

## 2 Samuel 11 — David and Bathsheba

**September 24, 2023**

Good morning CrossWinds! If you are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. We are thankful to have you. This week, we installed most of the new lights. The lighting project is not done. We have more lights to install. We have height adjustments to be made to the new lights. We have a new light board coming, plus additional programming. The first step in the light project is done. I am just grateful we have light.

As a church, we are on a mission. That mission is reaching people with Jesus. Many times, you don't have the privilege of seeing people come to Christ like I do. That is why I love to tell you how that happens. A great "Reaching People with Jesus" story began about three weeks ago. It was the Sunday a few weeks ago when I wasn't here because I was teaching at the Spencer Campus. I taught a message on Naaman. About 20 minutes after the message, a woman approached me to ask if I would talk to the friend she brought to church. That morning, her friend asked Jesus to save her from her sins. That morning, after the service, she became a Christian. They invited me to also pray with her. What a great reminder of how God uses us when we do the simple work of inviting friends to church. That is not the end of the story. It is only the beginning of the story.

The young lady went home as a new Christian, but she didn't know anyone else at the CrossWinds Spencer Campus. She has children. They didn't know anyone either. One of her hopes and prayers was for her children to find friends and fit into church. The next Sunday, she arrived at the Spencer Campus

for church. She was walking down the hall with her children. All of them have that look on their face where they have no idea what they are doing or where they are going. They don't know anyone. Then one of her children called out to someone across the hall. "Grandma!" She ran over to give her grandmother a big hug. She didn't know Grandma and Grandpa had also recently started attending the CrossWinds Spencer Campus. In the hall last week, on her second week at church, there was an unexpected family reunion. That is something to celebrate!

God is at work drawing people to Jesus. Sometimes, God is at work drawing individuals to himself. Other times, it is even better when God is at work to draw multiple people in a family to himself simultaneously. That is what happened in the last few weeks.

I also share this story not just to remind us about the importance of inviting people to church but also to remind us of the role each of us plays. Every church is like a football game. At a football game, there are two kinds of people. There are fans. They do nothing besides watch the game, drink beer, and stuff themselves with pizza, chips, and cheese dip. Some Christians at church are like that. They are not involved in the game, but they are quick to be critical of the game.

Then there are the players on the field. The players on the field make things happen. They work hard. They sweat. At CrossWinds, we are not a church of critical fans who do nothing. We are a church of people involved in the game, giving our best as we strive for victory. What does it look like to be involved in the game? It simply means that we are on the mission. We love the people in our

community. As God gives us the opportunity, we tell people how Jesus changed our lives and we invite people to church where they can learn more about Jesus. As we do that, lives are changed. Sometimes, it is not just one person but an extended family that meets Jesus. That is pretty special.

This morning, we return to our studies in 2 Samuel. We were last in those studies in May. Up to this point, 2 Samuel is the story of the rise of David. After running for his life from King Saul in 1 Samuel, in 2 Samuel, David becomes king of the nation. He is a godly king. Things went amazingly well for King David and the nation of Israel. Things were on a trajectory that was straight up. Life was good.

When we left off in 2 Samuel 10, the Ammonites were harassing the Israelites, but Joab, the army commander, repelled the Ammonite threat with his soldiers. The threat was only 40 miles away from Jerusalem, so it was significant. When we turn the page and move from 2 Samuel 10 to 2 Samuel 11, we expect it will be another story of things getting better for David. We expect another story of an enemy that David defeated. That is not what happens.

At the pinnacle of his power, David had an affair. A child was conceived. David murdered the woman's husband to cover his sin. This chapter is the decisive turning point in the book. From this point forward, everything in David's life as king starts heading down, not up. It is a reminder that when we sin, we will suffer. Even though sin promises short-term fun, it always leads to long-term suffering.

This chapter is also a reminder that even though David is an amazing and godly man, he is also a flawed human being, like the rest of us.

As we get into this pivotal chapter, it feels that David's affair comes out of nowhere. It doesn't. This affair wasn't out of character for David. If we think back on what we have learned about David's life in earlier chapters of this book, we can see this disaster coming.

In earlier studies of David, we looked at the commands in Deuteronomy about kingship and how kings in Israel were to be different from kings in the nations around them. One of the ways a king of God's people was to be different was that they were not to rely on chariots and horses for military strength to give victory in war. For the most part, David obeyed those commands and saw tremendous victories given by God when Israel's foot soldiers fought against nations filled with horses and chariots for military strength.

There was one area of the Deuteronomic regulations for Israel's king that David chose to ignore.

**And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away,...  
Deuteronomy 17:17a (ESV)**

David chose to ignore that one. Look at the structure of this book and we can see David's lust for women forecasting his demise.

- 2 Samuel 3:1 is the story of how David grew stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker.
- 2 Samuel 3:2-5 is a Harem report. It is the account of David starting to take multiple wives.
- 2 Samuel 5:10-12 is how David's power grew, and God strengthened him.

- 2 Samuel 5:13-16. Is another harem report. It is the story of David taking even more wives.
- 2 Samuel 8 to 10 is the story of how David, with God's help, expanded his empire.

We would expect another harem report where David took more wives. Instead of taking more wives, David takes another man's wife, then he murders her husband.

While things were going amazingly well for David in earlier chapters, he did not choose to sexually restrain himself. He chose to sexually indulge himself by marrying any attractive and available woman that came into his orbit. Since he never learned to sexually restrain himself, when an attractive woman who was already married caught his eye, he took her anyway. You see, this affair doesn't come out of nowhere. It came from the unaddressed sexual sins in his past and the lack of sexual restraint he had in the present.

There is a lesson for us in this. *When it comes to a significant failure in the middle of life, it usually comes from the small sins we have nurtured earlier in life.* If you allow yourself to flirt with the opposite sex at work, later in life, you will likely find yourself doing more than flirting at work. If you indulge yourself with looking at porn on the Internet, later in life, you will probably find yourself involved in hard-core things you never expected. If you let yourself become intoxicated on Friday nights, later in life, you will start to find yourself intoxicated every night. Be careful about disobeying God's word in little areas. It doesn't lead to anything good.

As we look at this chapter, we will look at it under three headings. First we will look at the affair in verses 1 to 5. Second, the cover-up in verses 6 to 13. Third, we will look at the murder in verses 14 to 27.

## The Affair

Let's remember where we left off in May. In 2 Samuel 10, the Syrians and the Ammonites formed a coalition against David. David sent General Joab and select men to deal with them. Militarily, it was a defensive operation. Joab crushed them. The Ammonites retreated into Rabbah, their capital city. As winter came, Joab and the men returned to Jerusalem. The Ammonites were humbled, locked into their city, but not decisively defeated. When 2 Samuel 11 begins, it is spring and the time for Joab to return with the military and deal with them once-and-for-all. Unlike other nations, they refused to make peace with David and to recognize him as king. They chose this fight.

In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 11:1 (ESV)

It was spring. Things were warming up. It was time to resume the war with the Ammonites. David sent Joab and his soldiers to fight the Ammonites, but he also sent all Israel. There was a general draft of all the able-bodied men in Israel who joined Joab and the army to finish off the Ammonites. No men were left in Jerusalem, just the women.

Here is where something strange happens. David chose to remain in Jerusalem. In Hebrew, the words "But David" are emphatic to draw our attention to what David was doing that he shouldn't have done. It was the time when kings led their armies to battle, but David didn't do his job. He stayed in Jerusalem, a

city filled with lonely women. For a guy with a lust problem, that doesn't sound like a wise move.

A literal translation is not "David remained in Jerusalem" but "David was sitting in Jerusalem." This implies inactivity. David didn't remain in Jerusalem because he was engaged in great work. He remained in Jerusalem because he was lazy and self-indulgent. He didn't want the inconvenience and hardships of war.

Here is the first way David sets himself up for an affair. He wasn't busy at work. He wasn't doing his duty. Sins of omission often proceed sins of commission. Failing to do the right thing often leads to pursuing the wrong thing. If David was busy at work, doing what he was supposed to be doing, leading his army into battle, he wouldn't have had time for this affair.

One of the best ways to avoid setting ourselves up for an affair is to be busy with the work God gave us to do. If we are engaged in what God wants us to do, we are less likely to be distracted by the sin Satan wants us to pursue.

Another way to avoid sexual temptation with someone else is to do the work of loving, cherishing, spending time with, and sharing your heart with the spouse God gave you. The best way to protect yourself against interest in someone else's spouse is to busy yourself with the work God gave you to do of loving, cherishing, and pursuing your own spouse.

It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house,... 2 Samuel 11:2a (ESV)

Notice the contrast. Joab, the troops, and all the men of Israel were engaged in a life-and-death struggle on the front lines of a war while David was

lounging around the palace, having got up from his afternoon nap. He was aimlessly walking around the flat roof of his house with nothing better to do. As the king, David's house would have been taller than others. From his roof, he could look down on the houses around him.

David may have been safe in Jerusalem from the dangers of the war, but he was not safe from himself and the danger of his unrestrained sexual desires.

...he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. 2 Samuel 11:2b (ESV)

David looked over the end of his balcony, gazing at the city below. On a rooftop close to him was a woman taking a bath. The Hebrew strongly emphasizes her beauty. She was very, very, very beautiful. She was extremely attractive and completely naked, right in front of his eyes, plus she was shimmering in water.

Before this, David made unwise decisions. Here is the first time he made a consciously sinful decision. David didn't turn away. He kept looking. He kept enjoying. He started imagining. He started dreaming as his eyes swallowed images of her figure like a man in a desert swallows water. The more he looked, the greater the pull. We don't know how long he watched. I suspect he watched her until the end. David had nothing to worry about. Her husband was not home.

We know what he should have done. As soon as he saw her, he should have turned away. Christian men must learn to bounce their eyes off of sexual temptations that come in advertisements, the Internet, television programs, and of course, the enticement of an actual woman. I like the way Job says it.

"I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?" Job 31:1 (ESV)



It is a sin to look at someone of the opposite sex and lust after them in our hearts. Remember what Joseph did when Potiphar's wife tried to pull him into bed for an affair, he didn't stay and look. He ran. I am sure Mrs. Potiphar was a very attractive woman who wasn't wearing a snowsuit when she tried to seduce him. Joseph knew what to do. Run!

Paul gives the same instructions to young Timothy.

**So flee youthful passions... 2 Timothy 2:22a (ESV)**

David didn't turn away. Remember, he was used to sexually indulging himself, not restraining himself, so he kept looking and enjoying.

**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?" 2 Samuel 11:3 (ESV)**

Instead of turning his attention away from this woman. He looked at her for so long he couldn't get her out of his mind. He sent his servants on a little research project to learn more about this woman. He learned three things.

1. Her name was Bathsheba.
2. She was the daughter of Eliam. He was a very important man in David's kingdom. Eliam was one of David's mighty men, one of the top 37 soldiers in David's kingdom who were the best and most loyal. Her grandfather was Ahithophel. He was one of two men who served as David's advisors for his kingdom. She was the beloved daughter and granddaughter of two of David's most loyal men. How could he not just sin against her, but against them, if he led her into an affair?

3. She was also the wife of Uriah. She was already married. Uriah was also one of David's mighty men, one of the best soldiers, the top 37 soldiers in his kingdom.

Everything at this point should have told David to keep his hands off. She was taken. She was the daughter, granddaughter, or wife of some of David's best, brightest, and most loyal men. How could he sin against them? The Bible tells us the line he was not to cross.

“...you shall not covet your neighbor's wife,...” Exodus 20:17 (ESV)

“You shall not commit adultery.” Exodus 20:14 (ESV)

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

David, do not cross this line! His desire for this woman was not because he was lacking in wives. He already had more wives than any man needed.

So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her... Then she returned to her house. 2 Samuel 11:4 (ESV)

David sent more messengers. This time the messengers were not to inquire about her, but to take her from her house and bring her to him. David “taking her” does not imply physical violence. The wording is meant as a contrast. The David who refused to kill Saul and take power for himself but waited on God to give him the kingdom was now acting the opposite way. He was taking someone else's wife, a woman God did NOT give him.

She came to him. He lay with her, then she returned to her house. David sent messengers to get her, but when the one-night-stand was over, she returned home by herself. From the brevity of the account, it appears, they didn't take much time to build a relationship. It was a night of passion.

I want to pause a moment to make some observations from of how things transpired that evening. I think there are lessons to learn. First, the text clearly places the blame for this affair on David. He watched. He lusted. He sent for her. He took her. David was fully responsible for his sin.

While David is completely responsible for all of this, it would not be honest to leave Bathsheba entirely off the hook. Was she making herself available to him? Did she knowingly sexually entice him? She might have. She was lonely. Her husband was out of town for a long time. Just as David could see her on her rooftop, one earlier occasions, she knew that in the afternoon David might be on his balcony and he would be able to privately see her from his roof to her roof. If she knew that, why did she take a bath outside? This leads us to believe Bathsheba might have intentionally tried to attract the king. It doesn't state that explicitly, but if Bathsheba was concerned for purity and fidelity, she wouldn't have put herself naked on her roof where the king could see her.

In addition, when she was called to the king's house, she went without resistance. When she realized the king's intent, rather than resist him, she leaned into it. Deuteronomy 22 tells us that if a young woman is in a city and a man attempts to lie with her, she is to scream. If she doesn't scream, it is assumed the sexual encounter was consensual.

Even if Bathsheba was hoping to entice David, the guilt of what happened still remains squarely with David. The Old Testament law stipulated that what they had done required the death penalty for *both* because she chose not to resist. She chose not to scream.

“If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel.” Deuteronomy 22:22 (ESV)

There is a little parenthetical phrase thrown in the middle of the verse.

...(Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.)... 2 Samuel 11:4 (ESV)

Why was the reason for her bath thrown in? It tells us she just finished the week of her menstrual period. If she was to conceive, there was no question that David who could be the father.

When the affair was over, we are not told of David and Bathsheba having additional intimate encounters. It looks like things were over. David and Bathsheba planned to the events of their wild night a little secret. Several weeks passed when Bathsheba realized the events of that evening could not be kept hidden.

And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, “I am pregnant.” 2 Samuel 11:5 (ESV)

Notice the narrator calls her “the woman”. To David, she was not a person. She was not a man’s wife, a father’s daughter, or a loved granddaughter. To David, she was just a gorgeous woman to satisfy his lusts. He viewed her as an object, not a person.

While we learned many lessons, at this point, I want to highlight an important one. If a godly man like David can pursue an affair, don’t let me deceive myself by thinking, “It can never happen to me.” David was a great and godly man, but with the pressure of his kingship and the success of his world, his heart drifted away from God and what he never thought could happen to him, did happen to him.

This is a reminder for all of us that we must be on our guard around members of the opposite sex. It doesn't matter if you have followed Christ for years, none of us are bulletproof when it comes to matters of sexual sin. We must guard against it. In my premarital counseling, we always have a time when we talk about good fences making good neighbors. Have fences of protection set up in your life creating limits on the time you will spend and the things you will do with someone of the opposite sex. That is not weakness. That is wisdom. If it happened to David, it can happen to me.

The apostle Paul tells us what David should have done when faced with the enticement.

**Flee from sexual immorality... 1 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV)**

Now that David sinned, how will he deal with his sin? Let's find out.

### **The Cover Up**

David had a choice. He could repent of his sin. He could confess his sin. He could have confessed to Uriah, Bathsheba, and the nation. It would have been hard, but he could have done it. David didn't want to do that. He thought he could hide his sin. Here is what we learn from his attempts to bury his sin like a dog buries a bone. All attempts to cover our sin make it worse, not better. Trying to cover our sin, leads to more sin, not less sin.

#### **Plan A — Get Uriah to sleep with his wife.**

David needed a plan to cover his fling. The easiest way to do that would be to have Uriah sleep with his wife, that way, he would think the child she conceived was his own.

So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. 2 Samuel 11:6 (ESV)

Before we find out what happens, let's take a look at the night of David's affair from a different angle. At this point, David thought his fling was a well-kept secret. It wasn't. At least one person made inquiry for David about Bathsheba's identity. He knew of David's interest in Bathsheba. A group of messengers brought her to the king's bedroom. They knew of the affair. At least one additional messenger carried the news of Bathsheba's pregnancy back to David. That messenger also knew of the affair. The king's fling was known by the palace staff, and I presume it was gossiped about between them. When Uriah was sent for, and brought back to the palace, there is a real possibility that somebody told him the rumor of what happened between his wife and the king.

When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. 2 Samuel 11:7 (ESV)

David attempted to make the situation seem as normal as possible. He acted as if he wanted an update from the battle. David really didn't care about Uriah's answers. They were all a cover for the real reason David brought him home.

Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." .... 2 Samuel 11:8a (ESV)

David concluded the interview with directions for Uriah to go home to his home to be with his wife. Washing your feet is what someone did when they came into the home to relax after a hard days work. David took additional steps to encourage Uriah to sleep with Bathsheba.

...And Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. 2 Samuel 11:8b (ESV)

This was probably a gift of food. It was a romantic candle-lit dinner for two. It looked like everything was on track. David could not resist Bathsheba. Certainly lonely Uriah after an all-expenses paid romantic meal with Bathsheba would not be able to resist her.

It didn't work.

But 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. 2 Samuel 11:9 (ESV)

Why didn't Uriah sleep with his beautiful wife? Had Uriah heard of the affair? He slept with the king's servants, the very people who knew about the affair. Do you think he heard about the affair? Do you think he put two-and-two together and knew David wanted Uriah to sleep with her to cover his affair?

The next day, look how David reacted when he heard things didn't go according to plans.

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?" 2 Samuel 11:10 (ESV)

Why did you deny yourself an evening with your wife? If Uriah heard rumors of the affair, those rumors would be supported by David's sudden concern about Uriah not sleeping with his wife at home. Why would David care? That was none of his business. Was David making it his business?

Let's look at Uriah's response.

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. 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." 2 Samuel 11:11 (ESV)

Notice Uriah brought up the phrase “lie with my wife.” He knew David wanted him to sleep with his wife. He understood the purpose of David’s directions and the romantic meal.

Uriah also says, “While the soldiers are forced to deny themselves the sexual pleasure of their wives, how could I partake of sexual pleasure with my wife?”

Uriah was a man of upstanding character. I think he was pointing out what a good leader should do. Of course, this should have stung David’s conscience. While Uriah won’t sleep with his own wife while the soldiers under his command are suffering in the field, David has no trouble lounging at the palace when he should have been at war. David had no trouble sleeping with someone else’s wife when he should be at war denying himself the pleasure of a wife. I am sure Uriah’s words stung.

Uriah promised he would never willingly sleep with his wife while the soldier were in the field. It was time for plan B. How could David trick Uriah into sleeping with his wife?

#### **Plan B — Get Uriah drunk.**

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. 2 Samuel 11:12 (ESV)

Suddenly Uriah was forced to stay around town an extra day. He was given no explanation. Did Uriah suspect something? We don’t know.

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. 2 Samuel 11:13 (ESV)



David asked him to dinner, then forced him to get drunk. David hoped to get him so sloshed that he wouldn't be able to resist going home to his wife. There are plenty of people who get drunk then find themselves in bed the next morning with a person they never met. If David was able to get him to drink enough, he would wake up the next morning in Bathsheba's arms and not know what did or didn't happen the night before. He wouldn't remember.

When Uriah left the palace drunk, he stayed at the servants quarters. Everyone knew he never went home to his wife. Uriah was a better man drunk than David was sober.

David's plans to cover his sin were foiled again. He was losing time. Soon, Bathsheba would begin to show. He needed something drastic to get rid of Uriah. Let's try murder.

## The Murder

Sin, if we do not confess it, works like a snowball. It keeps getting bigger as it goes down hill. David's lust led to an affair. The affair led to an unexpected pregnancy. David's unconfessed sin now leads to murder.

### Plan C — Kill Uriah

In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 2 Samuel 11:14 (ESV)

Uriah's job the next day was to carry a secret message to Joab, the commander of the army. That sounded reasonable . I doubt Uriah had any idea what was in the letter he carried.

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." 2 Samuel 11:15 (ESV)

He was carried the orders for his own assassination. He was to be killed not for any evil he had done, but because he was such a good, loyal, and upstanding soldier that David couldn't get him to make poor choices.

David had turned into such an evil scoundrel. He was lazy, lustful, and self-indulgent with another man's wife. Now he was murdering one of his best and most loyal men.

If you think of this plan, you can tell it was conceived in haste as David was desperate. How was Joab to make everyone pull back to safety at one time and leave Uriah alone? To do that, other soldiers would need to be in the know about Uriah's assassination. Do you think they would have agreed to it? I don't. If others knew about David's plans to assassinate Uriah, the affair would quickly be known.

Earlier Joab ravaged the Ammonites. They had withdrawn into their city for protection. At this point, what typically happened was the army besieging the city simply waited until the people inside the walls were starved to death, then they opened the gates willingly. You never attacked the city because the city had a great defensive position. There was no reason to attack the city walls or rush to attack the walls. The only way for Uriah to die was to make a foolish and suicidal attack on the city.

And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. 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. 2 Samuel 11:16–17 (ESV)

Joab attacked the city where it was most heavily defended. This was a complete suicide mission. Joab didn't have the other men withdraw. He let the

other men die with Uriah so it wouldn't look like Uriah wasn't targeted for death.

Now, we realized it was not just Uriah who died to cover David's sin but many other men as well. Covering sin is snowballing.

Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting. And he instructed the messenger, "When you have finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, 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? Who killed Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? 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.' " 2 Samuel 11:18–21 (ESV)

Joab knows that if David hears about his foolish military maneuver which led to the death of so many men, he would be furious with Joab for executing such a fool-hardy suicidal plan. Joab even imagines David yelling and what he would say when he was lecturing the messenger. Joab says, "If David gets angry, just tell him Uriah is dead." That will explain things to him.

The messenger was probably puzzled. Why was Joab so eager to send bad news of this defeat back to David? Why does he want to make sure David knows Uriah is dead? That doesn't make sense.

So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell. 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. 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." 2 Samuel 11:22–24 (ESV)

Just as Joab modified David's plan to improve on it. Joab's messenger modified Joab's message to improve it. Instead of waiting for David to become angry, he included the news of Uriah's death as part of his opening statements.

Notice David's response.

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.” 2 Samuel 11:25 (ESV)

You would think David would have exploded into anger at the needless loss of so many lives. Instead, David’s response was, “Well, it is no big deal.” There was no grieving, no sense of loss for the families. The same David who once declared a day of national mourning for the death of Saul, his enemy, didn’t mourn at the death of some of his best and most loyal men. This is a different David. His character changed.

All David care about was that it worked. The Uriah problem, the guy who was of such good character he wouldn’t sleep with his own wife, was eliminated.

When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. 2 Samuel 11:26 (ESV)

When Bathsheba heard of her husband’s untimely death, she grieved like any young widow would. We are not told that she knew this, but I think she realized her husband’s death wasn’t a coincidence. She knew it was a hit job. When her husband wouldn’t sleep with her, David, the father of her child, had her husband bumped off. That is dark.

And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son... 2 Samuel 11:27a (ESV)

The mourning period after someone’s death was 7 days. As soon as the week of mourning was over, David took Bathsheba as his wife, and she immediately shows up pregnant. How many widows would want to marry a new husband only a week after your husband’s funeral? This is weird. Everyone

knows this is weird. The sudden pregnancy that was shorter than 9 months also was apparent to everyone.

To David, it felt like he had everything under control. Bathsheba was his wife. Uriah was eliminated. She bore him a child. He thought his sin was covered, it was buried so nobody else would know.

The problem is his sin wasn't hidden. More people than he realized knew about the affair and murder. The palace servants and several messengers knew what happened. Abner knew what happened. Bathsheba knew what happened. The entire nation was also putting the pieces together with Bathsheba's hasty marriage and immediate pregnancy. There is one more person who didn't know just part of the story. He knew all the details. In this chapter, David forgot about him.

...But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD. 2 Samuel 11:27b (ESV)

David broke the tenth commandment. He coveted his neighbor's wife. That led him to break the seventh commandment. He committed adultery. That led him to break the sixth commandment, which was murder. God knows everything that happened.

Will David repent? Will God discipline him? What will happen with the baby? Is there any hope for David? Those are the questions we will look at next week.

Let me take a few moments to sum up some of the lessons we learned that we don't want to miss.

## Applications

1. David's downfall reminds us nobody is immune from temptation, especially sexual temptation.
2. The little sins we nurture today become the big sins of tomorrow.
3. Idleness leaves us vulnerable to temptation. It is always better to avoid temptation than needing to resist it.
4. Flee sexual immorality. Savoring temptation leads to giving in.
5. Our sin is never private. It may be partially known by people, but it is fully known by God.
6. Unless we repent and confess our sins, they always lead to more sin.
7. Sin leads to suffering.
8. This is not just a story of great sinfulness. It is a story of God's fantastic grace.

If we go back to 1 Samuel 7:16, we see David was God's chosen king. God promised to establish his eternal kingdom through David. How could God keep his promise and establish his eternal kingdom through David after he sinned so spectacularly and lost his way? What I find amazing is that God kept his eternal promises to establish his kingdom through him not because of his goodness but in spite of his sinfulness. When David was not faithful to God, God remained faithful to him. Today, you may have felt like David in this chapter. You wandered away from God. You fell into sin. You are suffering consequences of your sin. You are wondering, is God done with you. Has my sin ruined God's purposes for me? This chapter gives us a resounding answer to that question. When we are not faithful to God, he remains faithful to us. Even when we sin, God does not turn his back on us. He does not

throw away his eternal purposes for us. As we learn in this chapter, God is faithful to us not because of our goodness but because he is so good to us he gives us grace we do not deserve. This morning, if you identified with the sin of David, know God has not given up on you. He has not discarded his good eternal purposes for you. His goodness to you is not based on your goodness to him but it is in spite of our rebellion against him. That is the goodness of our God.



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