

2 Samuel 11-12 • David and Bathsheba

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2 Samuel chapter 11. And I have to tell you going into this study that this is a challenge for me to teach because David is one of my heroes. I love teaching through the life of David. There are so many amazing lessons that we can learn from the life of David. And I hate going through a biblical passage where I see my heroes falling in a big way.

But on the other hand, David, I have to tell you that there's something that's very comforting and encouraging about the fact that the Bible doesn't isolate us from understanding and knowing about the big failures these people in the Bible experienced.

David was a man. He was a human being just like you and I, and there were weaknesses of the flesh. And sometimes those weaknesses get the better of us. And the enemy attacks, and the world presents opportunities, and we're just drawn away. And we see that in the life of David.

And what's as painful almost as going through and reading this chapter and the following chapter, which we'll do our best to get through tonight. What's almost as painful as reading about the failure that David experienced is dealing then with the fallout, the consequences.

Because we deal with the same thing in our own lives. Even though we're forgiven of our sin, we are many times left to experience and to deal with the fallout of our choices. And it's not fun. In fact it's horrible, but it's reality. And we see it.

And we're going to see from these two chapters that we're going to be reading here; 11 and 12. We're going to see the results, or the consequences, or the fallout, however you want to say it, of what David did here for the rest of 2 Samuel. And that's a sobering thing to think about.

Sue and I were talking before we came tonight about just that spiritual principle, what a man sows, so also shall he reap. (Galatians 6:7) And we were talking about how that can be a scary/sobering reality from the standpoint that... And I

think it's supposed to be, I think it's meant to be. It's supposed to put the fear of God in our lives. You know what I mean? The fear of God is a good thing. *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom"* the Bible says. (Proverbs 9:10) And so there's something that's challenging and unnerving about the reality of the fact that, what we sow, so also shall we reap.

But I was sharing with Sue that there's something comforting about it to me as well, because it reminds me that there's justice in the heart of God. And the reason that is comforting to me is because in the world we see the lack of justice. In fact, we see lawlessness and we see lawlessness in fact, increasing as we talked about on Sunday.

And with all the lawlessness that we see in the world, there's a great deal of comfort that I derived from just the knowledge that God is a God of justice and things will be brought across the judgment place of the Lord one day. Again, that's a challenging sort of a truth and a comforting one all at the same time. We better pray before we get into this. What do you think?

Heavenly Father, thank You so much for giving us this time. We just, as we get into these chapters, difficult though they may be, we pray for wisdom, we pray for understanding, and we pray for insight.

And we ask that You would teach us, Lord, because You are the teacher. Lord, You are the teacher. Now teach us. Instruct us. Fill us. In Jesus name we pray, amen.

2 Samuel chapter 11. *"In the spring of the year, (right about probably this time of year) the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel."* (ESV)

And this first portion of this first verse sets the stage for us to understanding the downfall that is about to take place because David is going to have some downtime. And downtime can be very nice when you're on vacation. When you need a rest.

Sometimes God gives us downtime, doesn't He? Sometimes God literally will pull us out of the game and set us down and say, you need to rest son or daughter. You need this. You need to just chill for a while and take a few deep breaths and just get your bearings about you.

But there is also a point in time where downtime can become perilous because it, I think it's been said that, idle hands are the enemy's playground. And even

though that's not necessarily a biblical statement, it is true nonetheless, as it relates to that whole issue of just having too much time on our hands. And it says here that in the springtime when kings usually go off to war, David didn't. He sent Joab out to do that.

And it says here in the second part of verse 1, “*And (we're told that) they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.*” He stayed back and then that is all given us to set the stage for what we read in verses 2 and following.

“² It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. ³ And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” ⁴ So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been (purified, or had been) purifying (as the ESV puts it) herself from her uncleanness.)” Stop there for just a moment.

We see what has happened as it relates to this whole thing. David, whose palace is obviously a higher level than all of the housetops of all of the people. He could see things that the average person couldn't see. And one of the things in that day was the issue of privacy. And how can a woman have privacy when she's bathing? Well, put everything up on the roof. Nobody can see her up there.

Well, if you've got a king who's built a palace, and that palace is higher in proximity than all the other homes in Jerusalem, he's going to be able to see. And this is just one of those things.

And, it was not something that David had to do. But we've been watching over the last few weeks here in our study of 2 Samuel, haven't we? We've been watching about David. David's a very passionate man and passion's great! Unless it's directed by the sinful nature.

When our passions are being directed by the Holy Spirit, wonderful! Wonderful. But when our passions collide with the flesh and something like this happens. And David is the king and nobody's going to deny him anything as far as the people are concerned. David looks at a woman, and she's a married woman, and he wants her, and his servants are going to arrange it.

Who's that woman? Well, her name is Bathsheba. She's the wife of Uriah. That should have been enough right there. She's another man's wife. David, forget

about it. I know that the woman that you saw was very beautiful. And you know that men are attracted visually, but she's a married woman. Get it out of your head. It's not like he didn't have enough ladies in his life. And we've seen that over the course of the last several chapters, that David had been amassing wives, and we dealt with the issue of polygamy already. And if you haven't heard what we've had to say about that so far, you can go back in some of these past studies here in 2 Samuel.

But the point is, David could have, should have, at that point, said, no! I'm not going to pursue this situation, but he didn't. It says that he sent for her and they had physical relations.

Now, you'll notice that the last statement that we read, which in the ESV is given to us parenthetically, says, *"Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness"* And that's an important statement that the writer here is giving to us because it tells us something.

When a woman was purifying herself from her uncleanness, what that meant was, she was in that period after her monthly flow. And she was still in the purification period after her monthly flow. And what the writer is trying to communicate to you and I is, that at this time she is not pregnant, okay? And you know that you know that this is not Uriah's child because she had already, she had her monthly flow.

She was now in that period of purification afterwards and that is when David saw her and took her. It says at the very end of verse 4 that after all this took place, *"...she returned to her house."*

And verse 5 begins by saying, *"And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, 'I am pregnant.'"* You get a sense, too, here, don't you? About how long the army has been out in the field. For a woman to have had relations, and during that period, that time to know for certain that she's pregnant and she sends word to David.

And *"⁶ So David sent word to Joab, 'Send me Uriah the Hittite.' And Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. ⁸ Then David said to Uriah, 'Go down to your house and wash your feet.' And Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king."*

You see what's going on here. David knows that Uriah's wife is pregnant, and so he has invited Uriah home from the battle, so that thinking that Uriah has been

away for a long time. He's going to go home. He's going to have relations with his wife, and he will just assume this is my child. So David is undertaking a cover up.

The problem with cover ups is that if they work and this one doesn't, this one bombs big time. But if they work, they only fool people. They never fool God because He sees what is done in secret and He knows exactly what's going on.

And David is the kind of a man who ought to know better because he's a man after God's own heart. And this is shameful to see this happening, but this is very human, isn't it? Who of us here have not undertaken some kind of a cover up as it relates to people knowing about our sin? Who of us? We all have.

We, every one of us at some point in our lives have tried to cover up our sin. We don't like it being revealed. Why do you think people don't like it when we talk to them about Jesus? Because they are engaged in a full time cover up and our world has gotten very adept at covering it up, haven't they?

We've gotten very intellectual about it. We've made new names for sin so that they're not considered sinful, they're just conditions, and on, and it's all a cover up. It's the human sort of a character that just doesn't want to look at its sin, wants to keep other people from seeing our sin as well. We don't want to look at, we don't want other people looking at it, and so forth and so on. This is just the way it goes. But again, when you have someone like David, who is someone that we look up to so much, it's a very challenging thing to see, is it not?

He says "...to Uriah, *"Go down to your house and wash your feet."* And it says that *"Uriah went out"* and David even sent a present after him. Maybe some wine or something like that. Hey, listen, you've been gone, go spend some time with the little lady.

"But (verse 9 tells us that) Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" "

In other words, he's saying, why didn't you go and enjoy yourself with your wife? Haven't you been gone for a long time? Haven't you had to travel a good distance to get here and you're going to be heading back soon so why don't you take a little r and r and just with your wife and so forth.

And you got to wonder what Uriah is thinking at this point. It's like, why do you care? I mean, you're the king of Israel. Don't you have enough better things to do or to think about rather than to sit here and care about whether I spent some time with my wife?

“Uriah...” this is verse 11. *“Uriah said to David, ‘The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field.’* Obviously this is before the temple was built. And so he says even the Ark of the covenant is in a tent. Many people live in tents and Joab, the commander and all my fellow soldiers, they're out sleeping under the stars.

He says here, *“Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.”* And David's coverup gets pretty messed up at this point because Uriah is a righteous man. He's a godly man, he's a man with principle, he's a man with honor. And he's not the kind of man who selfishly wants to embrace his own pleasures at the expense of others. So he says, I'm not going to do it.

“¹² Then David said to Uriah, ‘Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.’ So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³ And David invited him, and he ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk. And in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.”

David thought, I got one more chance. I'm going to get him liquored up. Maybe get him a little sloshed and then, maybe that will create a promiscuous sort of an attitude in his heart. Maybe then he'll go home and spend some time with his wife. You can just see how shameful this is for David to be stooping to this kind of action. None of it worked. And so David has to opt for more drastic measures. And it's hard to even read these verses.

“¹⁴ In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵ In the letter he wrote, ‘Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and die.’ ¹⁶ And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. ¹⁷ And the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite also died. ¹⁸ Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting. ¹⁹ And he instructed the messenger, ‘When you have finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, ²⁰ then, if the king's anger rises, and if he says to you, ‘Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would

shoot from the wall? ²¹ Who killed Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? (and that's the son of, it's talking about Gideon, so it's reminding you of a story back in Judges. Jeroboam is the same as Jeroboam and Gideon. And he reminds him) Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. '”

Joab says, if the king gets angry, he says, what do you what was Joab thinking to take the men so close to the wall. It didn't even..., good grief. We all know the story of the son of Gideon came so close to a wall that a woman threw a big stone off the top and cracked his skull. Everybody knows that story. We know that it's ridiculous to get too close to the wall. He says, if David starts to say things like that, then say this, and Uriah the Hittite is also dead.

“²² So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell.

²³ The messenger said to David, “The men gained an advantage over us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. ²⁴ Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall. Some of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.” ²⁵ David said to the messenger, “Thus shall you say to Joab, ‘Do not let this matter displease you, for the sword devours now one and now another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.’ And encourage him.””

That's David's response. Again shameful, kind of a reaction that he has about this thing. He says, well, the sword devours one and then the devours another. I mean, this is war. People die. No, no mourning. No... The response is almost callous.

It's interesting. This is David. This is David. This is the kind of guy about whom people are interviewed on television and they say about him, I just, he's never struck me as the kind of guy who would ever do such a thing as this.

You ever heard those interviews on television? When there's some neighborhood thing going on, and something happens, and you find out that something horrific has been happening inside a house. And they interview all the neighbors, and the neighbors go, yeah, he was a real nice guy. We talked, I'd talk to him almost every morning. He's leaving for work, and friendly enough guy. And then you come to find out there's things going on in the house that are unspeakable and you wonder, how can a person become so callous, so casual about their sin?

Oh, are you kidding me? David did it. The man after God's own heart was calloused and calm about the death of this righteous man, so you think an unbeliever can't do that? David. Are you kidding me? This is the sinful nature just absolutely in charge.

But you'll notice that verse 26 tells us of a different reaction by Bathsheba. It says, *"When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband."* And that means she went into a period of mourning. ²⁷ *"And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the (and this is the important comment, the) thing that David had done displeased the LORD."*

Like I said, everything... His first plan to get Uriah just home with his beautiful wife didn't work. So then he tries to get him liquored up and go in to be with his wife, that didn't work. So then he has to come up with a plan to actually take him out in the battle. That one works. He's successful. Nobody's any the wiser, except God knows. And that's the thing.

That's the important thing about this statement. The thing that David had done *"displeased the LORD."* It may not have displeased anybody else. I don't know, but it displeased God.

Chapter 12. *"And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, 'There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ² The rich man had very many flocks and herds,'"* Now stop there for a minute.

Why is, you might be thinking, wait a minute, how does a man like Nathan get to come into the presence of the king and just start telling him stories? Hey David, just wanted to tell you a little story about something that happened. There was once this guy, and he's really? Seriously? What is this, a bedtime story?

No, what, you have to understand, David fulfilled a function just like the judges did in days of old. The kings of Israel were also the Supreme Court of the land. When there were issues, when there were conflicts between people, you would come to the king. And you would get an audience with the king, and he would make a determination based on the wisdom God had given him, and so forth. So he was the judge of the land.

You remember when Solomon, took the throne? He was very, that very well-known case of the two women with the baby. One whose baby died in the night and the other woman, so she switched the babies. And they came before

Solomon, and he had to decide which woman belonged to the baby, and so forth. And you'll remember, this is, that stuff happened all the time.

The fact that Nathan is coming in and sharing this instance between these two people in his kingdom, this is not uncommon, okay? And David knows that what Nathan is working up to is a decision on his part. He's wanting David to rule over this thing.

He says in verse 2 again, *“The rich man had very many flocks and herds, ³ but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴ Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.”*

Nathan's telling the story. Look at David's response. *“⁵ Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, ⁶ and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.”*

(and)⁷ *Nathan said to David, “You are the man!...”* Talk about guts. Yeah. I mean, this is the kind of stuff that some prophets later on down the line will do in front of the kings. They will confront them of their, with their sin. And they will, some of them will be put to death. Some of them will be thrown at the bottom of a cistern or a well. Some of them will be flogged. Some of them will be sent away.

This takes guts because you, keep in mind, you are confronting the embodiment of the Supreme Court. He's it. There's no one else to appeal to. If he says you die, you die, and there's no one to speak on your behalf. Okay.

How would you like to be a prophet. Any of you who are praying for that prophetic ministry? You might want to just think these things through or count the cost as it were, because this is challenging stuff.

But he says to David, *“You are the man!” Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul.’* Isn't it interesting when we look at David's response? Isn't it interesting how quickly we will sentence someone else for their crime and we will be completely unwilling to look at or confess our own?

David is, I mean, he doesn't even have to get worked up over this thing. It's just instantaneous. He doesn't even ask any questions. Now, what was the deal here again? This guy who had this huge flocks and herds, and he had all these animals to, are you telling me he went and took that one man's ewe lamb? Is that what you're, he doesn't need any further explanation.

He just instantly says, enough. That man deserves to die. As God lives, that man deserves to die and he must pay fourfold. And then Nathan drops that bomb. Well, David, you are that man. You are the very one that we're talking about.

And the Lord speaks to David through Nathan at that moment, *“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, (He says) ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. (verse 8) And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would (have given you more, I would have) add (added) to you as much more.’”* Than that.

Look at verse 9. This is the key of what the Lord is saying. *“Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You (David) have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.”*

God begins to speak to him about the consequences. *“¹⁰ Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, (and we do not see the sword depart for the rest of David's life) because (why) you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’”*

Did you notice in verse 9 and in verse 10, that the first thing the Lord makes David aware of related to his sinful action, is that it was against the Lord first. Did you catch that? *“...you despised the word of the LORD,”* right? And then He goes on to say that, *“you... despised me.”* 9 and 10, I think that's the verses I told you. Verse 9, *“...you despised the word of the LORD.”* Verse 10, *“you... despise me.”*

It's when we sin, when we do things that we shouldn't do, we are usually much more aware, cognitantly aware, of what we've done on this level because we see the people whom we have hurt. We see their reaction. We see the things that they're dealing with related to our sin. And that's painful. I mean, that's very, very painful.

And many times, though, we limit our understanding of the gravity of our sin based on what we're seeing here, because this is what we happen to be seeing.

And this is what's entering our ears and coming in through our eyes and this is. It's happening right before us. But there are reactions in heaven that you and I may not be aware of and we don't realize sometimes how much we hurt the Lord. How much the Lord is affected by our sinful activity.

It's interesting. We have these statements in the scripture in the New Testament when God confronted Saul on his on the road to Damascus who would later become the apostle Paul. Jesus actually appears to him on the path. And what does He say to him? "*Saul, Saul,...*" And then He asks him this question, why are you persecuting my church? Doesn't say that, does He? You know what He says? "*...why are you persecuting me?*" (Acts 9:4) It's Me.

Paul had to live the rest of his life with the awareness of the fact that in his ignorance and in his misplaced zeal, he was persecuting the Lord. That it was personal. It was relational.

And when God gives you a glimpse of how your sinful behavior has affected Him. It's probably a good thing that He doesn't very often, because it would probably wipe you out. I mean just for the Lord to give you a momentary glimpse of what your sin has done to Him. Relationally speaking. How you've affected that relationship, how you've grieved the Holy Spirit, and so forth.

The Lord says to David in 2 references here, you've despised My word and you've despised Me.

Verse 11 says, "*Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.'*" In other words, in the open sky, or in the open. In the open air.

And by the way, you'll notice there that the Lord speaks here through Nathan prophetically and says that one of his neighbors will take David's wives and lie with them in front of everyone so everyone can see. The word, neighbor here refers to someone living close by.

But God spares Nathan, excuse me, David the knowledge that neighbor would be his own son. His own son Absalom, who one day in an attempt to wrest control of the kingdom out of his father's hand, would do this heinous thing of actually laying with David's wives and concubines so as to show the people he was now king. But it was all part of a prophetic fulfillment of the fallout of David's own sinful behavior.

Verse 12, God says, *“For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing (in front of everybody) before all Israel and before the sun.”* ¹³ David said to Nathan, *“I have sinned against the LORD.”* And Nathan said to David, *“The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.”*

Now stop there for a minute. We will get through the rest of the chapter. I promise so give me your attention for a minute because this is very important stuff.

You remember our study of 1 Samuel and you remember king Saul. And you remember how many times Samuel confronted Saul with some aspect of his disobedience. And you remember how Saul responded. He always made excuses. He always made excuses. He never, ultimately, and for very long, owned up to his sinful behavior. There was a couple of times when David had the opportunity to kill him that Saul admitted before David, you're a better man than I and, and, and on.

But Saul never repented before the Lord. And I want you to see David's response. And people, this is one of the main reasons why David is considered a man after God's own heart. Because there was a teachable spirit. There was the ability to be broken. That is so refreshing. So beautiful.

When Nathan goes through this thing. Tells him he is the man in the story. Tells him that you've sinned and God is going to bring all this stuff to pass in your life. Immediately David says, *“I have sinned against the LORD.”* And did you notice that?

He doesn't say, I've sinned against Uriah. He did. He didn't say, I've sinned against Bathsheba. He did. He didn't say, I've sinned against the kingdom. He had. He said, *“I've sinned against the LORD.”* I've sinned against God. And David knew that according to the law, he deserved death for what he had done.

And so Nathan immediately says to David, and this is the other important thing for us to see here. Nathan immediately says, *“The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.”* The reason this is important for us to see is this phrase, *“put away your sin.”* He's put it away. That's what the ESV says. The New King James says the same thing. The New American Standard Bible says that, *“he has taken away your sin.”*

Either way, you'll notice that God does not say through Nathan here that He has punished your sin. A lot of things that are going to happen that are really nasty to David in the next week and in the rest of his life, but they are not the

punishment for his sin. The things that happen in David's life, the fallout is not punishment, it's consequences. And it's an important distinction.

So many people will make mistakes in their lives and then they'll say, why is God punishing me? Let me tell you, if God were punishing you, you wouldn't even be around to talk about it. You are dealing with fallout, with consequences. There are always consequences.

Paul says in the New Testament, do not, you know, don't be deceived. God cannot be mocked. He will not be mocked. (Galatians 6:7) What a man sows, so also shall he reap. Right? That's consequences.

But in this case, God says that he's taken away David's sin. He's just taken it away. But people, I want you to understand very clearly, he did not punish David's sin.

You may say, well, wait a minute. What are you saying, pastor Paul? Are you saying that God doesn't punish sin? No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm saying that he took David's sin and he set it aside because it was going to be another thousand years or so before that sin was going to be punished. And I can show you that out of a Scripture in Romans.

Let me put this on the screen for you so that you can, we can read it together. Romans chapter 3, beginning of verse 23. Look, Paul says,

Romans 3:23-25 (NIV84)

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished...

...for all have sinned (we know that) and fall (we've all fallen) short of the glory of God, (we know that) and (but we also know that we're) are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (and then Paul says) God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, (I'm reading this, by the way, out of the NIV) through faith in his blood. (through faith in his blood, and then he tells us why he did this) He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished...

David's sin with Bathsheba, when did that get punished? When Jesus hung on a cross. When did all of the other sins of people get punished when Jesus hung on

a cross? Because this passage tells us in no uncertain terms that “*in his forbearance*” God let those previous sins, although the people dealt with consequences for their sin. Right? And there were temporary sort of judgments, but not the punishment of those sins.

The sins that were committed before had been left unpunished. And Jesus absorbed all of that punishment. He was consumed with that punishment. Not just for the past sins, but for the present sins, and for the future sins as well. Right? That's why we don't have to keep getting saved every time we sin.

New Christians really struggle with that sometimes that whole idea that okay I asked Jesus to forgive me. He forgave me. I'm good. But wait a minute What happens tomorrow when I mess up? What happens then? You're covered. You're covered by faith. Well, don't I got to come back don't have to come back and ask His forgiveness. Yes, but not to be saved again.

We're not to come back and say, forgive us of our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. We don't say that so that we'll get saved again. We say it so that nothing separates us relationally from Him, because relationally speaking, sin always pushes us away. It separates us from God. That's what Isaiah says. Your sins have separated you from God. (Isaiah 59:2) That's always what happens with sin.

So when there's been a separation, there has to be something to bridge that separation. What is it? It's confession. You say, Father God, I've sinned. I ask you to forgive me. Not that I, I know that I'm already born again. I know that I'm going to heaven. That's why, there are people who are literally told that if you don't confess your sins before you die, even if you're already a Christian, you're going to hell. That is the craziest thing in the world.

But there are people who truly believe that and they go through their lives fearful that I haven't confessed something in my life. And maybe, just maybe, that one is going to come back to haunt me, and I'm going to die. And then I'm going to stand before God and realize, oh, I forgot to confess that one sin, and I'm going to be dead. And I'm literally going to be separated from God forever, because I didn't confess that one area of sin in my life.

People, that reveals a lack of understanding about God's grace and frankly, a lack of understanding of just the whole redemptive process of what Jesus came to do on the cross. Jesus came to die for sins, past, present, and future. And when you come to Him by faith, believing that what He did on the cross was for you, you are born again, you are washed, you are redeemed for the rest of your

life. You think you're going to stop sinning? Of course not. You're going to, you know, John writes to us and says, anybody who claims to be without sin, he's a loser. Actually, he doesn't say he's a loser. He says he's a liar. He says he's deceived himself. (1 John 1:8) But that's the paraphrase. It's like, you're self-deceived.

Well, so we keep sinning, right? We all sin. We mess up. But we know that if we confess our sins, He's faithful and just and will forgive us, cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We know that. But what happens if I have something that I didn't confess and ask Him to cleanse me for? You're still saved.

I use this example of my marriage all the time or any marriage. In a marriage, you do things to hurt one another. You say things that are mean you do things that you shouldn't do. You don't do things that you should do. You know what I'm saying? You offend one another in a marriage situation. You hurt one another's feelings.

Well, when that happens, are you suddenly divorced? I mean, do you look at your spouse then and go, gee, I guess we're not married anymore because I really I really hurt you there didn't I? Oh, you're still husband and wife, but there's a relational issue between you now that needs to be resolved. How do you do it? You go to your spouse and go, I'm really sorry. I'm an idiot. And I shouldn't have said that. And I ask you, would you please forgive me of what I've done? And hopefully, the response of this other person is, I forgive you.

Now, see, there's a freedom, relationally, for us to come back together, in the kind of intimacy that God intended marriage to be. Do you understand that your walk with the Lord has an intention of intimacy too? God wants to be intimate with you on a spiritual level. But it is sin, and unconfessed sin, that drives a wedge between that intimacy.

And then we wonder why, gee, I just haven't, I'm not really feeling God. I just I feel like my prayers are just bouncing off the ceiling, and all... And we never stop to think that maybe there's an issue that, we need to come to him and say, Father, forgive me. I know that I sin. In fact, I sin even when I don't know that I sin. And I confess Lord that I am, I'm just, I'm a weak individual. And Lord, I just, I thank You so much for Your forgiveness. And I ask You just to just forgive me right here, right now. Let's not let anything stand in between us. Isn't it wonderful when two people can come together after an issue? Isn't that wonderful?

I had a situation just at the pastor's conference happen to me where there was a pastor there who, he and I just had a row and it was unintentional. It was just, it was totally unintentional, but it was just this issue between us. And during one of the worship times, he came out of the blue and just gave me this enormous bear hug and just said, I'm sorry. Wow. That's wonderful. That's great. Everything's good now. We're good. Right? In fact, he looked at me, he goes, are we good? We're good. I love you. You're my brother. But this was a problem, see, because it was unconfessed. And that's always the way it is. Understand that.

Verse 14, *“Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die.”* ¹⁵ *Then Nathan went to his house.*

And the LORD afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick. ¹⁶ *David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.”*

You might say, why did you do, why, David, why are you doing that? Why are you fasting before the Lord and praying? God told you through Nathan that this child was going to die. Why don't you just sit back and let it happen? I mean, God told you.

Because David knew and understood the heart of the Lord. He knew that God's heart was a heart of mercy and he knew there was always room for appeal. And so he does, he appeals to God on behalf of the child.

In fact, it says he *“fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.”* ¹⁷ *And the elders of his house* (they started worrying about him, they) *stood beside him,...* And they tried to get him up from the ground but he wouldn't and he wouldn't have anything to eat either.

And then verse 18 says, *“On the seventh day the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, “Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us. How then can we say to him the child is dead? He may do himself some harm.”* ¹⁹ *But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David understood that the child was dead. And David said to his servants, “Is the child dead?” They said, (yeah) “He is dead.”*”

God's mercy is wonderful. God's mercy is wonderful. Truly glorious. But there are times that fasting, well, let me turn that around and say this. Fasting is never

a way of God's of twisting God's arm. It's a way of appealing to God. And by fasting, David actually was put in a better place to hear from God on this situation. But keep in mind that the act of fasting does not force the hand of God to change his plan. Alright.

“²⁰ Then David arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his clothes. And he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. He then went to his own house. And when he asked, they set food before him, and he ate. ²¹ Then his servants said to him, ‘What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive; but when the child died, you arose and ate food.’ ²² He said, (well) ‘While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, ‘Who knows whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’ ²³ But now he is dead. Why should I fast? (in other words, he says to the questioner) Can I bring him back (to life) again? (is it going to help? And then look at this last sentence. This is very important people) I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.’”

Even when David sees the judgment of the Lord, as it relates to this child, he expresses confidence in this last statement that this little baby that has just died was even now in the presence of the Lord and that he himself would see the child again.

And it says that *“²⁴ Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the LORD loved him (that’s a powerful statement) ²⁵ and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.”*

This, you guys, when you've made the biggest blunder of your life and you've seen the circumstances play out in a very negative and painful sort of a way. And then when you see the Lord come back with His favor, it is one of the most refreshing things in the world. I mean, it's like a refreshing rain after a lifetime of hot weather. And you'll notice what happens here.

David knows that this whole arrangement with Bathsheba was a bad idea, but he doesn't put her away. He goes to comfort her. And she eventually conceives again, and she gives birth to a child. And it's this beautiful statement that says, *“And the LORD loved him.”* Is there life after sin? With God there is. When we confess our sin, He is faithful and just and will forgive us, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. There is life, even after some of our biggest mistakes.

And I love how God... You know how when somebody offends us we're ticked for life, pretty much. It's like and anything that comes from that thing that hurt

us in the future, we're yeah, well... It's just, it's like a, it's like a reminder, like an ugly reminder. Yeah, that's, oh, they have another kid, that's great. Yeah, isn't this great? God doesn't like that.

God doesn't have this peevish kind of an attitude, like, oh, yeah, they're at it again, having children. Never a good relationship in the first place. It was a mistake from the get go. I'm just going to ignore the rest of anything that they have to do with anything. This David and Bathsheba. What a couple they are.

Isn't that great that God isn't like that? God comes back and they have another child and God's like, I love that baby. I love that child. And He's going to make that child from David and Bathsheba, the next king of Israel. The wisest king on the face of the earth. Crazy. But it's God.

Now, the chapter ends by returning us to the battle with the Ammonites that was interrupted by David's sin. And I'm not going to take time to read the rest of those verses. You can do that on your own.

But I want to call your attention, and we're going to do this very quickly because we're just about out of time. But there are 2 Psalms that go along with David's event. And I want to have you turn to them because we're just going to very quickly read them, and you can make a note.

Psalm 51. Go there first. Psalm 51. This is considered to be David's prayer of repentance when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. In fact, it says it at the very beginning of the Psalm before the verse. It says that, this is what David cried when the prophet Nathan came to him after he'd gone and had that situation with Bathsheba. I want you just to see David's prayer, because we didn't get it in 2 Samuel, but we get it here.

*“Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.”*

And here, this is important, verse 4,
*“Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,*

*so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.”*

That is an important verse. But on the surface, it grabs us for a minute and we think, wait a minute, David, what are you saying here? *“Against you, you only, have I sinned.”*

Didn't you sin against Uriah? Yeah. Didn't you sin against Bathsheba? Yes. Didn't you sin against the people of Israel who trusted in you as an example. Yes. Didn't you sin against your family? Yes. Yes. Didn't you sin against that child who died after seven days? Yes!

Listen, David is not brushing any of that under the carpet. He is understanding, and it's important that you and I understand it too, the priority of addressing God, and knowing that our sin ultimately is against God. Ultimately, we stand accused because there's going to come a time.

There's going to come a time, for the people who have rejected Christ, when they will stand before the Lord one day. And what they've done against people, those people, it's not going to matter. It's what they've done against God. It's against God ultimately, there's going to make the difference. And so David is speaking in an ultimate sort of a sense.

Now in your own time, I want to encourage you to read the rest of Psalm 51 but go over to Psalm 32, very quickly. We'll read just a couple of verses of this as well.

Psalm 32. David writes,

*“Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.*

² *Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.*

³ *For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.*

⁴ *For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of (the day) summer.*

⁵ *I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;*

*I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

⁶ *Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;*

*surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not reach him.*

*⁷ You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.*

And this is the last part of this Psalm I want to have you take note of. These next two verses 8 and 9, suddenly David switches into prophetic mode. And the Lord speaks here. Look what He says. This is God talking now.

*“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.*

*⁹ Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
which must be curbed with bit and bridle,
or it will not stay near you.”*

And then the Psalm ends off with.

*“¹⁰ Many are the sorrows of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.*

*¹¹ Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!”*

But I want to just go back to verses 8 and 9 guys. This is so important It I would encourage you, to look underline these verses make a note of them. Maybe even memorize them this is God to his people. This is God to you and I remember reading these verses at one point and just God just hitting me, just saying, son, this is for you.

Listen, He says, I'm the one who's going to instruct you. I'm the one who's going to teach you. I'm the teacher. I am going to counsel you. I'm going to keep my eye upon you.

But then God says, don't be like a dumb animal that is governed by their appetites. They look at something and they want it. And when we as human beings stoop to that level. When we become well, there's that biblical word, debauchery you come across that from once in a while in your Bible. You think that's interesting word, debauchery. What's debauchery all about? Debauchery is the lifestyle of an individual who lives to please or to satisfy their passions.

Do you know what it, what else the Bible refers to it as it's being animal like, because that's the way animals are. You can get animals to do incredible things

for a cookie, right? You can train them to do amazing things for a reward. Why? They're governed by their appetites.

When you and I eliminate God from the perspective and we just begin to live to please our bodily appetites, our desires, our whatever you want to call it. We become like an animal rather than like a human being that was created in the image of God that was meant to commune with God and was meant to be led by the Spirit of God.

We are to be led by the Spirit, not by our passions, not by our appetites. That's why fasting is probably a good thing to do once in a while. It is your way of telling your body, I'm in charge! And your body comes along and goes, I'm hungry. I know! Get away from me! And sometimes it's just important to do that, isn't it?

It's called self-control. Exercising some level of self-control. God knows we have, like, none. So He makes it even part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The last of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Self-control. Boy, do I need self-control, like we all say, right? Yeah! Because I see something and I want it. I'm hungry, I want to go eat. We're interesting, aren't we?

We know that eating in and of itself isn't a bad thing, but we also know that for me to just to give into my body all the time. All the time presents or creates this kind of habitual sort of behavior in our lives that says, my body calls the shots. I'm tired, boom, got to sleep. I'm hungry, boom, got to eat. I have this issue, and I'm just, take care of myself, sort of a thing.

And then our bodies begin to call the shots, they begin to rule our lives, instead of being ruled by God. By God, the Holy Spirit, and so forth. Anyway so God gives this very powerful, powerful message, which is a great lesson.

And let's face it, let's face it, when David saw Bathsheba on the roof of her house, taking a bath, what ruled that day? It was his fleshly appetites, wasn't it? It wasn't God. It was just all, it was all David. It was just, and it took over. And it said, go get her. Yeah, but she's Uriah the Hittite's wife. I don't care. Go get her. And it just overwhelms all our other sense of right and propriety.

God says, listen, don't be like an animal that has to be led around by a bridle. I want you to be led by the Spirit. I want you to hear My voice. I want you to obey.