become bitter and critical.

1. Shimei was of the house of Saul, the former king that God rejected. David had replaced Saul as king. Shimei had obviously been holding on to bitterness for years.
2. Now that David's throne had been usurped, and David was down for the count, Shimei decided to allow his internal bitterness to flow out in a stream of poison directed at David. He cursed him, disgraced him, threw rocks at him, and accused him.
3. Having a bitter spirit and a critical tongue is such an ugly thing. It's like drinking poison and hoping your enemy will die from it. All it does is kill you.
4. Shimei was full of bitterness at David, and David had no clue. This is common. The person with a critical spirit usually gets bitter at people who never even intended them any harm. The people they are bitter at may not even know they are bitter.
5. Are you a critical person? Do you hang on to offenses and allow the cancer of bitterness to eat you up? Is this the kind of person you want to be – a Shimei? Is this the kind of person you want to be known as – given over to a bitter and critical spirit?

6. Later on, Shimei came to David, humbled himself before him, and begged for mercy (19:18-20). He confessed his sin to the king, was willing to be a servant, and desired a change of identity. He no longer referred to himself as being from the house of Saul, but from the house of Joseph.
 - Did Shimei really have a change of heart, or was he doing what was expedient for him at the time?
7. I don't know for sure, but there is one thing I do know. If **you** really desire to change, Christ can help you to change. You can rid yourself of that bitter and critical spirit through Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 4:13

Second, you can become full of bold revenge.

1. The second man I want to look at is David's general, Abishai. When Shimei was disgracing David and his men, Abishai's first response was, "Kill him. Take his head off. Let's get revenge and do it now!" 16:9
2. Later on, in chapter 19, when Shimei bows before David and pleads for mercy, Abishai steps forward and gives some more advice (19:21). Abishai's solution to every problem is, "Kill him!"
3. If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to approach every problem as if it were a nail. Abishai is thinking the way most people think. "He kicked you when you were down, so kick him back, and kick him hard. Finish him off."
4. When other people offend you and do you wrong, the human, fleshly response is to retaliate in some way, or get revenge if you have opportunity. Cut them off as friends, avoid them, give them the silent treatment, talk behind their backs... really make them pay!
5. I think we all have some Abishai in us, don't we? But what does God's Word teach us? Romans 12:17-19, 21
6. Have you ever heard, "I don't get mad, I just get even"? This may sound tough and cool, but it is no way to live life. The thirst for revenge will drown you. Don't be an Abishai. Allow Christ to fill your heart with love for others, even if they have done you dirty.

Third, you can allow the beauty of mercy and forgiveness to fill you.

1. If anybody could have easily gotten full of bitterness and revenge, it was David. David has been tossed from his home, his kingdom was stolen by his son, he was forced to flee like a wild animal, and now this mean-spirited man threw rocks at him and cursed him.
2. Would you have been tempted to take the guy's head off? David could have unleashed his anger and frustration on this man, but he didn't. Notice how he responded. 16:10-12
3. Why would David think that God had sent this guy to rebuke him? Because David was acutely aware of his **own** sins. He thought that this may simply be a part of God's judgment, and a consequence of his own sin. Wow! Now that is humility!!

4. When other people offend us, what do we tend to do? We immediately justify ourselves and think things like, “I don’t deserve this. They are wrong. They need to get right. They need to pay for this.”
5. In chapter 19, David is restored as king and Shimei is the first one to meet David as David returned to Jerusalem. But, what a change (19:18-20)! He was either a very changed man, or a very good actor.
6. But I love David’s response after Abishai wants to kill Shimei (19:21-23). David took this man’s apology at face value, forgave him, and said, “*Thou shalt not die.*” What welcome words to the ears of a sinner! Remember when God said those words to you?
7. When Shimei said, “*I have sinned,*” don’t you think David’s mind went back to a few months prior to this when Nathan confronted him with his sin and David uttered the exact same words, “*I have sinned*”? Nathan said, “*Thou shalt not die.*” 12:13
8. This is the key to being filled with the beauty of mercy and forgiveness towards others who may have done you wrong. We must remember our own sin against God, and His forgiveness of our sins. Ephesians 4:32

In Conclusion:

1. We saw three men, today. All three men were offended by the actions of another.
 - Shimei was full of a bitter and critical spirit.
 - Abishai was full of a revengeful spirit.
 - David was full of a merciful and forgiving spirit.
2. David is such a picture of Christ. When the crowd cursed Christ, mocked and reviled Him, He said, “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*”
3. How beautiful is a person full of Christ-like mercy and forgiveness. It is such a beautiful thing to behold.

How to Overcome the Enemy **2 Samuel 17**

Introduction:

1. If you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, you have an enemy.
2. I don't know who you view as your enemy today – your boss at work, your neighbor, your former friend, your spouse, your mother-in-law – but I can assure you that they are **not** your enemies.
3. The Bible tells us in black and white that your enemy is not somebody with flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12). Who is your enemy, Christian? Ephesians 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8
4. Our enemy is the devil – pure and simple. He is the mastermind behind the evil world system that is in place on planet earth today. His desire is to destroy the believer's testimony, the believer's faith, the believer's family and marriage, etc.
5. How do we overcome Satan and win the victory? How do we win the victory in our personal lives, in our marriages, in our homes, etc.?
6. This morning we will explore this text about King David, and learn how to overcome our enemy, the devil.

Recognize Satan's attack plan.

1. When you are trying to defeat an enemy, it is always helpful to know his strategy and game plan.
2. Absalom wanted to destroy his father, David, so the kingdom would indisputably be his. So, he called on a counselor by the name of Ahithophel. This man had been David's personal counselor, friend, and companion, but he had turned on David.
3. This man was filled with the spirit of Satan, and he came up with a brilliant plan to defeat David. What a picture of Satan ("*pursue*" – to run after with hostile intent). vs. 1
4. What was his plan? His plan to defeat David mirrors Satan's plan to defeat us. vs. 2

Attack when they're weary! "*...while he is weary and weak handed...*"

- This is what Satan does to us. When we are tired or weak in mind or body, this is when Satan attempts to get an advantage on us. Many times this can happen after you have been serving the Lord fervently and you are spiritually exhausted.
- **Illustration:** Elijah (1 Kings 19) right after a great victory – he is drained, and here comes Jezebel! Elijah said, "It's no use. I quit." He just needed some food and rest.

Intimidate through fear! “...and will make him afraid...”

- Fear is one of Satan’s greatest tools (Abraham’s lie, Saul’s disobedience, Peter’s cursing and denial). Yet, think about David and Goliath. How could David defeat Goliath? His trust in the Lord was greater than his fear of Goliath. 2 Timothy 1:7
- Satan loves to use fear to paralyze us.

Divide and conquer. “...and all the people that are with him shall flee...”

- Another part of Satan’s plan is to make you feel that you are all alone. He loves to alienate people from their churches and cause friction between fellow believers.
- It is difficult enough to overcome Satan’s attacks in our daily lives, but when you feel like you are also fighting those who should be soldiers with you, it can be disabling.

5. This is Satan’s plan, and notice how it culminates: “...and I will smite the king...” This is the knockout blow when Satan desires to knock you out of the race and out of the fight.

Remind yourself that God is on your side.

1. Think about it. If God is on your side, it doesn’t matter how many others are against you. God is always a majority! Satan had a brilliant plan to defeat David, but there was an overriding factor – God was on David’s side!
2. After hearing Ahithophel’s plan, Absalom decided to listen to Hushai and see if he had a plan. Hushai was David’s friend, and was acting as an undercover spy. vs. 5
3. Hushai deliberately laid out a plan that he knew would help David, and buy David some needed time (vs. 6-13). So, Absalom had Hushai’s and Ahithophel’s counsel.
4. What would Absalom do? Notice verse 14. “*For the Lord had appointed... to the intent that the Lord...*” Satan meant to destroy David and had a well-devised plan, but God confounded Satan’s plan.
5. God was working for David, and while David didn’t realize the specifics of what God was doing, he did know that God was for him. Psalm 3:1-3, 8
6. Do you know that Paul told the church in Romans 8:31, “*If God be for us, who can be against us?*” Paul went on to say... Romans 8:33-34
7. Christian, it may seem at times that God has forgotten you, but I can assure you that God is on your side. You have a mediator in heaven named Jesus Christ, and He is ever making intercession on your behalf. That is a guarantee from God!
8. Satan may accuse you and fight you, but he can never strip you of the spiritual blessings you possess in Christ and the spiritual position that you have before God. Romans 8:38-39
9. Even if Satan wins a battle here and there, remember that you are going to win the war!

Rely on God's provision.

1. As you read through the ensuing events in this chapter, you can clearly see God's amazing protection and provision. Hushai got David word through carriers, and David escaped over the Jordan River (vs. 22). But, things were not good.
2. The people were hungry, weary, and thirsty (end of vs. 29). Then, while David was in the wilderness, three men showed up (totally unexpectedly) with much-needed food and supplies for David and his men. vs. 27-29
3. God knew their need and He met it. He provided refreshment and nourishment in the wilderness. God provided a table in the wilderness! Psalm 23:5
4. God does this for us today. When we are walking through the wilderness of this world, the Holy Spirit refreshes our spirit, and His Word nourishes us through every circumstance. Philippians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 12:9
5. Pray, trust Him, refuse to fear. Psalm 3:4-6
6. Do you know the greatest provision that God ever made for you? It was His Son, Jesus Christ. Through Christ, God has provided a way for you to have complete and total forgiveness of your sins, and an eternal home in heaven. Turn to Christ today!

Is the Young Man Absalom Safe? 2 Samuel 18

Introduction:

1. King David had a very troubled son by the name of Absalom. He was a very angry and rebellious young man. He had learned to hide his anger, but it was still there. He had learned outwardly to use his charm and good looks to deceive and use people.
2. Here in our text, Absalom had usurped his father's throne, and now he is out for David's life!
3. Absalom gathered his troops together and was preparing to attack David and his men, while David prepared his men for battle (vs. 1-2). Before the battle, David had one request (vs. 5). Here we see the unconditional love of a father.
4. Civil war broke out (vs. 6-8) and, despite David's wishes, Joab killed Absalom and then sent word to David, who was hiding in the city. David received word that his men won the war, but David had only one thing on his mind. vs. 29, 32
5. David cried out, "*Is the young man Absalom safe?*" This young man was not safe. His life ended in utter humiliation and destruction. He was not safe, and there are definite reasons why. Let's look at those reasons this morning, and learn from his mistakes.

First, Absalom was not safe because he had nowhere to turn for help.

1. Do you remember, Absalom had long, flowing hair (14:26)? It seems that his hair proved to be a detriment in battle. Notice verses 9-10.
 - Can't you just picture this? The guy is hanging there, in that tree, and can't get down. You talk about having a bull's-eye on you!
2. Absalom was suspended between heaven and earth. Nobody in heaven could help him, because he had alienated himself from the God who loved him. Nobody on earth was there to help him in that moment. They had all fled and scattered.
 - There he is, suspended between heaven and earth, without any help from either.
3. So many people are in this same condition today, spiritually.
 - They can't stay on the earth forever, because the wages of sin is death. Nobody on the earth can take care of their sin problem and help them to overcome eventual death.
 - Yet, they have refused God's love and God's Son, Jesus Christ. Christ died for their sin, but they won't accept Christ and receive Him into their hearts and lives.
4. Their souls are one heartbeat away from hell. Their souls are suspended between heaven and earth, hovering over hell. Satan would love to do to them what Joab did to Absalom – thrust them through with his fiery darts, and send them to the place he is going.

- I remember when this was me, but praise God for the day I received and trusted Christ as my Savior. He snatched me up, set my feet on solid ground, and seated me in heavenly places in Christ!
5. You are not like Absalom today. You can turn to Christ today for help, and He will give you eternal life. He will give you victory over sin and death!

Second, Absalom was not safe because he trusted in his outward beauty.

1. You know what Absalom was most proud of? His hair! It was a big scene when he would cut it once a year. 14:25-26
2. Absalom was a young man full of pride, and thought his beauty made him a cut above everybody else. But, his outward beauty that he took pride in led to his ultimate destruction.
3. I believe there will be many shocked people standing before the Lord on Judgment Day who thought that, because of some outward, beautiful deed or action, they would surely be granted entrance into heaven. Matthew 7:22-23
4. Many people will stand before the Lord and tell Him all the beautiful things they did on earth, but those that enter heaven will be those who stand before God and tell Him everything **Christ** did for them!
5. Many people think that Satan is only interested in killing, child abuse, devil worship, etc. This is not true. Satan loves it when people give charitably, go to church, get baptized, perform religious rituals, and then trust in these outwardly beautiful things for their salvation. He tells people, “You’re alright. Look at all you’ve done.”
6. But, those who trust in their outward beautiful acts will be like Absalom – facing eventual destruction.

Third, Absalom was not safe because he rejected his father’s unfailing love.

1. What love David had for Absalom. After all that Absalom had done, notice what David tells his generals. He said, “Deal gently with him for my sake.” vs. 5
2. After David found out that Absalom was dead, notice how David reacts (vs. 33). David wept and cried out for his son.
3. Did you know our Savior, Jesus Christ wept over lost and dying souls (Luke 19:41)? God never delights in a lost soul dying and spending eternity with Satan in the lake of fire. It breaks His heart. God desires for every person to be safe in Christ. 2 Peter 3:9
4. David cried out, “*Would God had I died for thee...*”
5. I’ve got great news today. Jesus hung on the cross, dying for our sins, and then cried out, “*It is finished.*” David wished that he **could** have died for Absalom so that Absalom could live, but Jesus **did** die for you so that you could live eternally. John 3:16; Romans 5:8
 - What unfailing love God has shown to you and me.
6. David cried out, “*Is the young man Absalom safe?*” Today, this is God’s concern for you. Are you safe in Christ? Are you dead in your sins, or alive in Christ?

7. The very heartbeat of God is to see people saved and brought into a right relationship with Him. This is why Jesus came to earth. 1 Timothy 1:15
8. The question is, "Are you safe?" If you were to die right now, do you know that you would wake up in heaven? If you reject the Father's unfailing love, you will not be safe, but lost for eternity.
9. Let's learn these lessons from Absalom. Turn to Christ, receive Him today.

The Return of the King: Are You Ready? – Part 1

2 Samuel 19

Introduction:

1. King David's armies had defeated the armies of Absalom and quenched the rebellion. David had been forced to flee into the wilderness, but now it was time for the King to return to the throne of his kingdom. vs. 15
2. In so many ways, David is a picture of the King of kings – Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:16
 - Due to earthly rebellion, David was sent into temporary exile, but ultimately returned in triumph.
 - Christ came to this earth as the King, the Messiah, but was rejected. He went into temporary exile into the heavens, but will one day return to this earth in triumph.
3. Like David, Christ will return to Jerusalem, sit on the throne of His glory, and dwell in the fullness of His glory and kingdom. Matthew 24:27, 29-30, 25:31; Revelation 1:7
4. Seven years before His glorious and public return to earth, Christ will make a secret return, not to earth, but in the heavens. We call this event the Rapture. We are caught up to meet Christ in the air.
 - At the Rapture, He is returning as the Head of His body (the church).
 - At the Revelation, He is returning as King over all the earth.
5. Just like King David returned, King Jesus is returning. Are you ready for His return? Are you prepared? Our knowledge that the King could return at any moment should cause us to prepare ourselves.
6. As we look at several people here in our text, and their responses, I believe we can make practical application to our lives. How can we prepare to meet the King, Jesus Christ?

The Return of the King: Are You Ready? – Part 2

2 Samuel 19

Introduction:

1. King David's armies had defeated the armies of Absalom and quenched the rebellion. David had been forced to flee into the wilderness, but now it was time for the King to return to the throne of his kingdom. vs. 15
2. In so many ways, David is a picture of the King of kings – Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:16
 - Due to earthly rebellion, David was sent into temporary exile, but ultimately returned in triumph.
 - Christ came to this earth as the King, the Messiah, but was rejected. He went into temporary exile into the heavens, but will one day return to this earth in triumph.
3. Like David, Christ will return to Jerusalem, sit on the throne of His glory, and dwell in the fullness of His glory and kingdom. Matthew 24:27, 29-30, 25:31; Revelation 1:7
4. Seven years before His glorious and public return to earth, Christ will make a secret return, not to earth, but in the heavens. We call this event the Rapture. We are caught up to meet Christ in the air.
 - At the Rapture, He is returning as the Head of His body (the church).
 - At the Revelation, He is returning as King over all the earth.
5. Just like King David returned, King Jesus is returning. Are you ready for His return? Are you prepared? Our knowledge that the King could return at any moment should cause us to prepare ourselves.
6. As we look at several people here in our text, and their responses, I believe we can make practical application to our lives. How can we prepare to meet the King, Jesus Christ?

First, possess an attitude of humility and repentance.

1. As David returned, the first person that ran out to meet him was Shimei. Do you remember him? He was the one that had previously cursed at David and threw stones at him. 16:13
2. Shimei now comes and humbles himself in repentance before the King (vs. 18-20). He admitted that he had sinned and asked the king for mercy. Because of his repentance, he was saved and delivered from the wrath of the King. vs. 23
3. You may say, "But Shimei deserved to die." Yes he did. But because of his repentance, he was spared from death and given life.
4. Did you know that we are all in the same boat that Shimei was in? We deserve death because we have offended **the** King, Jesus Christ. Romans 3:23, 3:19
 - There is not a one of us who hasn't sinned against God and offended His righteous and holy character. But, there is good news!
5. We too can be saved from the wrath of the King. How? The King **Himself** died **for** us and took the penalty that we deserve. Romans 5:8-9

6. God simply desires that we humble ourselves, and place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. At the very moment we trust Christ, our sins are all imputed to Christ, and His righteousness is imputed to us.
7. As Shimei stood before the King, do you notice what Abishai said? What a picture of Satan. Satan looks at me and says to God, “Look at all he has done. He deserves death.” God says, “Yes he **does** deserve death, but the blood of my Son has been applied. He is forgiven!” Colossians 1:14, 2:13

Second, live in anticipation of His coming.

1. There is another man that came out to meet the King. Do you remember Mephibosheth? He was the crippled man that David showed mercy to. 2 Samuel 9:7
2. Mephibosheth had a servant named Ziba. When David had to flee Jerusalem, Ziba went out to meet David, lied about Mephibosheth, and incriminated him to David. He did this for his own selfish gain. 16:1-4
3. But Mephibosheth was loyal to the King and lived in anticipation of His return. In fact, when he met David, he hadn't shaved, changed his clothes, or taken a bath since David fled (vs. 24 – ripe!). This was an outward demonstration of his longing and desire for David to return.
 - While I don't think you need to imitate what he did (we would all appreciate it), this is the **heart** we should have towards our King, Jesus Christ.
 - Mephibosheth's attitude was, “Let Ziba have everything. I don't care. My King has returned and that's worth everything to me!” vs. 30
4. We should be looking for and longing to see our Savior (2 Timothy 4:8)! Just as it affected Mephibosheth's daily life, our longing and anticipation for Christ's return should affect our daily lives. 1 John 3:2-3
5. We get so wrapped up in the things of the earth that we can easily lose sight of the fact that it could all end in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. When we do this, it can cause us to become consumed with what God is doing for us materially.
6. But this isn't what it is all about. Mephibosheth knew this (vs. 28). He was so thankful for the deliverance that David had provided, and simply longed to be **with** David. This should be our heart. Colossians 3:2, 4

The Return of the King: Are You Ready? – Part 3

2 Samuel 19

Introduction:

1. King David's armies had defeated the armies of Absalom and quenched the rebellion. David had been forced to flee into the wilderness, but now it was time for the King to return to the throne of his kingdom. vs. 15
2. In so many ways, David is a picture of the King of kings – Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:16
 - Due to earthly rebellion, David was sent into temporary exile, but ultimately returned in triumph.
 - Christ came to this earth as the King, the Messiah, but was rejected. He went into temporary exile into the heavens, but will one day return to this earth in triumph.
3. Like David, Christ will return to Jerusalem, sit on the throne of His glory, and dwell in the fullness of His glory and kingdom. Matthew 24:27, 29-30, 25:31; Revelation 1:7
4. Seven years before His glorious and public return to earth, Christ will make a secret return, not to earth, but in the heavens. We call this event the Rapture. We are caught up to meet Christ in the air.
 - At the Rapture, He is returning as the Head of His body (the church).
 - At the Revelation, He is returning as King over all the earth.
5. Just like King David returned, King Jesus is returning. Are you ready for His return? Are you prepared? Our knowledge that the King could return at any moment should cause us to prepare ourselves.
6. As we look at several people here in our text, and their responses, I believe we can make practical application to our lives. How can we prepare to meet the King, Jesus Christ?

First, possess an attitude of humility and repentance.

1. As David returned, the first person that ran out to meet him was Shimei. Do you remember him? He was the one that had previously cursed at David and threw stones at him. 16:13
2. Shimei now comes and humbles himself in repentance before the King (vs. 18-20). He admitted that he had sinned and asked the king for mercy. Because of his repentance, he was saved and delivered from the wrath of the King. vs. 23
3. You may say, "But Shimei deserved to die." Yes he did. But because of his repentance, he was spared from death and given life.
4. Did you know that we are all in the same boat that Shimei was in? We deserve death because we have offended **the** King, Jesus Christ. Romans 3:23, 3:19
 - There is not a one of us who hasn't sinned against God and offended His righteous and holy character. But, there is good news!
5. We too can be saved from the wrath of the King. How? The King **Himself** died **for** us and took the penalty that we deserve. Romans 5:8-9

6. God simply desires that we humble ourselves, and place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. At the very moment we trust Christ, our sins are all imputed to Christ, and His righteousness is imputed to us.
7. As Shimei stood before the King, do you notice what Abishai said? What a picture of Satan. Satan looks at me and says to God, “Look at all he has done. He deserves death.” God says, “Yes he **does** deserve death, but the blood of my Son has been applied. He is forgiven!” Colossians 1:14, 2:13

Second, live in anticipation of His coming.

1. There is another man that came out to meet the King. Do you remember Mephibosheth? He was the crippled man that David showed mercy to. 2 Samuel 9:7
2. Mephibosheth had a servant named Ziba. When David had to flee Jerusalem, Ziba went out to meet David, lied about Mephibosheth, and incriminated him to David. He did this for his own selfish gain. 16:1-4
3. But Mephibosheth was loyal to the King and lived in anticipation of His return. In fact, when he met David, he hadn’t shaved, changed his clothes, or taken a bath since David fled (vs. 24 – ripe!). This was an outward demonstration of his longing and desire for David to return.
 - While I don’t think you need to imitate what he did (we would all appreciate it), this is the **heart** we should have towards our King, Jesus Christ.
 - Mephibosheth’s attitude was, “Let Ziba have everything. I don’t care. My King has returned and that’s worth everything to me!” vs. 30
4. We should be looking for and longing to see our Savior (2 Timothy 4:8)! Just as it affected Mephibosheth’s daily life, our longing and anticipation for Christ’s return should affect our daily lives. 1 John 3:2-3
5. We get so wrapped up in the things of the earth that we can easily lose sight of the fact that it could all end in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. When we do this, it can cause us to become consumed with what God is doing for us materially.
6. But this isn’t what it is all about. Mephibosheth knew this (vs. 28). He was so thankful for the deliverance that David had provided, and simply longed to be **with** David. This should be our heart. Colossians 3:2, 4

Third, remember, your faithfulness will be rewarded.

1. There was another interesting person that met David when he returned. This was an elderly man by the name of Barzillai. This was the man that brought David and his men a load of food and supplies when they were in the wilderness. vs. 32; cf. 17:27-29
2. Barzillai was well-off materially. But, he also had large heart to do good with his blessings. This is to be the attitude of every child of God. 1 Timothy 6:17-19
 - What good are material blessings if we don’t use them to help others and help the cause of Christ? Ephesians 4:28

3. Barzillai is an example of a man who was a faithful steward and continued to be faithful until his King returned. When King David returned, he remembered Barzillai's faithfulness, and rewarded him. He invited him to come to Jerusalem and live with him.
 - Notice Barzillai's humble response (vs. 36-40). Chimham was most likely Barzillai's son.
4. Even on his deathbed, David remembered Barzillai's faithfulness and told Solomon to show kindness to his sons. 1 Kings 2:7
5. Did you know our King, Jesus Christ, also notices and rewards faithfulness? Matthew 25:41; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Hebrews 6:10
6. Maybe you have been discouraged lately. Maybe you have felt like quitting and throwing in the towel. Don't do it! Remember, your King could return at any moment.
7. We sing an old song, "It will be worth it all when we see Jesus." This is so true.
8. When Christ returns, may He find us faithful. It is not easy to be faithful. But, when we are tempted to quit, we must remember Christ. Hebrews 12:2-3

Cleaving to the King **2 Samuel 19:41-20:26**

Introduction:

1. The time finally came for King David to return to his palace in Jerusalem. Absalom's rebellion had been quenched, and in this chapter David is returning home.
2. But, on the way back home, there arose a contention between the ten northern tribes of Israel and the southern tribe of Judah. 19:41-43
3. Because of this contention, a man rose up against David (Sheba – 20:1), and the ten northern tribes of Israel followed Sheba in his rebellion (20:2a). But the rest of the verse caught my attention. "...*the men of Judah clave unto their king...*" **20:2b**
 - The word "*clave*" means "to cling to; to glue to."
4. This is what is needed so desperately today - believers who will cleave and cling to their Lord and King (Jesus Christ) like Superglue.
5. Notice what Barnabas exhorted his converts to do in Acts 11:23. This is what we need today!
6. When we think of this idea of clinging and glue, it reminds me of wallpaper. You glue it to the wall. But have you ever noticed that over time, or when steam is applied, the wallpaper will sometimes begin to separate itself from the wall and fall away.
7. This reminds me of many believers in our culture today. They cleave to the King when it's convenient or fun. But when a little heat is applied, they fall away. God give us some Superglue Christians – some Gorilla Glue believers! We must cleave to the King!
8. This morning I want to look at our text and derive some principles that will help us to cleave to our King, Jesus Christ.

First, we must dwell in unity with each other. 19:41-43

1. Here is the scene: The king is coming back, and it's a time of victory, celebration, and joy. But right in the middle of this festive occasion, a dispute starts between the ten tribes of Israel and the tribe of Judah. They are arguing about who should lead the parade - who should be front and center in the escort of the king.
2. As a result of this dispute, a man leads a rebellion against David, and there is a tribal split (kind of like a church split)! What a reminder of the present day church.
3. These people forgot that they were on the same team with the same king. Sometimes **we forget** that we are on the same team serving the same King (Jesus). God desires that we dwell in unity with one another and love each other.
4. It breaks God's heart when He sees us fighting, bickering, getting angry with each other, and allowing ourselves to be hurt over insignificant things. Psalm 133:1
 - We cannot possibly cleave to Jesus and be out of sorts with each other.
1 John 4:20

- Even preachers get this tribal mentality. “What camp or tribe are you in?” This must make God sick. I’m in the Jesus camp!
5. Did you know that God hates discord and contention among brethren? Proverbs 6:16, 19
 6. When there is contention between believers, we cannot possibly cleave to Christ because our heart is not right with God. God desires that CrossRoads dwells in unity.
 7. Imagine if there was a car in the parking lot, and the engine was in one place, the body in another, the transmission and tires in another place, etc. Are you going anywhere? No, because it’s not together. It is not in unity. It’s the same way with the church. 1 Corinthians 1:10-13
 8. If we are to cleave to the king, we must dwell in unity with each other.

Second, we must exhibit our loyalty by our sacrifice. 20:4-5

1. After Sheba rose up in rebellion and led the ten tribes away with him, David decided he had better get some troops together. He commissioned Amasa to assemble an army. vs. 4
2. But Amasa couldn’t get enough men together in three days (vs. 5). They wanted to march with the king in victory, but weren’t as eager to fight his battles. They wanted to prance along with him in triumph, but were not as eager to go on the front lines and sacrifice for him. They would cleave to the king if it was convenient.
3. Today in our culture, so many love a loyalty that is cheap and easy. But if we will cleave to the King, it will take sacrifice. Matthew 16:24; 2 Timothy 2:3, 3:12
4. So many times our thoughts are consumed with ideas like, “What will Christ do for me? How will He bless me? How will He make my life easier?” Shouldn’t our thoughts be consumed with ideas like, “What can I do for Christ? How can I serve Him and sacrifice for Him after all He has done for me?”
5. If we are to cleave to the King, we must exhibit our loyalty by our sacrifice.

Third, we must be aware of the enemy’s plans. 20:8-10

1. Amasa finally got some troops together and met Joab, and they left together to pursue Sheba. Amasa had been given Joab’s position as general, so Joab had a vendetta against Amasa. Notice what happened. vs. 8-10
 - Amasa was totally ignorant of Joab’s plan. He never saw it coming.
2. If you are a believer today, Satan is your enemy, and he has a vendetta against you. He desires to destroy you (1 Peter 5:8). We are warned to **not** be ignorant of Satan’s devices (2 Corinthians 2:11). If you are cleaving to the King, rest assured, Satan will come at you.
3. This story of Joab and Amasa parallels how Satan seeks to destroy us:

- Joab destroyed Amasa while Amasa was busy for the king.
 - This is what Satan does to you. While you are busy serving Christ, Satan will attempt to catch you off guard and neutralize you in your service. This is why we must make sure that we are serving Christ in faith and not in the flesh. Ephesians 6:16
- Joab used deceit to destroy Amasa.
 - Satan is said to be subtle and cunning. God warns us to not be deceived. Galatians 6:7
- Amasa was unaware of Joab's intentions.
 - As a believer in a wicked world, you cannot afford to be ignorant of Satan's devices, and walk in a casual, lackadaisical manner. Ephesians 5:14-15

Fourth, we must cast off the works of darkness. 20:15-22

1. When the city cast out the sin and evil, there was peace once again.
2. Sin robs us of our peace and that sweet fellowship with Christ. Maybe you're here today and you were once cleaving to Christ, but some particular sin has hindered you in your walk with Christ.
3. What is the answer? Hebrews 12:1; cf. Romans 13:12

In Conclusion:

1. Are you cleaving to the King? Are you walking in a close relationship with Christ? Or, are you like that sagging wallpaper that is losing its grip.
2. Have you been struggling in your heart with bitterness, anger, and sin issues? Turn it over to God today. Turn to Christ, and begin cleaving to Him once again.

Joab – Valuable Lessons for Life

2 Samuel 20

Introduction:

1. This past Sunday we looked briefly at a man by the name of Joab. In our text (2 Samuel 20) we saw Joab murder Amasa, the general of David's armies. The ironic part of this is that both men believed in the same cause and were serving under the same king.
2. Why did Joab do this? Was he justified in this murder? Who is this man, Joab? He is mentioned over 100 times in the Bible.
3. Joab was actually the nephew of King David. Joab's mother (Zeruiah) was the sister of David and had three sons – Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. All three boys were commanders in David's army.
4. Joab is a fascinating Bible character. I believe we can all learn some valuable lessons from his life. Who was this man, Joab?

Joab was a mighty warrior.

1. When David and his army went to Jerusalem in an attempt to capture that city (then called Jebus), David made a decree. He declared that whatever man smote the Jebusites first, David would make that man general of his army.
2. The Bible says that "*Joab went up first, and was chief.*" 1 Chronicles 11:3-9
3. Joab went on to experience some great military victories.
 - Over the Edomites – 1 Kings 11:15
 - Over the Syrians and Ammonites - 2 Samuel 10:6-14
4. There is no debating the fact that this man Joab was brave, courageous, an incredible warrior, and military mind. When it came to military strategy and courage, he was very gifted and talented.
5. But Joab had a couple of blind spots that would lead to his undoing.

Joab was a bitter and vengeful man.

1. We get a glimpse into Joab's blind spot when he is first mentioned in 2 Samuel 3.
2. King Saul had died. Abner had long been King Saul's highest military chief. After Saul's death, Abner made Saul's son the new king of Israel.
3. But the southern tribe of Judah had made David king. When civil war broke out, Abner was forced to kill Joab's brother, Asahel. He did not want to do it at all, but was forced to in an act of self-defense. 2 Samuel 2:19-23
4. Abner later gave his allegiance to David and was able to persuade all the elders of Israel to follow David. He was the key tool that God used to make David king over all Israel.
5. How did Joab respond to Abner? Let's read 2 Samuel 3:26-27.
 - Joab had been carrying extreme bitterness over an act of war that wasn't Abner's fault.

- As we will see later, the Scriptures clearly tell us that Abner was a more noble and righteous man than Joab, but Joab couldn't get past the spirit of bitterness and revenge. He put King David in a terrible spot by doing this, and it could have divided the kingdom again. 2 Samuel 3:28-39
6. In 2 Samuel 20 we see this spirit of bitterness again manifested in Joab. He murders a man by the name of Amasa. But why? Amasa had done wrong in following Absalom in his rebellion against David, but Amasa came back to David, and David forgave him.
 - Shimei was another example of David's forgiveness, but Abishai (and apparently Joab, his brother) desired to have him put to death. 2 Samuel 19:21-22
 7. David didn't write off Amasa forever, but forgave him, and was willing to allow him to be used again in the service of the king. 2 Samuel 20:4
 8. But Joab, on the other hand, was not so willing to forgive. He murdered Amasa in cold blood as soon as he got the chance. 2 Samuel 20:9-10
 - Did Amasa deserve to be murdered? The Bible clearly tells us that he did not. It was an act of bitterness, revenge, and spite.
 9. Joab was talented, gifted, and courageous, but he had a major problem that would contribute greatly to his downfall. He wouldn't let go of bitterness. He desired revenge.

Joab was a very self-willed man.

1. Joab had another huge blind spot that would lead to his eventual downfall – a self-willed heart.
2. When Joab murdered Abner, he gave no thought of how his actions would affect king David and the nation of Israel. The nation had just come together and was in a fragile state, but Joab's issue with Abner was more important in his mind than the nation. He had a score to settle, and he would settle it no matter what.
3. Later on, when Absalom rebelled against David, before going to battle David specifically asked his generals to deal gently with Absalom for his sake. David wanted to try to restore the young man. But Joab thought he knew better. While Absalom was hanging in the oak tree, Joab thrust three arrows through the young man's heart. 2 Samuel 18:14
 - Joab then rebuked David for mourning for his son and basically threatened him into doing what he wanted him to do. 2 Samuel 19:1-8
4. When David forgave Amasa and gave him a military position, Joab didn't agree with his leader's decision. It was every bit in David's right as a leader to appoint Amasa to whatever job or position he wanted to. But Joab thought he knew better, so in self-will and defiance of King David, Joab murdered Amasa.
5. When David was old and was close to death, it was clear that Solomon was God's choice (1 Kings 2:15) - and David's choice - to be the next king. Again, Joab thought he knew better than God or David, and attempted to lead a rebellion against David and make his other son, Adonijah, the new king. 1 Kings 1:5-7

6. Joab won some great victories, but he had some major stumblingblocks – stubbornness and self-will. So many times, he operated under the satanic principle of rebellion against authority. It would cost him his very life.

Joab was man who died in disgrace.

1. How did Joab's life eventually end? As we said, his final act was to lead a rebellion against David. Joab had been a thorn in his Uncle David's side for a long time. He had ruthlessly murdered innocent men and disrespected David over and over.
2. On David's death bed, he gave Solomon a charge. Part of that charge dealt with Joab. 1 Kings 2:5-6
 - David said, *"He shed the blood of war in peace."* He killed out of spite and vengeance, not out of an act of military warfare.
3. Let's look at how this man's life ended. 1 Kings 2:28-34
4. Even when he knew death was imminent, he wasn't going to take orders from anybody. He would do it **his** way, even in death. Notice what Solomon (one of the wisest men in Scriptures) had to say about Joab. These are the final words and legacy he left:
 - *"And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD."* **1 Kings 2:32-33**

In Conclusion:

1. Do you think Joab's life story has ever been repeated by other people? Probably a million times over.
2. What do you think the life of Joab teaches us? What can we learn? What did you get out of his life that you can apply to your life?
3. Allow the Holy Spirit to take this and apply it personally to your heart today.

Rizpah – Lessons for Everyday Life

2 Samuel 3:7-10, 21:1-14

Introduction:

1. There is a lady in our text by the name of Rizpah who, on the surface, seems like a rather insignificant character in the Bible. She was a concubine of King Saul. Concubines were wives, but not united by the usual ceremonies and were considered inferior.
2. Rizpah bore Saul two sons, Armoni and Mephibosheth (not the same one as Jonathon's son – Saul's grandson).
3. Though Rizpah was insignificant in her status as a concubine and is only mentioned a couple of times in Scripture, she played a major role in two very significant events in the life of the nation of Israel.
4. There are two incredible lessons for everyday life that we learn from Rizpah.

Rumors kill and destroy – 2 Samuel 3:7-10

1. After Saul died, the commander of Saul's army (Abner) placed Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, on the throne of Israel, and united the ten northern tribes of Israel under his leadership.
2. Two tribes followed David as King and they began to win victories over Abner's armies. But then came the fatal blow, and it involved this lady, Rizpah. 3:7-10
3. A rumor began to circulate concerning Abner and Rizpah. There is no indication in the text that the allegations were true; they were simply rumors. Ish-bosheth was upset by the rumor, and naturally Abner was furious.
4. This led Abner to take his support to David and led to the total destruction and demise of the northern kingdom of Israel. What war and armies could not accomplish, a simple rumor did! We know David was God's choice all along, but isn't it interesting that it was a simple little rumor that divided and destroyed the kingdom of the ten northern tribes.
5. Oh, the great power that lies in the tongue! What is a rumor? "General talk not based on definite knowledge; mere gossip, hearsay." What does God's Word say about this? **Ephesians 4:25, 27, 29; Proverbs 18:8, 20:19, 26:20-22; cf. Proverbs 10:18**
6. One of the biggest threats to confidence in our lives is rumors.
 - There was a rumor going around at Thessalonica that they were already in the Day of the Lord. It caused all kinds of problems and issues in the church.
7. Rumors hurt, destroy, and are simply non-productive. How do we guard against this tool of Satan in our lives?
 - We must guard our mouths. James 3:8; cf. Ephesians 4:29
 - If our words do not build up and minister grace to others, then it is best we leave them unsaid.
 - We must guard our ears. 2 Timothy 4:3
 - We learn that part of our fallen human nature is that we love to have our ears tickled. The context here is false doctrine, but it also applies to rumors and gossip.

- People love to have their ears tickled with juicy gossip, especially if it is about another person. As we yield to the Holy Spirit, when people say, “Did you hear about...” we politely say, “No, and I would rather not. If it isn’t news that we can rejoice in, maybe it is best that I don’t hear it.”

True love reconciles and heals – 21:1-14

1. There was a famine in Israel for three years, and David suspected it may be due to divine judgment. He was right. The drought was due to a reign of terror that Saul had conducted on the Gibeonites. vs. 1-2
 - Gibeonites – a group of people that Joshua had made a treaty with and that had lived peaceably with Israel for years. Saul broke the treaty and sought to destroy them.
2. The Gibeonites demanded seven of Saul’s relatives to exact judgment for those crimes done against them (vs. 3-6). David agreed to their terms and two of the men were the sons of Rizpah. vs. 8-9
3. The Bible does not give us a lot of details about this story. Were these seven men accomplices with Saul in his reign of terror? We do not know for sure, but they were all executed during the first days of the barley harvest. But the story doesn’t end here.
4. Rizpah’s deep love for her sons caused her to take sackcloth (symbol of sorrow), spread it on a rock and she kept a vigil day and night over the bodies of her sons, keeping the birds and animals from devouring their bodies. vs. 10
 - This watch could have lasted anywhere from three to six months.
 - She was there as an act of love and devotion. She was not permitted to move the bodies of her dead sons, but she could keep the buzzards and coyotes away!
 - What a testimony to abiding love! It reaches past the boundaries of this life and extends beyond the grave. Death could not diminish her love. Though her boys were grown and dead, though their bodies were left hanging as a sign of contempt and condemnation, she still loved them.
5. The news of this reached David and he was so moved by Rizpah’s actions that he went personally and retrieved the bones of Saul and Jonathon and buried them, along with these seven men in the tomb of Saul’s father, Kish. vs. 11-14
6. Because of Rizpah, the saga of King Saul ends with an honorable burial, an act that perhaps symbolized David’s own reconciliation with the man who had persecuted him.
7. Not only this, her actions also won for her sons an honorable burial, instead of their bodies hanging in disgrace and being devoured by wild animals.
8. Here is a woman who was grieving deeply, yet she allowed her grief and love to motivate her to action, and her actions brought peace and reconciliation. After this, God is entreated for the land of Israel and the drought was lifted. vs. 14
 - Her actions were a catalyst for closure.
 - They brought closure in regards to the famine, closure in regards to the feud between the house of Saul and the house of David, and closure in her own life and loss.
9. Rizpah was a healer, a reconciler. This is a mark of true love. Love always seeks peace, healing, and reconciliation.

In Conclusion:

1. Most likely you have never heard a message on Rizpah, but hopefully you can see the valuable life lessons that we learn from this woman.
 - Rumors kill and destroy and divide.
 - Love heals and reconciles.
2. If we could somehow have these two life lessons etched on our hearts, what a difference it would make in our lives.

Facing Greater Giants than Goliath – Part 1 **2 Samuel 21:15-22:51**

Introduction:

1. If I were to ask you the name of the giant that David killed, what would you say? You would most likely say, “Goliath.”
2. Many people do not realize that David and his men killed four more giants after Goliath. They are all listed right here in 2 Samuel 21:15-22.
3. But these four did not go down as easily for David as Goliath did. He needed some help (21:16-17), because he was faint (21:15). Let’s read about these other giants. 21:18-22
4. If you would, allow me to make application from our text to our personal lives.
5. How many of you are saved - you have trusted Christ? In order to get saved, you had to overcome a huge giant - a “Goliath-like” giant. The giant of sin had you in bondage, and eternal death had you in its grip. You were dead in trespasses and sins.
6. But the moment you simply received Christ - the moment you trusted Him as your Savior - that giant went down immediately. The blood of Christ was applied to your heart, the life of God was breathed into your spirit, the bonds were loosed, and you were set free from the giant of sin and death. That giant went down instantly.
 - I will never forget how I felt the night I got saved. I literally felt like I had defeated an overwhelming giant, and I knew it was through Christ that I had defeated it.
7. But as wonderful as that was, my salvation did not mean that there wouldn’t be more giants to face and overcome. In fact, the giants that come along **after** you get saved are tougher to knock down than that first giant you faced when you got saved.
 - I had a much easier time getting saved than I have had trying to live unto Him after salvation. When I got saved, all I had to do was simply trust Christ completely. He had already done all the work. It was a one-time event. I trusted Him and overcame the giant of sin and death, and it was settled in heaven.
8. The way we received that initial victory is the same way we overcome giants after we are saved (Colossians 2:6), but it is a daily battle.
 - After salvation you may face the giants of marital problems, family problems, hurt feelings by another believer, besetting and addictive sins and habits, spiritual disappointments, discouragement, depression, etc.
 - Problems are a reality for every believer, and they are woven into the fabric of everyday life.
9. What do we do with these giants? After David and his men defeated these four giants (21:22), David testified in song as to how it happened, and how they destroyed these giants. ch. 22

10. 2 Samuel 22 is actually a very prophetic passage, as David is a picture of the believing flock of Israel in the last days. But I would like to make application to our personal lives today. How did David overcome these “other” giants?

First, David’s complete trust was in the Lord. vs. 1-3

1. Notice David’s attitude in vs. 2-3. “*In him will I trust.*”
 - This word “*trust*” means “to flee for protection.”
 - **Illustration:** In Missouri, when the tornado alarm went off, we’d flee into the basement for protection. We trusted in the basement.
2. David says, “God is my rock, my fortress, my high tower, my refuge. When giants come along I flee to God for protection. I am trusting in Him!”
3. If we are to overcome giants, this thing of trust is of utmost importance. Where you flee for protection will determine whether you destroy the giant or are destroyed by the giant.
4. As we said earlier, when you got saved you trusted Christ completely. It is no different after we are saved. We must trust Christ, and Him alone, if we are to overcome giants.
5. Your trust cannot be:

In yourself

- If I start thinking that I can handle these giants on my own, I’m in for a rude awakening. David’s trust was not in himself.
- 2 Corinthians 1:9-10 – All believers go through problems, but why? Imagine if we lived a problem-free life. We would be full of pride and full of ourselves. Problems have a way of teaching us to not trust in ourselves, but in the One who can raise the dead. Proverbs 28:26; Proverbs 3:5
- **Illustration:** One time, a believer said to me, “For years I was trying to be a good Christian. Now I am letting Christ live through me.”

In friends or family (people)

- When a giant comes stalking you, what is your initial reaction? Where do you flee? However you answer that question, **that** is where your trust is.
- God can use people to help us overcome giants, but God desires to see that your trust is in Him. God wants to be the first one you flee to. Psalm 118:8-9; Jeremiah 17:5, 7-8

In circumstances – Proverbs 20:7, 44:5-7; 1 Timothy 6:17

6. Where is your trust? If we are going to overcome giants, our trust must be in the Lord. He is the One we must flee to. God takes special notice of those who trust Him. Nahum 1:7

Facing Greater Giants than Goliath – Part 2 **2 Samuel 21:15-22:51**

Introduction:

1. If I were to ask you the name of the giant that David killed, what would you say? You would most likely say, “Goliath.”
2. Many people do not realize that David and his men killed four more giants after Goliath. They are all listed in 2 Samuel 21:15-22.
3. 2 Samuel 22 is actually a very prophetic passage, as David is a picture of the believing flock of Israel in the last days. But I would like to make application to our personal lives today. How did David overcome these “other” giants?

First, David’s complete trust was in the Lord. vs. 1-3

Second, David’s trust led him to humble himself in prayer. vs. 4-7

1. Let’s read verses 4-7. David’s trust led him to his knees.
2. This is only natural. When you are in trouble and facing a giant, you call upon the person or thing that is your trust. **Illustration:** When I would wrestle with my boys, if they got hurt, do you know who they called upon? Mama! They trusted her.
3. Do you remember when you got saved? You realized that your only hope was Jesus Christ and that you had to trust Him to save you. Your trust led you to your knees and you called upon Him to save you. Romans 10:12-13
4. The same should be true **after** salvation. There is no need for the believer to have fingernails and coffee for breakfast. Worry does not change a thing, and worry accomplishes nothing at all. But prayer does!
5. When the giants of waves, floods, sorrows, and snares surrounded David (vs. 5-6), what did he do? He called upon the Lord and “*He did hear...*” vs. 7
 - **Illustration:** My older brother Steve and I would fight, and he would get me down on the floor and torture me. I would scream to my mom, and she would always deliver me. But there were times when she wasn’t home. What a helpless feeling! I cried out... but no answer.
6. Aren’t you thankful that God is always there and He hears us? Romans 8:26-27
7. David knew that if he was to overcome these giants, his trust in God must lead him to his knees. Psalm 55:16-18
8. As we become men and women of prayer and seek God fervently, no longer do we fear these giants in our lives. No longer do they bring worry and fear into our hearts, but God gives us a peace beyond comprehension. Philippians 4:6-7; Psalm 118:5-14
9. Today, our enemy that we are fighting is not a nation, and it isn’t physical warfare (like for David). Yet, we **do** face giants every day. How do we overcome them?
10. We must trust in the armor of God, pray to our God, and seek His face. There is simply no other way to overcome giants in our lives. Ephesians 6:11-18

- I believe this thing of prayer is such a neglected necessity in the Christian life. We want shortcuts in overcoming giants, but there are none. Victory comes from seeking our God in prayer. Giants, problems, and conflict have a way of revealing if we truly have a walk with the Lord, or if we simply have an outward cloak of Christian activity.
- After we get saved, we have a desire to serve God and “get busy” for Him. We learn how to talk like a Christian, act like a Christian, and serve like a Christian. But do we ever really learn how to walk with Jesus daily and develop an intimate relationship with Him?
- You can survive for a while this way, but when the giants of problems, conflict, and hurt feelings come into our lives, they have a way of revealing the inner emptiness.

Facing Greater Giants than Goliath – Part 3

2 Samuel 21:15-22:51

Introduction:

1. If I were to ask you the name of the giant that David killed, what would you say? You would most likely say, “Goliath.”
2. Many people do not realize that David and his men killed four more giants after Goliath. They are all listed in 2 Samuel 21:15-22.
3. 2 Samuel 22 is actually a very prophetic passage, as David is a picture of the believing flock of Israel in the last days. But I would like to make application to our personal lives today. How did David overcome these “other” giants?

First, David’s complete trust was in the Lord. vs. 1-3

Second, David’s trust led him to humble himself in prayer. vs. 4-7

Third, David’s prayer moved the Lord to action. vs. 8-20

1. Let’s read about how God responded when David called upon Him. David’s prayers moved the Lord to action. Read verses 8-20.
 - **Illustration:** If somebody is breaking into your house and you call 911, what do you expect? You expect an answer to your call. You expect a response. Imagine getting a busy signal, a “we’re closed” message, or an operator saying, “The number you have called is disconnected.”
2. May we remember that David is fighting and warring against heathen nations. The fight is over physical land area that God had promised to Israel. God’s answer had to do with strengthening David as king so that he could overcome these nations.
 - This is a picture of the believing remnant of Israel in the last days, when they call upon Christ, and their Messiah and King will fight for them and return to earth, and the Gentile nations will be subject to Israel and her Messiah. Read verses 8-10, 14, 35, 38-41, 43-44, 47-51, and cross-reference Jeremiah 33:14-17. How does this happen? Jeremiah 33:3
 - Do a study of 2 Samuel 22 some time and compare this passage with other passages dealing with the last days and the Second Coming of Christ. This is an amazing prophetic passage.
3. The reason why I emphasize the context is because when we pray today, God doesn’t promise to bring wrath on nations, destroy people, or take away all our problems.
4. Nevertheless, it is still true today that our prayers **do** move the Lord to action. Remember what we read earlier in Romans 8:26-27? All three members of the godhead are moved when we pray. This is so exciting.
 - It is through prayer that we are strengthened in our inner man to overcome the giants of addictive sins, destructive habits, worry, fear, bitterness, anger, pride, discontentment, materialism, etc.

- It is through prayer that we are filled with wisdom to overcome the giants of marital problems, family conflict, church problems, workplace issues, etc.
 - It is through prayer that we overcome obstacles to getting the gospel out to people. It is through prayer that we break down the blinders that Satan has placed upon people in regards to hearing, understanding, and receiving the gospel of Christ.
5. Do you want to overcome giants? You see the order: trust in the Lord, your trust leads you to your knees, and your prayers get God involved in the situation!
Psalm 34:4

In Conclusion:

1. Many times, when we face giants, it is through these problems that we learn more about God than ever before. We tend to have a more teachable spirit when trouble and problems are in our lives. They can humble us if we let them. vs. 28
 - **Illustration:** A soldier can study books about warfare and military strategy and go through training with simulated war games, but do you know how that soldier learns the most about warfare? It's out in the battle where the bullets are flying.
2. Likewise, we can study about God and learn facts about God. But we learn the most about God when we are in the battle facing giants.
3. Notice some of the things that David learned:
 - God delights in the humble, but resists the proud. vs. 28, 36b
 - God is my only source of light. vs. 29
 - God's way and God's Word are perfect. vs. 31
 - God is my strength and power. vs. 33, 40
 - God is to be thanked and praised publicly. vs. 50
4. The Holy Spirit desires to teach us these things when we are facing giants. God desires that we be in the place of complete reliance upon Him. God desires to knock out the props of self-reliance from under us until we learn to completely rest in Him. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

David's Last Words 2 Samuel 23:1-7

Introduction:

1. We have a record of the last words of King David (vs. 1). It appears that “*last words*” refers to the last words that he spoke as a prophet by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. vs. 2
2. There is so much from David’s life that the Holy Spirit could have inspired David to talk about: his exploits over the giant (Goliath), his kindness to Mephibosheth, his royal city he built, overcoming King Saul’s vicious attacks, the deliverance from Absalom, etc.
3. But David did not talk about any of those things that **he** had done or accomplished. He talked about the covenant of salvation that God had graciously made with him. We studied this incredible covenant in 2 Samuel 7.
4. It involved the promise of a literal, physical, earthly kingdom and throne with a literal, physical descendant from David ruling on the throne.
5. God would become flesh and be born of David’s seed (Matthew 1:1), and all three promises contained in the Davidic covenant will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
6. In Luke 1:30-33, every one of the promises in the Davidic covenant was reiterated and confirmed.
 - The promise of a seed – “...*his father David...over the **house** of Jacob...*”
 - The promise of a kingdom – “...*and of his **kingdom** there shall be no end.*”
 - The promise of a throne – “...*the Lord God shall give unto him the **throne** of his father David.*”
7. All of prophecy points to the day when Christ will return to this earth, will reign on the Davidic throne, and establish a righteous political government over all the earth. He will bring salvation to Israel and to the earth. Isaiah 25:9, 45:17, 46:13, 52:10; Jeremiah 23:5-6
8. As David knows that death is fast approaching, his last words see him reiterating God’s promises contained in this covenant of salvation and clinging to them.
 - Christ will return and rule and reign. vs. 3-4
 - God’s promises are sure and will not fail. vs. 5
 - Evil men will be judged and righteousness will prevail. vs. 6-7
9. Today, evil and sin still abound on this earth. But God is providing for **us** a covenant of salvation that resides within our hearts. God is bringing His salvation, righteousness, and peace to individual hearts through His Son’s finished work on the cross.
10. As David talks about the promise of his salvation that was to come (the kingdom on earth at Christ’s return), we can make application to the promise of salvation that we have as a present possession in Christ.

First, David's salvation was ordered. vs. 5

1. The salvation that God will provide to Israel and the earth at His Second Coming is ordered. That is, it has been carefully planned and arranged for by God. The prophets speak of God's plan in detail.
2. In the same way, salvation's plan for us today was not an afterthought in the mind of God. God did not look down at a world in rebellion against Christ, wring His hands, and wonder what to do to save sinners.
3. Salvation's plan was already well ordered and thought out by God. Ephesians 3:11; Acts 13:27-29; 1 Peter 1:19-20
 - This is how the prophets could write in detail about Christ years before He was ever born in Bethlehem.
4. God's heart is always to save sinners, so Christ came into the world with a well-ordered purpose – to accomplish the payment for sin so sinners could be justly forgiven and saved. 1 Timothy 1:15, 2:4-6
5. Hidden in the mind of God was the dispensation of grace we enjoy today. God knew what He would do, but kept it a secret until the "*due time*." Now "*every man*" can be saved, because it was all well-ordered by God. Colossians 1:26-28

Second, David's salvation was sure.

1. David said it was "*ordered in all things, and sure...*"
2. David had God's Word and God's promise on it. 2 Samuel 7:27-28
3. Have you ever asked a person the question, "If you died, do you know for sure that you would go to heaven?" Sometimes you get answers like, "I hope I make it; nobody can know that for sure; I guess I'll find out when I die." These are sad answers.
4. There is not a more important subject in the universe than where your soul will spend eternity. There are only two options – heaven, or the lake of fire.
5. Eternity is a long time. Something **that** important, God desires that you know for sure. David said that his salvation was sure. In the same way, God desires that you be sure of your salvation.
6. A person may say, "Nobody can know for sure." People are funny. They know they are going to die. They may even know which city and which cemetery they will be buried in, and even which lot. But they don't know where their soul will spend eternity. 1 John 5:13
7. I know my salvation is "*sure*" for three reasons:
 - The Father provided for my salvation.
 - How? He gave His Son. John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 14
 - Jesus paid for my salvation. 1 Timothy 2:6; Galatians 1:4; Romans 5:8
 - He didn't offer a partial payment, but a **full** payment for sin's price. Salvation is a gift that has already been paid for by Christ. Romans 6:23
 - The Holy Spirit protects my salvation (we will cover this in our next point).
8. Isn't it interesting that we see all three members of the God-head in our text.

- The Spirit of the Lord (God the Holy Spirit) – vs. 2
- The God of Israel (God the Father) – vs. 3a
- The Rock of Israel (God the Son) – vs. 3b; cf. 1 Corinthians 10:4

Third, David’s salvation was everlasting.

1. God’s promise to David of salvation for his seed and an everlasting kingdom was an everlasting covenant. cf. 2 Samuel 7:16, 24
2. Likewise, since God gave us salvation through Jesus Christ, we don’t have to worry about God changing His mind. We have eternal life as a present possession, and we have God’s promise on it. Titus 1:2
3. The eternal life we have in Christ is a gift (Romans 6:23). You don’t work to earn a gift, or it is no longer a gift. Likewise, you cannot work to earn your salvation, nor can you work to keep it. The same God that saved me by His grace will keep it by His grace.
4. How does God keep our salvation? He does this through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:13-14; cf. 4:30
5. A seal was a:
 - Sign of ownership – **Illustration:** farmers branding animals
 - Sign of security – When a person in authority put his seal on something, it was a done deal and nothing could change it.
6. There are those who say, “You believe that salvation is just a license to sin.”
 - **Illustration:** How many of you have health insurance? Because you have life insurance, does that mean that you are going to chew on razor blades and drink hydrochloric acid?
7. Salvation is eternal but is not viewed by a believer as a license to sin. It is a high and noble calling.

Fourth, David’s salvation was personal.

1. Notice in verse 5 the personal pronouns that David used when describing this incredible covenant of salvation that God had provided for him. “*Yet he hath made with me... for this is all my salvation, and all my desire...*”
2. David says at the beginning of verse 5, “*Although my house be not so with God...*” Many of David’s children, grandchildren, and family were not in a right relationship with God. But David says, “*...yet he hath made with me...*” Salvation is personal.
3. When God delivers the nation of Israel and brings national salvation to them at His Second Coming, it will only be for the believing remnant. Past believers of Israel, like David, will be resurrected to also live in that glorious kingdom.
4. Nobody will be in that everlasting kingdom simply because they were David’s son, daughter, or descendant.
5. There were Jews in Christ’s day who thought that because they were Abraham’s seed, they were automatically right with God (John 8:33, 39). Jesus told them that they were of their father, the devil. John 8:44

6. Nobody is saved based on what family they were born in, or what their parents did, said, or were. Corruption runs in the blood, not salvation. Salvation is a gift that is given by God to individuals who receive it. It is between you and God.
7. Nobody can get saved for you – it is personal. You don't get salvation by going through the church or confessing your sins to me or anybody else. You get it directly from God.

Fifth, David's salvation was fulfilling.

1. Notice David said, "...*this...is all my desire.*" David is saying, "As long as I have the covenant of salvation that God promised, I have enough. I desire no more."
2. The salvation that comes from God is fulfilling. One day, when it is our time to die and leave this world, our houses, cars, bank accounts, boats, TVs, cell phones, video games, etc. won't comfort us or fulfill us one bit.
3. Our comfort and our fulfillment will come from the covenant of salvation that God has promised us. Psalm 27:1
4. "It matters not what you lose if you save your soul; it matters not what you save, if you lose your soul."

Jesus Christ – Defying the Enemy! **2 Samuel 23:8-10**

Introduction:

1. Beginning in verse 8, we have a list of David’s mighty men. These were the men who fought for King David and were valiant in battle. There were 37 men in all.
2. Verse 9 mentions a man by the name of Eleazar. This man caught my attention. It says that he “*defied*” the Philistines, who were the arch-enemies of God’s people.
 - The word “*defied*” means “to pull off; to expose (as by stripping).” Eleazar exposed the Philistines and stripped them of their power and authority.
3. Of course, the Christian’s enemy is Satan (1 Peter 5:8). Satan roars as a lion and attempts to intimidate God’s people. But, like Eleazar, believers today can defy Satan. We can expose him for who he really is and overcome him.
4. You say, “But how can I do this? After all, Satan is wise and powerful, and was once the anointed cherub of God. I’m just a human being.”
5. Praise God, the victory has already been won! Jesus Christ defied Satan and has overcome Him through his cross-work and resurrection. If we know Christ, He lives in us, and we simply walk in the victory that He has already wrought!
6. How did Eleazar defy the Philistines? Let’s examine this, make application, see how Christ has defied Satan, and how we can defy Satan on a daily basis.

First, you must be willing to stand. vs. 9

1. When the Philistines gathered together to battle, the men of Israel were fearful and fled. It was easier to flee than to stand.
2. But notice Eleazar – he arose and smote the Philistines (vs. 10). He stood there alone and outnumbered, but yet he took a stand and held his ground.
3. This reminds me of another man called Jesus. When Jesus was betrayed and was being led away, all the disciples forsook Him and fled. He was left to stand alone.
4. Even the Father had to turn away as Christ was made sin for us on the cross. He hung on that cross atoning for our sin all alone. Had He not stood alone, our souls would have no hope and would be bound for an eternal hell.
5. Christ stood that day on the cross and defied the devil. Hebrews 2:14-15
6. If Jesus was able to stand that day and defy the devil, and He now lives in us, we too can stand and we too can defy the devil. We must stand in Christ’s power! Ephesians 6:11, 13

Second, you must remain faithful while weary. vs. 10

1. Eleazar smote the Philistines until his hands were weary, yet his hand clave to his sword.
 - The word “*weary*” means “to gasp; to be exhausted; to tire.” Can’t you just picture him all by himself, weary and exhausted? But he was faithful!

2. This reminds me of our Savior. The soldiers tried to wear Him down and make Him admit that He wasn't the Son of God. He went through unthinkable torture.
3. The soldiers, the demons of hell, and Satan himself were all watching and waiting to see what would happen, and how Jesus would respond. He could have called 10,000 angels.
4. Jesus was human, therefore weary. Simon had to carry the cross to Golgotha's Hill. Yet Christ did not quit. He remained faithful. Matthew 27:42
5. As Christ was hung on that cross, it looked as if Satan had won that day. In reality, Jesus openly defied and defeated Satan and the demons of hell. Why? He remained faithful while weary.
6. How about you today? Have you been weary and felt like quitting or giving up? Satan and his world system will wear you down and get you weary. They want you to quit. They want you to pack it in, throw in the towel, and quit.
7. But remember, Christ the Victor lives **in** us. We must trust Him and His victory if we are to defy Satan. Galatians 2:20, 6:9
8. When you feel like quitting, think about Jesus! Meditate on Him. Hebrews 12:2-3

Third, you must find your victory through the Lord. vs. 10

1. Notice verse 10, "...*the Lord wrought a great victory that day...*"
2. On Calvary, God the Father and God the Son wrought a great victory. A person may say, "But He died." Yes He did. He died for our sins and made a complete payment.
3. But what are the first two words of verse 10? "*He arose!*" Christ defied Satan and won a great victory over death, hell, and the grave.
4. Just like Eleazar received victory through the Lord, there is only one way that we can receive victory, and that is through the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Apply to the lost person: If you want victory over death, hell, and the grave, you must go to the One who has already fought that battle and won that victory. 1 Corinthians 15:55-57
 - Apply to the Christian: The only way for you to defy the devil is through Christ. The same place you received victory for salvation is the same place you go for daily victory.
5. Look at the end of verse 10. The people received the spoils of Eleazar's victory. What does this remind you of? Ephesians 1:3 – We have received the spoils of Christ's victory. Aren't you thankful?

David's Great Sin 2 Samuel 24, 1 Chronicles 21

Introduction:

1. What if I were to ask you, "What was David's great sin", what would you say? Your answer would probably have something to do with his adultery with Bathsheba or his murder of Urriah. Actually it was neither one. It is found here in our text.
2. David numbered the children of Israel. He basically conducted a census. You are thinking, "What is so bad about that?" Two things we need to understand:
 - First, God had instructed Israel under the law that when they took a census, every man was to give "*the redemption money*" as an offering to the Lord. This was not done. God's Word was completely ignored. Exodus 30:11-16
 - Second, David's pride was what led him to number the people. David had won a number of great victories and he wanted to bask in the glory of his successes. This national census was for his glory, not God's glory. vs. 2 – "*That I may know...*"
3. David's heart was full of prideful rebellion. Do you remember what God told Saul when he was full of pride and rebelled against God? 1 Samuel 15:23
 - Do you remember why Satan fell? Pride and rebellion. Isaiah 14:12-14
4. After David's sin of adultery and murder he said, "*I have sinned.*" These were sins of the flesh. But after David's prideful rebellion in numbering the people, he said, "*I have sinned greatly.*" These were wicked, premeditated sins of the heart.
5. Truly this was David's greatest sin. His sin with Bathsheba was a family matter with only a few involved. In this sin here in our text, 70,000 people died because of David's prideful rebellion against God.
6. From this story I believe we can learn how to avoid prideful rebellion against God and His Word.

First, by understanding that we never outgrow temptation

1. We may outgrow diapers, a pacifier, a little red wagon, and a tricycle, but we never outgrow temptation.
2. 1 Chronicles 21 gives to us a parallel account of this story. Notice verses 1-2. Satan **provoked** David, and David fell prey to Satan's deceptions.
3. David was not an inexperienced youth when this happened. He was a seasoned soldier of the Lord who had walked many miles with the Lord and won great victories for God.
 - I'm reminded of Peter. He walked with Christ personally for three and a half years and thought he was invincible. He found out differently.
4. If we're not careful, we can get kind of cocky and start thinking that we are good Christians, and how lucky God and the church are to have us. That can change quickly. David found this out, didn't he?

5. Think about these verses – 1 Corinthians 10:12; Proverbs 16:18, 28:26 (If Satan can't get you with outward fleshly temptations, he'll try and wiggle his way into your heart and your thinking processes). Peter later wrote to "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*" **1 Peter 5:8**

Second, by listening to the wise counsel of others

1. Joab and the captains in David's army tried to warn David and advised him against this. vs. 3-4, 1 Chronicles 21:3-4
 - Joab, himself, was a very self-willed, rebellious sort of guy, yet he knew that this would only lead to problems and tried to dissuade David from doing it.
2. Bottom line - David was too prideful and stubborn to listen to anybody.
3. Many times, God works through people to warn us, rebuke us, encourage us, and admonish us in or walk with Christ. What should be our attitude? Ephesians 5:21; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 5:5
4. Sometimes we are convinced that we are doing the right thing, but it is not right, and we need to listen to others. Proverbs 12:15, 9:8

Third, by reminding ourselves of sin's consequences (vs. 10-15)

1. Sin brings misery, pain, corruption, and death. This is an eternal principle that will never be proven wrong.
 - Romans 6:23 – "*The wages of sin is death...*"
 - Romans 8:6 – "*For to be carnally minded is death...*"
 - Romans 8:13 – "*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die...*"
 - Galatians 6:8 – "*For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption...*"
 - James 1:15 – "*Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*"
2. We know that sin carries serious eternal consequences for the lost person who is without Christ. They will suffer the consequence of eternal death and damnation from the presence of the Lord.
3. But sin also carries consequences for the saved person as well (most of the verses we read were written to saved people). David knew the Lord, yet his sin brought tragic consequences.
4. Oh the pain, guilt, and excruciating burden David must have felt as 70,000 men lost their lives and David knew that his rebellion and disobedience to God had caused it. David should have contemplated sin's consequences **before** he rebelled.
5. Sin always carries a price tag with it. Nobody "gets away" with sin. It robs us of our joy, peace, and contentment. It brings bondage, pain, and misery to us and to those affected by our actions. It has a trickle-down effect to every other area of our lives.
6. When we are tempted to rebel against God we need to remember this. When we make unwise and ungodly decisions, there is a price to pay.

7. David ends up genuinely repenting of his sin (vs. 16-17), buys a piece of land, builds an altar, offers a sacrifice, and the plague was stayed. vs. 18-25
8. But despite David's repentance, damage had been done. Nothing could undo that damage in the lives of people and families. Nothing could take away that excruciating knowledge that David's sin had brought this death and misery.
9. When we make ungodly choices, is God merciful? Yes! Does He strip us of our salvation? No! When we truly are grieved and we turn from our rebellion, does He hold it against us? No! But the consequences are still there, aren't they?
10. We must remember this and abstain (flee) from even the appearance of evil.

Sin – The Price Must Be Paid **2 Samuel 24, 1 Chronicles 21**

Introduction:

1. Both of our passages give to us a parallel account of the same story – David’s numbering of the children of Israel and God’s subsequent judgment.
2. Right away, the diligent Bible student notices something that seems a bit odd and confusing on the surface. Read verse 1 of both texts.
 - In 2 Samuel it says that **God** was angry with Israel and moved David against Israel by basically announcing the idea of a census.
 - But in the 1 Chronicles account, it says that **Satan** stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel.
3. There was obviously a deeper issue at hand than simply a national census. God was angry with Israel, but why? In 2 Samuel 23, it lists the military exploits of David’s mighty men. Israel must have gotten very puffed up with pride over their own accomplishments.
 - No army could stand against them and they knew it! They had forgotten who it was that had given them the victory and blessed them. God warned them of this. Deuteronomy 8:10-19
4. As we learned last week, pride is a very serious issue. God cannot tolerate it in His children. It is utterly satanic in origin. God can do nothing but resist the proud.
5. So God basically (in His anger with Israel) allowed Satan to directly tempt and provoke David to number Israel. It appears that God gave Satan the thought to do it, but Satan actually provoked David.
 - So while Satan is the one that directly tempted David, the Bible is letting you know that God was involved in this due to His anger with Israel.
 - Keep in mind, at any time David could have resisted Satan and humbled himself before the Lord (which is what God desired).
 - God can use Satan, demons, lost people, or anything or anybody else in the work He is trying to accomplish. The ultimate example of this is the cross! God kept the hidden wisdom of the cross from Satan so that Satan would carry through his evil scheme of convicting and crucifying Christ.
6. Why did God allow Satan to induce King David to do a national census? What was the purpose of it? Read 2 Samuel 24:2-4, 9.
 - David desired to gloat in his victories – “Look at our power and look at our strength. Look what we have done. Look at our mighty military strength.”
 - God allowed this census because it perfectly exemplified and typified the heart of David and the people – pride, arrogance, self-will and egotism. God wanted it to serve as a powerful object lesson to Israel of their heart attitude. David figured out God’s object lesson right away. 2 Samuel 24:10
7. As we learned last week, there is a price tag on sin, and therefore sin must be paid for. God cannot allow sin to go unpunished. There are some wonderful lessons that this story teach us.

First, when genuine humility and repentance are in the sinner's heart, God is always willing to show mercy.

1. Israel was full of prideful arrogance and rebellion. The wages of sin is death. God brought punishment for their sin, and a terrible plague came upon the nation of Israel. This plague took the lives of 70,000 men. 2 Samuel 24:15
 - It is interesting that it was 70,000 men, not women. What was the source of Israel's pride? It was the military strength of their men. 2 Samuel 24:9
2. God was about to turn the angel loose in Jerusalem which would have resulted in thousands more deaths, but God halted the angel (2 Samuel 24:16). But why?
3. Look at 2 Chronicles 21:15 – Notice, "*The Lord beheld...*" Something God beheld caused God to halt the angel from continuing to bring judgment. What did He behold?
4. Look at 1 Chronicles 21:16-17. David and his leaders are on their faces in repentance and humility and David is a broken man before God. vs. 17
5. The Bible says that God resisteth the proud but gives grace to the humble. When David and his leaders made the choice to humble themselves and acknowledge their sin, God gave mercy and a solution to their sin problem.
6. God will do the same today! Nobody gets saved who is full of pride and arrogance. People must humble themselves, admit their sin, and acknowledge that apart from God's mercy, they will suffer eternal damnation and punishment. When a person truly has a humble heart and a repentant spirit, God will show mercy.

Second, the only solution for people's sin problem is that someone must pay the price for sin.

1. The wages of sin is death. It must be paid. Seventy thousand men died in Israel because of sin. The people were paying the appropriate price for their sinful pride.
2. But then David stepped in and literally became a mediator between Israel and God. What did he do?
3. He obeyed God completely by paying the price for a piece of land as God instructed, and by offering up the appropriate sacrifice for his sin.
 - This piece of land belonged to a man named Araunah or Ornan. When David went to pay the price, Ornan desired to give it to David, but David absolutely refused. He insisted on paying the "*full price.*" 1 Chronicles 21:24
 - David bought the threshingfloor for fifty shekels of silver (2 Samuel 24:24), and he bought the entire surrounding area for 600 shekels of gold (1 Chronicles 21:25).
4. David understood the principle that the price of sin is not cheap. David's repentance toward God was sincere, and he didn't want to offer up to God a sacrifice for his sin that cost him nothing. 2 Samuel 24:24
5. What do we learn from this for today? God has provided a solution for our sin problem and that answer is Jesus – God's only begotten Son. The thing that God the Father valued the most – the eternal relationship and fellowship with God the

Son – He sacrificed for us. Jesus sacrificed this also, along with His physical life on the cross.

6. The price for sin had to be paid before God could justly show us mercy, and that price was very costly. 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2:24, 3:18

- David paid the price for the sheep of Israel to save them from God's wrath.
- Jesus paid the price for all people in order to save us from God's wrath. Romans 5:6, 8-10