

11 – “Self-Destruction” // *The Search for a King* // 2 Samuel 11:1-27

Let me look at you for a moment... couldn't hardly remember what you look like. My name is J.D. and I used to go to church here...

Announcement for college

Today we come to something in the life of David that is relevant, I think, for all of you, and that is sexual sin. You're going to see David make a devastatingly bad decision that just about ruins his family and his kingdom.

- Sexual sin has brought down some of the strongest and best of people...
 - I mean, just think about who David was for a minute... David was the **shepherd boy** that God took from the pasture and made king. He'd learned to trust God by **fighting a lion** and bear with his bare hands. He was the one who charged out to face **Goliath** when nobody else would; he lived a life of **such trust in God that he refused to take vengeance** on Saul, even when we would have said he had every right to.
 - Throughout his reign he had resisted every opportunity to **draw attention to himself** or become **bigger in his own eyes** than he should be. He was **generous**. He wrote the most **beautiful Christian** songs... songs we still sing in the church today. He was called a “man after God's own heart.”
- Yet, here he's about to do something so bad, so deceptive and so twisted... that before it's all over, he will have conceived a child with a woman who was not his wife, killed her husband, and then covered it all up.

Sexual sin is so powerful and so destructive; yet so easy to access. Sometimes it feels like an urge you just can't say 'no' to...

- ...and there's usually more involved in it than just physical urges. There are deep soul elements involved.
- And I'm not just talking about women when I say that... **Guys crave the emotional and psychological** elements of sex. Sex gives a lot of guys a sense of power, or self-worth
 - They say that guys go through 3 stages in their lives in how they establish their self-worth... in high school athletic ability; sexual prowess; earning potential;
 - For guys, sometimes sexual pleasure is an escape, a retreat from stress to a place of pleasure we feel like we can control.
 - So, for all of us, sex is about more than just physical urge.
- Sex promises so much to us. It says, “If you can just find me (a good version of me) I can make you so happy; if you miss me, you'll always be miserable.”
- In fact, I'd say that this is what more people try to substitute for God than anything else.

Now, one quick rejoinder. Some people think the whole idea of talking about sex in church is inappropriate. I respect your opinion, and especially your responsibility to know when your kids can handle it, but to be truthful, I think that is crazy...

- Average age when a kid looks at pornography now is 11. Sex dominates the airwaves and the television screen.
- *Listen, it's not like it was when you were a kid.* When some of you were a kid, the edgy band of the day, the Beatles, sang, “I want to hold your hand.” Today, teeny bopper singers like Christina Aguilera sing “Sex for Breakfast;” Brittany Spears sings “Give me more,” and Katy Perry sings “I kissed a girl and I liked it.”
- The world talks about it constantly, and I think that the best place to counteract the lies our culture spews about it is in the church.

- But, I do understand if some of you parents have younger kids with you and you may not think this is appropriate for them... at all of our campuses, we'd have stuff

2 Samuel 11:1–27 (ESV) ¹ *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, out to battle... But David remained at Jerusalem.*

- Two things happening here the author is trying to show you that are important, and I'd encourage you to write those down: **(1) David was blessed; (2) David was disengaged**

(1) David was blessed

- Things are going really well for David. The kingdom is established; everyone loves him; if you read chapter 10 you see that he had just won a slew of battles. His stock is pretty high; he's got a lot to be proud of.
- Did you know there are 2 times sexual sin is really appealing to you? **The first is a time of great stress**—and sex is like a savior; an escape; it's a place you feel like you can retreat to. **The second is a time of great blessing.**
- Now, you say, "I get the stress one, but why in a time of blessing?" **Because when things are going well for you, you tend to forget how dependent you are on God.** And when you forget how dependent you are on God, you tend to think, even subconsciously, that you can go out on your own and you're not as worried about breaking the rules.
 - For example, my youngest daughter is 3 and so she can't really swim yet... but she loves to get in the pool so when she does she clings to me. My 2nd daughter, who is 5, actually can swim decently well, but she's also the clumsiest human being on the planet, and her meager ability gives her a false confidence that she can do anything. **So, she's the one I worry about... because she will often get herself in trouble, because she has confidence beyond her capabilities.** When you are weak, humble, you know to cling closely to God. when you're flat

on your back you look to God. When you are walking upright is when you forget how much you need him and fail to cling tightly to him.

- That's why the Bible says... *"Let him who stands take heed lest he fall."* You don't know how close to disaster you just might be.
- **(Prov 30:5-6; Give me neither...)**

(2) David was disengaged

- Vs. 1 we see that he sent Joab ought to fight the battle, he didn't go himself. David the warrior has become David the vacationer, and his lack of engagement makes him susceptible to cheap thrills.
- **Write this down:** **The way to successfully resist the enticements of this world is to be busy with a higher purpose.**
- For a lot of people, their lives are so empty, so pointless, that the excitement of sex promises a fulfillment they desperately crave. That's why you're so driven by it. ***It's not a physical lust thing; it's a miserable soul thing.***
- That means the only way you can really break the power of sex over you is to be involved in something higher... to be more excited about God and His plan for you than you are enticed by the lusts of the flesh.
- Men, you won't be controlled by sex when you are actively engaged as the spiritual leader in your family.
 - That's why some of you are so susceptible. You're just bored. You're not living the life of courage and ministry God has designed you to live. You're not the spiritual leader on your family; you're sitting on the sidelines, disengaged from the battle.
 - It's a lot more difficult to take your pants off when you're in a battle than it is when you're lounging around on the couch. Ever try that? **Try to take off your pants in the middle of a rugby match.** Let that be a metaphor unto you.

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. (Hebrew word is "tobe", which means literally "fine." The Bible doesn't usually rate people. So, the fact that it notes that Bathsheba was *fine*—not just fine but *very fine*... means that she smack yo momma hot)

Write this down: **(3) David was in a place where he could be tempted.**

- He's walking on the roof... He's doing the OT version of browsing the internet alone, late at night. He points, clicks. Clicks again... then He dwells. And his feelings start to overpower him. And so he invites her up for drinks. One thing leads to another. And then he sleeps with her.
- **Write this down, too: It is easier to avoid temptation than it is to resist sin.**

I want to develop that, but first, let me show you Bathsheba's role in all of this.

- Bathsheba, I believe, is not entirely innocent in this matter. By any means. First, she doesn't make any kind of protest to David when he sends for her, and the writer of Samuel makes a note in other places where a woman protests sexual advances. The implication is that this is fully consensual. She's a little star-struck with David.
- In fact, I want to go out on a limb here and say that I think she intended for David to see her naked.
 - David's balcony is in eyeshot of where she bathes. Ladies, if the President of the USA lived right behind you, do you think you'd know? Yes. There's no way she just doesn't realize it.
 - Now, was she trying to seduce him? Probably not, maybe she just enjoyed the attention... At the very least she was not being careful about what David could see.

- I think this gives you a great picture of the differences between men and women and how both of them get into trouble with sex.
- **David gets caught up in sin because he doesn't keep himself away from temptation; Bathsheba gets caught up in sin because she wants to be noticed.**
- So, the application for guys: **stay away from temptation... It is easier to avoid temptation...** like I've told you the quote by Martin Luther, "If your head is made of butter, stay away from the fire."
 - If you can't not look at porn when you go on business trips, ask them to turn off the TV in your hotel room before you ever get there. Put a filter on your internet that tells your wife what sites you've been looking at. Don't play Russian Roulette with your family. **It is easier to avoid temptation than it is to resist sin. (Guys: on our Equip blog on our website we give you some practical steps. check them out, and put them into practice.)**
- For girls, the application is quit wanting your body to be noticed, or at least be careful about how easy you are making it for your body to be noticed...
 - (OK, here's where the hate-mail starts... I wish I could convince some of you girls to think a little bit when you put some clothes on. I'm glad this is coming up in the winter because nobody here is going feel self-conscious... if this subject comes up in the summer people start looking around going "He's talking about hers." If you're 25 or younger... **And yes, I got your emails last time. And I'm sorry I didn't respond.** That's what I'm doing right now.)
 - I feel like a lot of girls have to be naïve. I know it's like you're not directly trying to seduce a guy, because you get all offended when he speaks sexually to you, but it's clear you want your body to be noticed.

- I mean, why else would you have a plunging neckline or write notes for me to read on your rear-end that says “cheer” and spandex-fitting skinny jeans which, I’ve established before are just “ankle length panties.” Here’s something I’d love to say: **tights are not pants. Those are two different classifications of clothing.**
- I know it’s partially our fault when we lust, but maybe you could think about dressing in a way that directs our attention toward God and not your body?
- You say, “Well what do you want me to do—wear denim jumpers and mom-jeans with Bible verses on them?” No, I think my wife dresses stylishly... I just want you to take some precaution in how you dress, knowing what we’re like, and **knowing that when a guy consumed with lust for you he can’t simultaneously be filled with the Holy Spirit of God.**
 - Girls, listen... out of love for your brothers, who are so fragile... you can help them in their relationship with God by how you dress. It’s just compassion for us! **My daughters have a real problem for anything in movies that is scary.** Allie, who is 5, still thinks the *Incredibles* is terrifying. To this day, you can say, “Allie, we’re going to watch the *Incredibles*.” NO!!! Ryah gets freaked out by one of the Veggie Tales episodes... Ryah, come on, it’s a cucumber and a tomato; how scary can it be. But here’s what I know. One wrong scene, and they’re not going to be able to sleep. Now, I love my daughters, so I try and guard what they see.
- Girls, sexually, that guy is fragile. And if he tells you he’s not, he’s lying. So guard him! How you dress can be a real act of love and service for your brothers.
- Yes, girls, I know it’s our fault if we strike the match to light the fire of our lust, but for God’s sake you don’t

have to put twigs at our feet and douse them with gasoline.

- **OK, we still friends?**
- ***It is easier to avoid temptation than to resist sin*, that’s my point.**
 - One more thing. This is about more than porn and dress... You are to guard yourself emotionally. There is a right and wrong way for married men and women to interact with people who are not their spouse.
 - There are emotional needs that are to be fulfilled by your spouse that should not be filled by another person. Married women, if you are pouring out your soul to some old friend on facebook, you are setting him and you up for disaster.
 - ***It is easier to avoid temptation than to resist sin.***

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?”***

- This is really important: The author points out that this is someone’s daughter; someone’s wife; someone’s mother. Why is he doing that?
- Because, you see, sexual sin almost always objectifies someone. They become an object of your pleasure, and you forget that you’d dealing with someone’s life; usually multiple people’s lives. This is someone’s mother; someone’s daughter; someone’s wife, or future wife; you are not just enjoying someone’s body, you are tampering with their soul. You are sabotaging the life of multiple layers of people.
- Same is true for Bathsheba. She wasn’t just having a night of pleasure with the king; she was destroying a man, his family, and doing great damage to God’s kingdom.
- Listen, God’s rules are not arbitrary! People act like God invented sex and was then like, “Wow, they really enjoy that. Better rein that back in. ***Sex is a unity of bodies that was to be accompanied by unity in everything else.*** So that when the bodies become one in sex, there is also a oneness of your

hearts in a lifelong commitment; a oneness of your futures; your banking accounts

- Sex done that way is life-giving. Sex outside of marriage; the uniting of bodies apart from the uniting of the rest of you, is dis-integrating. It tears apart the person. DIS-INTEGRATING. Tears apart the integrity of the person.

⁴ So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.)

- That means she had kept up her religious observances.
- The hypocrisy here... the author points out she's purified herself from uncleanness... Yeah, because adultery is not unclean to God at all?
- Isn't it amazing how many of us can be involved in sin throughout the week and then just show up in church like that's what really matters to God? How many of people are here this weekend after having walked in rebellion to him all week?
 - College students, what if I told you that God is more concerned with what you did last night than the fact that you're here this weekend?
- God doesn't want your prayers and shows of religion; if you're not surrendered to him, that stuff does nothing but anger him further, because you are just mocking Him. He wants repentance.

Then she returned to her house.⁵ And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

Now starts a pretty complicated, ingenious cover-up. David sends word to Joab and says, "Have Uriah come home. I'd like for him to brief me on the war." He gets back, Uriah starts explaining what is happening, and David is like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's great. Why don't you go on home, get a good night's sleep... are you married Uriah? Oh really, well, I'm sure your wife misses you, so go on down to

your house..." David is of course thinking that Uriah hasn't seen his wife in a while, and well, we've already established that she's really pretty; so David gives him a Hebrew version of an aphrodisiac and sends him to a house thinking he and Bathsheba will get it on, and then everyone will assume the baby is his.

But here's where the real drama start. Uriah refuses to go home. He says in vs. 11, "All my brother soldiers are sleeping in tents in the midst of battle, and the ark of God is out there, too, it's just not right that I go home, lounge around, and sleep with my wife." So he sleeps in a big room with all the palace guards tomorrow night. Imagine how convicting that was for David.

Well, so then David hatches plan-B. He invites Uriah up for dinner the next night, and just gets him hammered, thinking, "Drunk guys lose their nobility." **So, Uriah, who is noble, yes, but also loves a good Corona, gets hammered,** but as he's going home he passes out in his front yard and spends the night there... and everyone sees that.

So, David starts plan-C. By this time he's desperate. He writes a note to Joab that says, "Put Uriah in the very front of the battle. And when you charge the line, have everyone pull back from him and leave him out there alone, so that he dies." And he seals it up and gives it to Uriah and has him carry it back to the battle.

Uriah carries his own death warrant and gives it to Joab, who follows the instructions, and Uriah is killed.

- This is David, the loyal servant who was a man after God's own heart.
- Let me tell you something very important: Unconfessed sin changes you. **Everybody sins. People who cover it up destroy themselves.**
- The question is not "do you sin?" but what do you do after you sin? **Everybody sins.** What you do after you sin makes the difference between life and death.

Well, after Uriah dies, David takes Bathsheba for his wife and takes her into his house. She bears a son, everybody assumes that she got pregnant on her honeymoon, and David brushes this whole thing under the rug. It's all behind us, right?

The chapter ends with these chilling words: ²⁷ **But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.**

And chapter 11 marks a turning point in David's life. His family starts to fall apart. His newborn son dies. Later, his firstborn son will die. Another one of his sons leads a rebellion against him.

5 things I want you to have gleaned from that story:

1. Sin can destroy your life

I am very aware that some of you this weekend are right on the brink of disaster... Randy Alcorn has a book out called *The Purity Principle...* in which he explains that at the beginning of his ministry he and a friend listed out the 25 or so consequences that would come into his life from immorality. It inspired me to make my own list. If I committed adultery:

1. I would bring untold hurt and shame onto my wife, Veronica
2. I would have to endure the loss of her respect and trust, and might possibly lose my entire relationship to her
3. I would shame my mother and father and hers as well.
4. I would seriously damage the confidence of my children Kharis, Allie, Ryah, and Adon, who would probably never understand why I traded them for a thrill.
5. I would cause shame to you, my church family
6. I would give an easy punchline to all the skeptics and atheists in the area who already mock God.
7. I would heap judgment and endless problems on the girl I committed adultery with
8. Most importantly, I would grieve Jesus

9. And I know that one day I will have to look Jesus in the face at the judgment seat and have to give an account for why I did it after all the blessing He has put into my life
10. I would follow in the footsteps of men I know whose immorality forfeited their ministry and humiliated themselves.

All those things would be the result. Can that sin be forgiven? Yes, of course. Can God make all things new? Of course? But sin still causes painful consequences.

You see, maybe, just maybe, some of you are on the brink of this... you are flirting with a woman, or some of you ladies are beginning to delight in the attention of another man. **I wonder if you are here today because of a message I am supposed to give you.** And maybe you need to **go to your spouse** and confess what is happening, and ask for their help... as well as other people around you. I know that will be painful, but, I'm telling you, not as painful as the consequences of not doing something about it.

Pastor friend who fell into adultery...

Maybe it's not sexual sin. Maybe you've been building a **web of lies** to your parents. **Cheating** in school. **Pornography** is forming a vice grip on you. **Unchecked pride** is killing you. A **grudge** you've been holding and it is consuming your heart and will eat you up and destroy your soul.

Sin kills. Puritan John Owen, "Be killing sin, or it will be killing you." One of the 2 things is always happening.

2. You should be actively engaged in God's plan

- That's how you avoid the sins that grow out of boredom.
- Many of you are susceptible to sexual sin because your life has no higher meaning. You've got this big void right in the middle of your life that comes from not being in right relationship to God. So, I can say, 'Don't commit adultery' all I want but it

isn't going to change anything. God is in the wrong place in your life.

- **A. Only a vision for what God wants to do in your will give you a sense of purpose strong enough to free you from the boredom that leads to sin; B. only a vision of what God has done for you in the Gospel will keep you from giving your body away like it's a piece of trash.**
- I want you to get a vision for the great stuff God is doing in you and through you. There are people God wants you to impact. Your children... Your children's children... There are people who the only way they will ever hear about or know God is through you... and you're going to throw it away!
 - You say, "But I don't know what that plan is..." *Well, maybe that's why you're here today, because it is time for you to start discovering that plan and having the kind of life God intends for you to have so you're not driven out of boredom into a life of materialism and sexual sin.*
 - Men, you need to realize that your addiction to pornography is going to keep you from having a great marriage (EVEN YOU GUYS THAT ARE NOT MARRIED—DESTROYING YOUR CAPACITY TO BE INTIMATE WITH A WOMAN),
 - **It's keeping you from being respected by your children; being a respectable leader, and being used by God.** God cannot abide where sexual sin is fantasized about. God's power can't flow through a body that is yielded constantly to sin. You can't charge hell with your pants down around your ankles.
- And for those of you whose sexual sins in the past make you feel worthless... (You see, sexual sin has this vicious cycle. It makes you feel dirty; like 2nd hand goods), and that makes you more likely to give your body away like it's not worth anything b/c you don't think you're worth anything...) I want you to get a vision of the Gospel. I want you to see that Christ has

purchased you with His blood and washed you and remade you in His image.

- Psychologists tell us 3 a healthy person is one who feels clean, special and safe.
- Paul goes through a list of sexual sins in 1 Cor 6: adultery, fornication, homosexuality... and he says to the Corinthian church, "such were some of you... But you were **washed, sanctified, justified**... You are made clean through the washing of Jesus blood; made special, sanctified by His setting you apart for Himself, and secure by being justified.
- **And, listen, I'm not telling you "get a higher self-esteem." That's the last thing I'm telling you...** you need to stop thinking about yourself altogether and instead focus on Jesus—what He has remade you for and the plans He has for you.

Power of God is greater than the damage of sin. Blood of Jesus can make you purer than if you'd never lost your virginity, because our so called purity is an illusion (since we're not pure in heart). Jesus resurrected in a better body than he had to begin with. If you are put in Jesus he can make you more pure and more special and clean than if you had never made those mistakes. He can give you baby skin again. Such is the mystery of God's grace.

3. Flee temptation

- I just can't say this one enough: ***It is easier to avoid temptation than to resist sin.*** It's time for you take this seriously, and get whatever help you need.
 - I thought Dietrich Bonhoeffer perfectly described my own path of temptation: ***"In our members there is a slumbering inclination toward desire which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power, desire seizes mastery of the flesh. All at once, a secret smoldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames. In this moment, God is quite unreal to us. And Satan does not***

here fill us with hatred of God, but with a forgetfulness of God. The lust thus aroused envelopes the mind and the will in deepest darkness. It is here that everything in me rises up against the word of God, therefore the Bible teaches that in times of temptation to our flesh there is one command – flee. Flee youthful lust. Flee worldly temptation. If you're feeling under pressure and on the verge of something – an emotion is dwelling up within you – what does the Bible say? Run. No human being has within them the strength to resist such overpowering emotions." **Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Temptation**

It's easier to avoid temptation... it's why I don't go out with girls! Is that because I can't handle myself? No. It's just the stakes are too high. I don't play Russian Roulette with my family. I don't leave loaded guns around the house, or keep a rabid dog in my house that may or may not bite one of my children.

And now, the most important point...

4. Be captivated by God's beauty

- David was seduced by Bathsheba's beauty because he was not captivated by God's.
- In the next chapter, chapter 12, God says to David, "The problem in all of this is that you despised me." See that? [10] *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.' (2 Samuel 12:10 ESV)*
 - Despised, like "I hate you, God"? David never said that.
 - No. Despised means that he loved the pleasure of Bathsheba more than he loved God, so He was willing to trade in God, trample God's glory in the dust, to get the pleasure of Bathsheba.
 - That's despising God, in the same way that a man with 3 little kids who comes home to his wife and family

and tells them that he is leaving them for his secretary despises his family. It's not that he has started to hate them, but he has despised them in that he didn't love them enough to turn down temptation for them. So he trades them for a relationship with this woman.

- David despised God by being willing to separate from God to get a night of pleasure.
- What that means is that the way you can avoid sin is to increase your delight in God to the point that you love Him more than you do sin.
- **Write this down: You will only really be free from sin when the pain of what you'll lose is greater in your heart than the thrill you'll receive.**
- A lot of people are going about trying to conquer their lust in entirely the wrong way. They think they can overcome their lust by lessening it, or taming it, and bringing it under control. No. **The way to overcome sexual urges is NOT by learning to love them LESS, but by learning to love God MORE.** It's when the passion you feel for God and His plan is greater than the thrill that sin can give you.
 - Here's the example I always use... "off like a lightswitch." In that moment your desire for her is LESS THAN your fear of her father. On one side you have your desire for her... but that is outweighed by your desire for personal survival.
 - You'll overcome sin when the joy of what you have in God outweighs the thrill sin could give you. the joy of having His beauty as a part of your life; gratefulness for your grace. And you say, "I wouldn't give that up for such a small gain."
- You say, 'Great, pastor, well how can I just increase my love for God? I'd love to just press a button and do that...' Great question. You learn to love God by seeing more of His beauty; seeing Him for more of who He is... **Which is why the most important thing in this passage, and every passage of**

Scripture, is that you see how it points you to the beauty of Christ.

- Look at this: Usually it is David that pictures Christ for us, isn't it? David is like Jesus when he's a shepherd, when he's fighting Goliath; when he's forgiving Saul.
- Here, David is not like Jesus. There is another one who is. Uriah. Uriah is innocent; heroic. He dies in absolute loyalty to David. He won't enjoy pleasure at the expense of army. He carries his own death warrant to the battle. Uriah is faithful to the end and because of that dies for David's sin against him.
 - Like Jesus. Jesus was loyal to us. He put our needs above His. He carried His own death warrant to the cross. He was faithful to the end and because of that died for our sins against Him.
 - But there's one crucial difference. Uriah did not know what David had done against him. Jesus did, and did it anyway.
- But even with that, Uriah gives us a picture of the steadfast love of God which God had promised David would never depart from him.
 - Yes, David made a bad mistake, and yes, there would be pretty bad consequences, but God would never depart from David, and God would ultimately take the death penalty for David's sin.
- Seeing this about God is what captivates your heart to the point that you are willing and able to say no to sin.
- **Let me tell you what the Gospel says to your sexual sin:**
 - You and I have made decisions that are not only harmful to our families, but also worthy of our eternal death.
 - But Jesus took the penalty for us. You might have made a devastatingly bad sexual decision, which should ruin your life, but Jesus has taken your penalty

for that... and now He specializes in resurrection and repair. ***That means that even when you make a mistake like David did, God can heal that and even use it for good in your life and the life of others.***

- I know of 2 beautiful stories in our church...
 - You see, right now maybe you feel that discouragement in your soul that comes from sexual sin, and it is pushing you down into despair. That's not God. God calls you upward into hope. In Christ He has given you steadfast, never stopping, never to depart from you kind of love.
 - **Jesus went to the cross so He could erase your past and then was raised from the dead so He could recreate your future.**
 - **The God of the cross can cleanse your past; the God of the resurrection can recreate your future; and believing those two truths fills you with the Holy Spirit and that redefines your future.**
 - He says, "I know what you've done. I took the penalty. And behold, I can make all things new. If any man or woman is in Christ, they are a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come."
 - **Sexual sin is great; God's grace is greater.**

You don't gradually take small steps closer to God. You all at once receive the billion steps He's taken to get close to you in the cross. It's a gift.

Which leads me to the last point:

5. Don't cover up your sin

- **Proverbs 28:13, "Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy."**
- ~~God will give you help, if you ask for it.~~

- We'll get into this next week, but the problem is, like David, the thing that keeps a lot of you from God is fear about what everyone else will think about you if you come clean.
- Your covering up your sin is just eating away at your integrity... and it is isolating you from God and everyone else.
- Here's my question. Think about it. What do you think is more important to your happiness: maintaining an image in everyone's eyes; an image that is not even true; or being known, in reality, by God and others.
- You say, "But how do I know they'll accept me? Maybe when they find out what I've done they'll reject me forever."
 - Well, for God, I know He'll accept you. How do I know? Jesus consistently found Himself in front of people exposed and humiliated in their sin on earth. And to every single one of them, He spoke forgiveness and acceptance. The rule seems to be, "If you'll be honest about your sin, you will find Jesus and His acceptance. If you won't be honest about your sin, you'll lose Jesus."
 - The only thing that separates some of you from God's grace is your stubborn, proud refusal to admit that you need it.
- As for others, you'll probably be surprised how they will forgive you. But you can't go on like you are... Is the life of deception and lies working for you? Give people a chance to know and love you.

Don't cover it up...

Here's where I will close: There are 4 things you should never say about sexual sin:

- "Everybody's doing it"
 - You must answer to God
- "God made me this way, so it's not my fault."

- We all have various temptations that we are susceptible to. We may not have chosen our temptations but we choose how we respond to them.
- "I can't help it. I can't control myself."
 - Yes you can. God gives the strength to obey what He commands. The same God that brought Jesus from the grave can give power to your dead, sin-addicted soul! Believe Him. Trust Him. Reach out and touch the hem of his garment and you might be surprised. I'm not saying it will be easy or all go away overnight, I'm just saying that God helps all who call on Him.
- Lastly, never say: "Tomorrow I'll get this settled..."
 - No. God's voice may not be there tomorrow. Don't harden your heart to what God is saying to you today. "Tomorrow, tomorrow..." that's what Saul said, and tomorrow never came for him.

Repent today. Repent of despising God. He will abundantly pardon; He stands ready to receive you if you'll come! The choice is yours.

PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

- Focus on the beauty of God; let that drive out smaller passions. Paul says it is the kindness of God that leads us to repentance
- Receive God's grace as a free gift. Repent and believe. The Gospel is that Jesus has paid for all your sins and can make all things new if you will repent (acknowledge him as Lord) and believe (receive Him as your Savior)

Bullpen:

- We know they are different.
 - Joke: *There's a store in NYC called The Husband Store. A woman goes in on the first floor and it explains that on the floors above there will be different types of men for sale. The higher you go up, the better they are, and the more expensive they are. She goes up one floor, and there are a bunch of men standing around and there is a big sign that says, "These men have jobs." She thinks, "That's pretty good." But she goes up another floor. So on the 2nd floor there's a sign that says, "These men have jobs AND they're good with kids." She says, "Wow." So she goes up another floor. "These men have jobs, they love kids, AND they're drop-dead gorgeous." She thinks, "This is fantastic!" So she goes up to the fifth floor and there is a sign that says, "These men have jobs, they love kids, they're drop-dead gorgeous AND they help out around the house." Well the woman is just blown away so she goes up one more floor. There's a sign that says, "You are visitor 31,284,618. This floor has no men. It is simply here to prove that you women are never satisfied."*

Across the street, they opened up a Wife Store. There you go in on the first floor and it said the same thing: the women get nicer as you go up. So the man goes in to the first floor and there's a sign that says, "These wives love to have sex." And no man ever made it past the first floor.

They're different... and how they get in trouble is different.

Allie: I don't think the cheerleaders are dressed appropriately

Repent of your sin, whether it's sexual or not. Repent of how you have despised God by delighting in sin more than Him and return to God. He will abundantly pardon you. He stands ready to receive you if you'll come!

CHECK BACK THROUGH YOUR BLACK BOOK... BETTER ENDING?

HE QUIT OPERATING IN GOD'S KINGDOM, AND GOT INTO HIS OWN. IN HIS KINGDOM, BATHSHEBA WAS SINGLE...

Run to Jesus, not after you clean yourself up, but before. Don't get it backwards (John 8; or 1 John 1:9)

Sin does something to people. It changes them.

- Sin gave David a desperate resourcefulness

The lies:

- Your blessing makes you invulnerable
- You can handle temptation
- Bathsheba will satisfy
- Things will be better if you cover it up

Alt openings:

- Dirty little secret of church. Believers have huge sins in their past (see intro to [2 Sam 11 sermon in Sabotage](#))
- "The lie"

Causes the deepest pain... cheating on your relationship, or on the verge of doing that, or, you could never do that, but you're fantasizing about someone else's spouse; pornography; masturbation

- One more thing... a lot of people assume that God created sex and was then like “oh crud, they *really* like that” and so started to put all kinds of rules in place to curtail it.
 - If you aren’t aware of God’s plan for you, that’s when you get bored and feel like your life has no point and so you look for a little (bomp-bomp) to spice it up. It’s when you don’t know how God feels about you that you have such low self-esteem you give yourself away to anybody.
 - We’ll come back to that.

The only way you can bring certain desires in your life under control is to replace them with a stronger desire. An old Puritan called it “the expulsive power of a new affection.”

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. ⁹ 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. 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?” 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. 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.” 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. 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? 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.’ ” 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 trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.’ And encourage him.” ²⁶ When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. 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.

- You’ve got to feast on God. (same meal, different butler)?

- Jesus understood this... John 8, woman taken in adultery. “Neither do I condemn you.” Jesus said it that way because the stones that should have hit her were taken into Him. So, He could say to her that He sees her as innocent and is making her a new creation.

- What happens is sin in your life causes shame, guilt. That weight will drive you to do 1 of two things: either drive you to repent and confess, or to do more and more to cover up your sin and numb your soul from the effects of guilt.
- One of my favorite novels that gives you a picture of this is Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*. The guy, after committing a crime, weaves a web of lies to keep people from knowing the real him. He turns to selfishness and drunkenness to numb the pain. I talked to a guy the other day... “When I got away from God, I went to the one thing I knew how to do to comfort myself, and that was to drink... It was after I wandered from God... When God was in the right place, I felt like I didn’t need the comfort of alcohol.”
- The other option is to repent... it’s the only thing that will really save you.
- Let us help you. 1 word you should remember: Small group. Be known.
-