

# “Consequences” // 2 Samuel 12–18 // *The Search for a King*

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## No announcement:

- Q&A
- BC South

## Enjoy David?

**I want to talk with you day about the consequences of sin. Sin, even when it's forgiven, still has consequences.** Say you're at your small group tomorrow night and some guy in it requests prayer for UNC to win on Wednesday night. Well, that just ticks you off because **(a)** you just know that God is a Duke fan (despite the fact that they chose His enemy to be their mascot), **and (b) while you think it would indeed take an act of God** for them to win on Wed you just don't think it's appropriate to pray about stuff like that. So, you humbly point that out to the guy—since humility is so common a characteristic of Duke fans—and of course he gets mad, because you know those UNC fans are, they're kind of obnoxious; and you guys get in a shouting match and phrases like “Tarhole” and “Dukyface” get thrown around and you haul off and punch him in the face. (This is a true story, by the way) You give him a black eye and in the process you break your wrist. Now, later, both of you calm down and you realize that your unity in Christ is greater than your rivalry in sports and so you hug it out and ask forgiveness. And so you've forgiven each other, and God forgives you, too... but you still have a broken wrist and he still has a black eye. *Even after full forgiveness, there are still consequences for our sin that don't just disappear with forgiveness.* Pretty simple, right? Nobody denies that.

That's what I want to talk to you about—the consequences of sin, and what God's grace does in and through those consequences. What I hope to show you from the life of David is that sin does have

consequences—painful consequences; but that **Jesus has taken the ultimate sting out of those consequences, so that while they are painful, excruciatingly painful, they are not devastating.** Jesus was devastated so that the consequences of your sin could be redeemed. (I have a dilemma when I preach: On one side, I want to make the painful, sometimes irreversible consequences of sin so **real** that those of you who are on the brink of sin will be scared and stop; and at the same time I want to give hope to those of you in the midst of those painful circumstances; to show you that your pain is painful, yes but God's goodness and mercy and grace are greater than your sin; and God can reweave all things in your life, even the consequences of your own sin and stupidity, for His perfect plan and your ultimate good.

He turned the cross into the resurrection; he can turn your pain into triumph.

## I want to show you BOTH SIDES...

Here's where we left David after his sin with Bathsheba (*RECAP*): **2 Samuel 12:13**, the prophet Nathan tells David on God's behalf, **“God has put away your sin; you shall not die.”** Yet, Nathan also tells him these 3 things:

- Vs. 10, **“the sword shall never depart from your house.”**
- Vs. 11, **“Your wives will be unfaithful to you.”**
- Vs. 14, **“The son born to you from this affair will die.”**

The next 5 chapters show you how all that plays out. Before chapter 12 is over, David's newborn son is dead and David experiences a pain like nothing he's ever known. I've watched some of you in this church deal with the loss of a newborn child and I know that it is some of the deepest pain on earth. David goes through that.

Then in the next 5 chapters you are going to see David's family turn into a Jerry Springer show. Some of you are probably going to find some comfort in that:

- How many of you over Christmas (while you spent time with your family) thought, "My family is just not normal." Raise your hand. **The rest of you without your hands raised: "Denial ain't just a river in Egypt."**
- You probably thought we invented dysfunctional families, didn't you? Here: let me describe in a few words what happens in David's family in these chapters: adultery; murder; incest; sexual harassment; sexual abuse; rape; substance abuse; one brother murders another one; stepmoms leverage their kids against one another; David refuses to speak to one of his sons for 2 years and another for 5; one of David's sons steals his Dad's house and sleeps with a few of his stepmom; vicious infighting over the family inheritance and more murder.
- **DAVID A SMALL GROUP, DON'T HE?**
- I feel like David can probably compete with the best of you in here.
- On a serious note... the result was that David became very acquainted with relational pain. As a pastor I have seen that there is no pain quite as severe as relational pain. There are certain kinds of pain can bring people together...
  - But when you stand in a divorce court and all you can think about is when you stood before a pastor beginning your marriage and you wonder what went wrong, that's a different kind of pain.
  - When you go another year and your kid won't speak to you, that's a different kind of pain than a broken bone.
- There's no pain as great and acute as relational pain.
- And this story shows you that in all of its rawness, and at the same time gives you hope by showing you how God can weave it for good.

These 5 chapters are way too much to read, so I'm just going to walk you through and summarize most of it, but if you have your Bible... you can just follow along with these chapters because I will be referring to verses throughout.

**2 Samuel 13:** David's 1<sup>st</sup> born son develops a perverse crush on his stepsister Tamar, and wants her so bad he can't even eat. (We actually looked at this story in detail last year on Sept 19 but let me just cover it really quickly).

- Amnon hatches a plot where he gets Tamar alone and rapes her. And the chapter says that after he'd raped her **(13:15) "he hated her so that the hate with which he hated her was more intense than the love with which he had loved her."**
- So, after he rapes her, he says, **13:17, "Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the door after her."** *This woman.*
  - *Do you remember that when David was having his affair with Bathsheba he said that "who is that woman? She's very beautiful, go get her for me," and his servants said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of so and so and the wife of so and so..." in other words, she has a name; she is someone's daughter; someone's mother; someone's wife... but David didn't think of her that way; he thought of her only as an object for his pleasure.*
  - **See what's happening? Amnon, David's son, is repeating David's sin. The sin sown by the father is harvested in the child.**
- And the other question in this story is—**Where is David in all of this?** He is totally disconnected. I mean, he's around... he actually helps set up the encounter between Amnon and Tamar... but he is totally **disconnected and clueless** as to what is happening in the life of his children. And after she's raped, he finds out about it, and does nothing. **Vs. 21** says he was angry about the situation, but he never confronted Amnon or dealt with the situation.

- She even put confidence in her daddy's sense of justice (vs. 13)... she says, "My daddy is a just man, a brave man. He'll do the right thing. My dad is the one who faced Goliath. He'll protect me." But the man of courage who had stood up to Goliath did nothing for his little girl.
- **Why?**

Well, Absalom, who is Tamar's full brother (gets kind of complex when you have multiple wives, which is why we encourage you not to do it), watches all of this. He can't believe what has happened to his sister and that nobody, especially David, is doing anything about it.

- (And we know, by the way, that Absalom really loved his sister, because it says he let her live in his house after the rape and later we find out he even named one of his daughters "Tamar" in her memory...)
- ...but because his dad does nothing he starts to plot his own revenge against Amnon.
- **You have to wonder the disappointment that Absalom felt toward his dad during all of this.** I'm sure his daddy had been his hero. He and his friends had probably played 'David and Goliath' when they were little boys... some of you dads tell your sons exaggerated stories about how good you were at sports in high school... David was like, "I killed a 9 foot giant when I was 15 with a rock." Absalom was like, "Is that true, Dad?" "Yeah, it's right here in the Bible: Look."
  - *His daddy was the giant slayer... the hero of Israel. But where is that David now*, and why hasn't he come to the protection of his family?

Well... again, Absalom begins a 2 year scheme to take vengeance on Amnon. **13:28** says that eventually Absalom got Amnon away from the palace, got him drunk and then murders him.

- Now, again, what does that sound like? **Getting someone drunk and then murdering them?** You see what the writer is showing you? David's sin is being replicated in the life of his sons.

- The sin sown by the father is harvested in the son.

So, after Absalom murders Amnon, he flees for his life. 3 years. David knows where he is, but never once goes after him or even sends word to him. **Eventually Joab, who was the captain of David's army, comes to David and says, "Let me bring your son back."** David finally consents and Joab brings Absalom back.

**14:24** Absalom comes back into Jerusalem, comes to the palace, and **David makes one of the biggest mistakes, I believe, of his life.** He refuses to see Absalom. He says, "He must go to his own house; he must not see my face." And he refuses to speak to him for 2 more years.

Here's Absalom... He's done wrong, to be sure. But he has been confused:

- He acted in love for his sister. His dad had done nothing.
- He needs a dad to talk to him, to say, "Let's talk about what you did, and why you did it, and the pain in your heart."
- He needs a dad to embrace him, and to listen... but instead he is greeted only by the message David doesn't want to see his face.
- And Absalom goes to his own house and David refuses to see him for 2 years.
- *You feeling better about your family yet?*

**Men, LISTEN... our great temptation, as men, is not to outright wickedness; but to apathy.** This goes back all the way, farther than David, to the Garden of Eden. God had made the man to be the spiritual leader... He had created man in the Garden with a job and a relationship with the woman, and when God brought Eve into his life he was to protect her, provide for her, lead her spiritually, and lay down his life for her.

- He utterly failed... it says that the snake came to the woman to tempt her with the forbidden fruit; but what is interesting is that the **way the Hebrew is written** it shows you that while

the snake is tempting the woman the man is standing right there. He's not like, you know, off somewhere doing something important, he's standing there letting her eat of the forbidden fruit... because he is thinking, **"God has said when we eat of it, we will surely die... I wonder if that's true?"** I'll let my wife take a test bite, and see what happens to her." She does, and doesn't die, so then Adam takes a bite.

- Men, we weren't the first ones to eat of the forbidden fruit, but our passivity created the situation.
- That's why when God comes looking for them after the situation, the Bible says, **Genesis 3:9**, that God called out for the man, not the woman, but just to the man, **"Adam, where are you?"** Where are you? In other words, "Where were you?"
  - **Let me tell you how all that should have gone down. It should have been,** "Uhh... excuse me, Mr. Snake. What you doing talking to my wife, you **slithering Satanic slimebag.**" We ain't eating of the forbidden tree; we are eating of the tree of life." Human history would have been so much different.
  - Men, our 1<sup>st</sup> sin was not one of **commission, but omission.** The world got screwed up not because we did something bad, but because we did nothing at all. The original sin was an abdication of spiritual leadership.
- **And we just keep repeating the sin. That's what David did. It happens today.**
- **Why are men so absent in the church?** Why do women make up more than 60% of the people who come to church?
- I read earlier that in overseas missions, in places where the work is really dangerous, women volunteers outnumber the men 3 to 1.
  - Girls are like, "People without the Gospel? People dying? **I'll go.**" Guys are like, "What's on ESPN tonight?"
- Why are men so absent in their parenting?

- Most men are not the leaders in the rearing of their children. They are not leading in their discipleship or their discipline. They turn that stuff all over to their wives.
- No, no. LISTEN. That's my most important job. It's more important than what I do here. **You guys could always find another pastor; my kids can only ever have one daddy.**
- Reading a book right now called ***Gospel-Powered Parenting...*** He points out that every verse written on parenting is written to guys! **Guys, do you lead in parenting?** Do you lead in discipling and disciplining? If not, then your family might be headed down the same path as David's was, I don't care how good your wife is at being a mother.

### **Now, IT'S DIFFERENT AT OUR CHURCH...**

Well, **14:29**, throughout these 2 years, Absalom is sending messages to David through Joab, who is now like David's Mancretary, requesting an audience with his dad but Joab won't return his phone calls because he knows that David doesn't want to see Absalom.

**So 14:30**, Absalom sets Joab's fields on fire... which kind of makes me laugh. (I like Absalom.) What's happening? **Any child psychologist will tell you. He was trying to get David's attention.** Child starts acting up; your daughter starts dressing like a prostitute; burying himself in his work; a lot of times it is to try and get his daddy's attention. Men, for a lot of you, that is happening now. Your kids are setting fields on fire. Better wake up.<sup>1</sup>

Well, eventually, David allows Absalom back into his presence, but things still aren't right. There is never really any conversation about what happened. **They just did like what some of your families do. Just gloss over and move on.**

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<sup>1</sup> I owe that insight to John Ortberg in his message at Willow Creek on this passage.

**And Absalom begins to plot against his father, to take the kingdom from him.** (*This happens a lot in father/son relationships...* because of his disappointment in David, his deep love and admiration for David turns into hatred.

Now, a few things about Absalom.

- First of all: Chapter 14 tells us that he is tall and good looking. Vs. 29 says he had beautiful, long hair. Chapter 14 tells us that his hair weighed 5 lbs.<sup>2</sup> Archaeologists have uncovered a picture of him. **FABIO**. He was the FABIO of the ancient world.
- He commanded attention when he walked in the room... just like David used to.
- Chapter 15, He started standing outside of his father's palace and when people would bring their cases to the king Absalom would put his arm around them and say, "Yeah, you know you've got a real issue there. I feel your pain. **But unfortunately you can't get to the king... he's untouchable. He's probably out on his balcony again, if you know what I mean...** You should go home and check on your wife. *Man, if I were judge of Israel, though, I would make sure you got justice.*
- **Verse 5 of chapter 15** says that when people would see Absalom they would **bow down** because he was the king's son but he would pick them up and hug them and say, "Brother, don't bow down to me. We're the same, me and you."
- **15:6** says **"So Absalom stole the hearts of all Israel."**

And then, when the time was right, he staged his coup... drove David out of the palace.

**And then, as a show of power,** he set up a pavilion on the roof and slept with some of David's wives that had been left at the palace. Which, is not like an X-rated movie as much as it is a public

humiliation of David to let everyone know he had stolen his daddy's kingdom.

**Now, don't miss what is happening. Absalom steals everything a man has and sleeps with his wives on the roof.** See what is happening? Absalom is just repeating his daddy's sin. The sin sown by the father is harvested in the son. In fact, in a little irony, he is doing it in the very place from which David had hatched his plan with Bathsheba.

Well, **chapter 15 verse 30** says that **David fled from Absalom up the Mount of Olives**, weeping as he went. He's lost his kingdom, his family, and now he's running away weeping... Again, where is the guy who stood up to Goliath with such confidence in God?

There is another interesting scene that takes place next. Chapter 16 says that as David is fleeing, a guy named Shimei, who was son of Saul... **(16:5-6)** **"...as he walked on the road beside David he cursed at him continually. And he pelted David with stones... see? The Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See? Your evil is on you, you man of blood."**

One of David's guards said, vs. 9, **"David, let me shut this dead dog up. I'm going to go over and take off his head."** (That was the **Jack Bauer** of the group).

And David said, **(Vs. 10)**, **"Leave him alone. Maybe he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, 'Curse David.'**"<sup>13</sup> So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and pelted him with stones and flung dust at him." Which is a little funny. David walking along the road weeping and there's a guy who stays right beside him, like a scene out of Monty Python, going, "David, you worthless piece of trash. When danger reared its ugly head, King David tucked his tail and fled, King David... David, if you were any stupider, you'd have to

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Samuel 14:26

be watered twice a week...” and all the while flinging dust in the air in front of him.

- I used to think that what David did here, in saying, “Let him insult me because maybe God is insulting me through him” was noble. And there was certainly a nobility in recognizing that God has sovereign in this whole thing and David needed to have his focus on responding to God and not to Shimei, but there’s at least one thing in here that is just wrong. He says, vs. 10, “Maybe God has spoken curses through Shimei.” **What about Psalm 51?** God had promised blessing, not cursing, to David. **God had told David (2 Sam 7)** he was given an eternal kingdom which could never be taken away; he had put away David’s sin and **washed him with hyssop and made him whiter than snow.**
- In this chapter, David doesn’t quite believe that any more, or at least he’s not living in the full awareness of it. That truth has not saturated his soul. He’s living with a guilt complex and a sense of condemnation. **He’s lost touch with the Gospel.**
- **In fact, I’m going to make a case to you at the end that David’s problem throughout these chapters is he is not living in the new reality and hope of the Gospel.** The Gospel has not completely transformed either how he sees himself or how he relates to his sons.

*We’ll come back to that. First, let’s finish this story.*

Eventually, the tide turns and David is able to muster enough his army to take back his kingdom. Absalom and his followers are driven out into the wilderness. The army chases after them, but David gives explicit instructions, **18:5 “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.”**

- Well, as Absalom is fleeing through the forest, his horse goes under a heavy brush and his **5 lb hairdo gets tangled up and he is literally left suspended in the air** (which is almost funny if it weren’t so tragic, he’s hanging up like a piñata swinging by his Patrick Swayze hairdo).

- David’s men quickly surround him. One of the guys says, “David said not to hurt him.”
- Joab says, “Nonsense.” (He’s still probably ticked off about Absalom setting his fields on fire, and) he knows that Absalom is likely to just do this all again if he goes free, **so he gets 3 javelins and (vs. 14) thrusts them through Absalom’s heart.**

Meanwhile, people are bringing word back to David about the battle (THEIR VERSION OF TWITTER) and to every single one of them David asks, “*Is my son Absalom safe?*” And finally a runner named **Ahimaaz** comes with the news that the battle is won but Absalom is dead, but he can’t bring himself to tell David. So, another runner comes and says, “May all the enemies of my lord the king be like that young man.”

The next verse is one of the saddest, most pitiful scenes in all the OT, to me:

**<sup>33</sup> And the king was shaken and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept.**

- Shaken: the crushing realization of all that has happened pressing down on him. **You know, it’s one of those moments of awareness when someone dies.**
  - Thinking about Absalom playing on the floor in front of him when he was a 3 year old begging him to tell him again about the time he beat Goliath; thinking about showing him how to use a slingshot
- **Shaken, thinking about all the bad decisions and missed opportunities and things he’ll never be able to tell Absalom.**

And then he calls Absalom something he’s never called him in this story: (vs. 33) **And as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom!”** That is the first time, in all these chapters, that David has ever used the word, “son” for Absalom. Up until now he’s only been “the young man.” What the writer is showing you is that

for the 1<sup>st</sup> time David is feeling the emotion of a daddy. And it's too late.

**Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"**

- *It is almost impossible to represent the intensity of emotion in that verse. I told you last week that the repetition of a phrase in Hebrew means an intensity of emotion (THEIR VERSION OF ALL CAPS). Against, you, you have I sinned... Here David says "my son" 5x.*

And so ends the tragic story of David and his son Absalom.

*Now, one of the questions to ask when you read a biblical story is why it's in there. Why is this story included? Well, clearly, it's there to show us the consequences of sin. And yes, it's there to show you men that you must be proactive in your families.*

**But before you can get to that, at least in a helpful way, you have to see that it has a much more primal purpose... and that is to show you that David is not the king we are searching for. The King we need, the Father we need, is like David in some ways but is so much more than David; a King and a Father who would prevail where David failed.**

You see, the reality is that all of us are like Absalom. We have all rebelled against God, stolen God's kingdom for ourselves, and publicly humiliated him on the rooftops of our lives.

**But here's the difference:**

1. **Absalom was driven to rebellion because of David's failures;** we did that to God even after He had been the perfect Father to us.
2. And Jesus showed us the love that David failed to show Absalom. Remember—when Absalom came home, David refused to even meet him at the gate and said 'I don't even want to see your face.' Do you remember Jesus told a story

about a son who had sinned and stolen from his Father and shamed him and do you remember what that Father did when that son came home? He ran... embraced. The son can't even get out an apology before the Father is pouring out forgiveness onto him.

3. And then it said that David fled from his son *up* the Mount of Olives *away from* Jerusalem and away from danger; Jesus ran to us, his estranged sons and daughters, *down* the Mount of Olives *into* Jerusalem and *into* danger.
4. At the end, David could not and did not save Absalom's life. **When Absalom died David said, "Oh my son, Absalom; my son, my son, my son. I wish I could have died in your place." You should hear in those words Jesus' cry for you.** On the way to the cross, Jesus said (Matthew 23:37), "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how many times I wanted to gather you to myself.*" Put your name in the place of Jerusalem...
  - And then, on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."
  - He was saying of you, and me, "My son, My son." Because God so loved the world...
- **David wanted to die in Absalom's place, but he couldn't,** (at least he couldn't do that and save the kingdom.) Jesus **could die in our place,** and did. **Jesus did for us, His sons and daughters, what David could not do for his own.** And so Absalom died hanging in a tree with a spear for his rebellion thrust through his heart; Jesus died in a tree with a spear for our rebellion through his.
- **Jesus is the true and better David. He is the real King; the ultimate Father, and that's because He's not just the King, He is the Redeemer and Savior. And so in Him is where the SEARCH FOR A KING ENDS.**

**Now, what is remarkable about all of that is that SEEING THAT about Jesus is what gives you the ability to have hope in the painful consequences of your sin and to break the cycle of sin in your family.**

**Even though David had consequences for his sin, God still had a plan for David.** He still had promised to give him an eternal kingdom and to use his life for good. Psalm 23, “Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.” That verse has not stopped being true. God has a plan for good in David’s life; God still uses David’s family to bring the Messiah to earth.

Some of you are dealing with the consequences of our sin. In one sense, we all are. You see, the world is under a general curse because of our sin and because of that general curse people get hurt, they get sick, and they die.

Some of you are suffering from the direct consequences of your sin. A broken marriage; an estranged son or daughter; a body that is messed up because of drugs; you lost your job.

But, you see, Jesus took the ultimate penalty for that sin, and because of that He took the sting out of it. The word given to David is given to you. You will not die; God goodness and mercy will follow you all the days of your life (Psalm 23:6) working in all things (Ephesians 1:9) for your good (Romans 8:28).

Your sin is not the final word over you. **You were divorced**; that is not the final word. Your identity is not “a divorced person.” You are a child of God. **You lost your virginity**; you got **fired from your job** for stealing; you had a problem with your **temper and abused** your child; but in Christ you are not an **adulterer, a thief, or an abuser**; In Christ you have new identity, a new reality. Those previous words about you were, in one sense, true—because you had committed adultery, and stole and abused; but God speaks a true and louder word over you in the Gospel. **The adulterer; the liar; and the abuser died with Christ; the new you, the real you, has been raised together with Christ to a new life.**

Because Jesus cried, “It is finished!” your new life can begin.<sup>3</sup>

Some of you are feel abandoned relationship (spouse, child, parent). But you are not abandoned ultimately. Jesus experienced ultimate relational pain, relational abandonment. He was forsaken by the Father so you would never, not even in your darkest hour, have to face ultimate abandonment. And so, I know, that even in my darkest hour, when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I can fear no evil, for THOU art with me.

And yes, your sins from the past have consequences, painful consequences, and God doesn’t always take all those away. The broken bone and black eye will still hurt. But God has taken the ultimate penalty out of our sin, and has stripped sin of its sting, so that God even works redemptively now through your painful consequences for your good and for His plan.

***Listen. You’ll find this hard to believe: He can, and will, use even the painful, self-inflicted consequences of your sin for His kingdom and your good.***

- **Illus. Mesopotamian pot.** He can reweave beauty out of disaster. More value after broken than before.
- **Romans 8:28, “All things work together for them that love God, who are called according to His purpose.”** “All things.” Does all mean the injustices inflicted on you by others? Does it include the bad decisions you made? The Greek word for all means literally “all” (that’s why you need me, to explain to you stuff like that).

**The tragedy is that had David really lived with the awareness of all of this, he probably could have saved his family a lot of heartache.**

If David had just recognized the goodness of God toward him and grasped God’s forgiveness of Him and modeled his own fatherhood

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<sup>3</sup> Trevin Wax. <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2011/02/04/blessed-exchange/>

after the fatherhood of God... things might have been so much different. He would have been proactive and present in his kids' lives; not apathetic and absent.

Maybe, just maybe, the reason he never had the courage to confront his own sons in their sin is because he felt like he had lost his moral authority. I mean, he was the adulterer. That's what that story of Shimei may show you... David hears Shimei's curses and says, "Maybe God has told him to curse me."

God had spoken forgiveness and healing to David. David was not perfect, he was a sinner, but he had tasted of God's grace and goodness. **I would say that had he grasped that it would have given him an even greater authority to speak.**

- Some of you feel like because you sin, and your kids know it, you can't speak to them. But if you have repented and grasped the Gospel, you can say, "Listen, I'm not perfect. You know that. I'm not telling you to be just like me. In many ways you, my child, need to forgive me. But let me tell you how good God is and what God did for me." I would suggest to you that God's grace gives you a greater authority in your kids' lives than your perfection does, because you are able to show them you are just like them and the grace and salvation you have found is what they can access to.
- With my kids, I make it a point to admit my sin to them, regularly, and talk about God's grace to me... (WHEN MY KIDS WERE YOUNG I THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO ARGUE WITH MY WIFE IN FRONT OF THEM) because what I most want for them is not for them to try and emulate me but to hope in the One I've learned to hope in.
- The point: **God's grace can free you from the paralysis of guilt.**
- ***If anything, it makes it even easier you to take the focus off of you and put it onto God where it belongs.***

**Finally, embracing what God has remade you in the Gospel will help you break the cycle of sin.** Some of you were abused as kids... you are starting to abuse your own children. Your parents were divorced; you're headed there too. Some of you have been treated unfairly, and now you treat others unfairly. Some of you women have been neglected by your husband, and your life is a passive aggressive attempt to pay him back. All you are doing is just repeating the sins of others. It's a way of assuaging your own pain. **It's what Absalom did. Didn't end well.**

***You don't have to do that. There is a better way.*** By embracing God's grace and His new plan for you, you can break that cycle of generational sin. **He's got a good plan that trumps everything bad others have done to you.** His sovereign grace can take even the bad decisions of others (*and even your own bad decisions*) and use them for good. But you have to access that power by faith. When you believe, God starts to work redemptively.

*"He breaks the power of cancelled sin, he sets the prisoner free. His blood can make the foulest clean, his blood availed for me."*

Breaks the power of cancelled sin: Sin was cancelled by the cross, but it still hold power over you. You have to embrace your new identity and future in Christ. The cross forgives your past; the resurrection recreates your future.

Get out of the grave and get on with what God has for you in the future.

The Gospel not only saves you for your past, and rescues you in the future, it also delivers you in the present by giving you the power of new life. But you must believe.

**Closing reflection:** I want to give you time now to do what David never did. *What if it's true, what the Gospel says? All sin is forgiven...*

*Christ's record is yours... power of resurrection at work in you to recreate your life.*

*The Gospel for believers is: Jesus died for all your sin and gives you power of new life.*

*The Gospel for unbelievers is: Jesus died for all your sin and gives you power of new life.*

Christian growth is not moving beyond the Gospel, but deeper into the Gospel.

# Bullpen:

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Yes, I realize your sinful actions and the actions of others have spoken destruction over your life. That is true. God speaks a louder word. I love this quote by Martin Luther,

Others (or my own sin) might tell me I am a failure, an idiot, a clown, evil, incompetent, vicious, dangerous, pathetic etc., and these words are not just descriptive: they have a certain power to make me these things, in the eyes of others and even in my own eyes, as self-doubt creeps in and the Devil whispers in my ear... But God's word speaks louder, and his word is more powerful. You may call me a liar, and you speak truth, for I have lied; but if God declares me righteous, then my lies and your insult are not the final word, nor the most powerful word.

I have peace in my soul because God's word is real reality. That's why I need to read the Bible each day, to hear the word preached each week, to come to God in prayer, and to hear words of grace from other brothers and sisters as I seek to speak the same to them. Only as God speaks his word to me, and as I hear that word in faith, is my reality transformed and do the insults of others, of my own sinful nature, and of the evil one himself, cease to constitute my reality. The words of my enemies, external and internal, might be powerful for a moment, like a firework exploding against the night sky; but the Word of the Lord is stronger, brighter, and lasts forever.

- Men, our temptation is not wickedness, it is to do nothing.
- David is a lot like Adam

Absalom rebels... Sleeps with his wives in broad daylight. Public shame. Absalom has repeated his daddy's sin.

- Our sins are replicated in our children

Absalom dies, "Oh, my son Absalom". Here is where you see the hope. God can break the cycle of sin, take the sting out of sin

Jesus can do what David never could:

- David's inability to save: David wishes he could be the one to take the place of Absalom: he cannot; and in order for the kingdom to prosper, Absalom had to die. We hear in those words "Oh my son Absalom" Jesus words for us. He did die for us. Relational pain.
- God still has a good plan.

David could have embraced it sooner and started the healing process.

That's what you can do today.

- You can repent of your sin, ask forgiveness, and seek healing
- You can break the cycle!

A common theme of David's life is that he loves his enemies. Gospel-saturated people do that. Embracing the Gospel gives you 3 things:

- Hope: dysfunction is not ultimate. God has a greater plan.
- Healing: the ability to work for it, since the cycle can be broken.
- Compassion: the ability to love and forgive others. They are you.

Resources:

- <sup>10</sup> Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house... , because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.' " <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die."

- Ortberg cassette
- Eugene Peterson