



**“CONSEQUENCES,
just ahead”
2 Samuel 11-12**

**by Pastor Tim Dodson
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Things had been going so well now for David and actually had been going well for a long time. David had been chosen and blessed by God, but then things apparently just fell apart.

We tend to think that adversity, testing and trials is what precedes sinful behavior, and our actions are merely an escape from such. But the truth is, a state of blessing can be just as dangerous. Perhaps it is because in times of blessing we can tend to forget how dependent we are upon God. We can easily start to think we can handle things on our own and then begin to drift away from Christ. We do so in a misdirected idea that to step out in such a manner is a sign of growth and maturity. We can see such “good times” as this as something which emanated from our doing or resulting from God as a reward for our righteous living. Such then generally has the odd secondary effect of causing us to move out into a more “solo mode operation” and God is pushed to the outer edges of our lives.

In Proverbs 30 we read the authors words saying “...give me neither poverty nor riches! Give me just enough to satisfy my needs. For if I grow rich, I may deny you and say, “Who is the LORD? And if I am too poor, I may steal and thus insult God’s holy name.” (30:8-9) The fact is, the more self-sufficient we become, the closer we are to disaster.

This chapter does not open up onto a young and foolish man, but rather a man who was older...a man who by any measure was “mature.” For David was probably 50 years old or better at this point. One might tend to think that by that time in one’s life that we would be strong enough and the pull of the flesh had subsided. But the reality is, the temptations of this world come at any age, and sadly we are never beyond falling into it.

So what happened here exactly?

According to the text, this was the time of the year in which “kings go out to battle.” It was ‘war season’ in Israel. It was the spring of the year, and the weather was such that wars could be fought without the snow, rain, cold or the mud. But apparently not this king. Not this year. Perhaps his thinking was that he had “been there, done that” and he was just going to take it easy this year and let others do the fighting.

So the first mistake that David made as he moved toward this sin was he was not where he was supposed to be. He was supposed to be out with the troops and fighting the battles that continued to come their way. He instead decided to take it easy...enjoy a little "R-n-R" time. He was not where he was supposed to be, and he was not doing what he was supposed to be doing. His calling was being ignored.

And it didn't matter how old he was. Many of us tend to think that we can retire from serving the Lord when no such body-life resignation exists. We are all being called to battle and called to service until there is no breath left in our bodies. So when David laid aside his armor he took the first step toward sin, defeat, and the consequences which would follow.

Quite simply, one of the best ways to resist the call of the world is to be busy with a higher purpose. For so many folks, their lives are empty, idle, pointless and devoid of purpose. So the enticement of sin's "sweet season" is a "fulfillment" in comparison to what they have on their plate every day. But we were never designed to live our lives on the sidelines. Only a clarity of calling and passion to live out your story in Christ will "one up" the cheap thrills the world is offering.

One thing we must note is that there is no question that David was a lover of God. That is not the issue here. He did not fall because he didn't love God. No, it happened because he began to look for a place of comfort and ease in his life with God. He wasn't fulfilling his calling but instead was fulfilling his flesh...and that was happening long before he committed the actual sexual sin with Bathsheba.

Rarely if ever do we awake one day and decide to go out and commit some gross mortal sin. No, it starts with a mere compromise...an allowance, an indulgence in which then cascades into something for which there was no undoing. There was temptation at first, but not sin. But David allowed himself in his state of leisure and the plethora of time that he had on his hands, to allow his curiosity and his self-reasoning to tacitly edge him forward. Closer to the flame. Closer to the point of no return.

The length that David goes to cover his sin is incredible. He was ingenious and devious at the same time. And what an investment of time, work, and planning! And when things did not go as planned, David did not resign and repent, no, he pushed forward, unwilling to relent. That is the action of sins' hardening one's heart. That is the insidious nature of sin. It always begets more...*never static...never stable*. What starts as a glance, becomes a thought, which turns into action, which becomes a lie to cover it all up, and the progression continues. James 1:14-15 tells us "*Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*"

David was caught and was soon swept into deeper and deeper waters. One after another he broke the 10 commandments...first he coveted his neighbor's wife, then he committed adultery with her, then he bore false witness against his neighbor, and then he committed murder! The more he tried to cover up his sin, the worse the situation got! Prov 28:13 says "*He who covers his sins will not prosper.*"

How did David find his way out of this? For one thing...despite his sin, he still availed himself of his access to God. Once he had been outed, He went to God and prayed and fasted for Bathsheba and the child. He did not hide or apply self-imposed penalties upon himself as we often do, which is in fact only a continuance of our sin. For in our rebellion, we often STILL try to control the field of play and the authority in our lives even in our remorse and repentance!

But David was humble and broken and apparently greatly cared for Bathsheba and the child. The bible in Hebrews 3:13 speaks about the possibility of being “hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.” But this was apparently not the ultimate case with David. We read herein and see that he seems to still have a soft shepherd’s heart. Perhaps that is why he survived this ordeal and was still known as the man after God’s own heart, *even after this terrible run of sin!* So David fasted, and David prayed, and God said no.

Note that God said no. Back in 2 Samuel 7-8 we covered that very aspect of God. David loved God. God loved David. But God still said no.

David went on to be that man “after the heart of God.” He would be a great man in the lineage of Christ Himself. He went on to love and be loved, to serve God and his kingdom. But He was always “that man” as Nathan the prophet called him. It would always be there, and something for which there was no erasing. It would be his “skeleton in the closet.” His “baggage,” His sorrow.

2 SAMUEL 11-12 SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is idleness? How did idleness contribute to David's sin? What should he have been doing during this time? How is idleness a challenge for us in the church today?
- 2) How did Joseph handle his similar situation back in Genesis 39. What was different? How did He make it out in one piece but not David?
- 3) How could a man who committed so many sins still later be referred to as "a man after God's own heart?" Why did he choose deception when he knew God was aware of everything he did? (*Note: desire to control a situation and fix things himself?*) Why is it so tempting to think we can get away with sin?
- 4) Why do you think that God used Nathan to confront David on his sin...Couldn't he have done so himself? (*Note: the use of others in the body, especially those we respect and have given authority in our lives*) Where does such a design leave us...What does it say to us?
- 5) Do you think we should be confronted about our sins? What does that look like in your mind's eye?
- 6) God essentially refused David's request and the child died. God said "no." How did David react to that answer? Was his response the correct one? Why or why not?
- 7) Despite the negative response, God went on to bless David and show his grace. How did this play out? Do you think David was treated righteously in this? (12:24-25) Why? What makes you think so?
- 8) What does this story teach us about God and about our choices? (*Note: That our choices have consequences, but that He never stops loving us. It seems also that with repentance and forgiveness, there so often comes a second chance despite the price and penalty of the sin.*)
- 9) What are some of the blessings that God has provided you that are most likely to actually make you forget your dependence on Him if you let them?
- 10) What are the most vulnerable times and places where you are most likely to face temptation? How are you handling those times and places?
- 11) What does true repentance look like?