Devastating Sin - 2 Samuel 11

The Joy Of the Lord Is Your Strength!
Hardly anything beats a "radiant face"

1. With only one exception - I don't remember anything from my 9th grade biology class.
2. Nothing - except one thing...
3. It was the day I walked it, got a partner, and dissected a frog.
4. I'm still nauseous over it.
5. The purpose - as best I can tell - of dissecting the frog was to show us how things work.
6. Today - I want us to look at the worst day in Davids life - and do a bit of dissection on HOW SIN WORKS...
7. **You see, Sin will always take you further than you want to go and cost you more than you're willing to spend.**
8. That's what we're going to see in the life of David today.
9. David is at the height of his success.
10. He's killed Goliath. He's become king. He's brought the ark back to Jerusalem. God has established his kingdom and given him an incredible promise about his future.
11. And then comes 2 Samuel 11. One of the darkest chapters in the Bible.
12. You see - from chapters 6 last week until chapter 11 this week - all of Davids life is up and to the right!
13. He's absolutely crushing it
14. But there is a truth that we can miss before we look at the anatomy of how sin works...
15. ... **your greatest vulnerability can come right after your greatest victory.**
16. If David can fall, so can we.
17. This isn't a sermon designed to shame anyone. It's a sermon designed to make us wise.
18. One of God's greatest gifts is allowing us to learn from someone else's mistakes before we make them ourselves.
19. So let's look at four lessons every disciple of Jesus needs to understand about sin.

(Here's where I'm going: *Sin often begins when we drift from our purpose.*)

2 Samuel 11:1–2

1. Look at verse 1:
2. "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."
3. Notice that last sentence.
4. "But David remained at Jerusalem."
5. This was the time when kings went to battle. But David, the warrior king, sends everyone else while he stays home.

6. Now, delegating responsibility wasn't necessarily wrong. David didn't have to personally fight every battle.
7. But the writer wants us to notice something has changed.
8. The man who once ran toward Goliath is now staying behind while others fight.
9. And in verse 2, we find him getting up from his couch late in the afternoon.
10. *David has plenty of time on his hands.*
11. And that becomes the setting for temptation.
12. Here's the first lesson:
13. **Sin often begins when we drift from our purpose.**
14. David didn't wake up that morning planning to commit adultery or arrange a murder.
15. But he was drifting.
16. And that's how spiritual drift works.
17. You don't wake up one day and decide, "I'm going to stop following Jesus."
    a. You just stop spending time with Him.
18. You don't decide to neglect your marriage.
    a. You just get busy with everything else.
19. You don't decide to become spiritually passive.
    a. You just start coasting.
20. And slowly, almost without noticing, you move away from the person God is calling you to become.
21. Let me ask you something.
22. **Where have you gone passive in your life?**
23. Maybe it's your marriage.
    a. You haven't done anything terrible. You're just not investing in it anymore.
24. Maybe it's your parenting.
    a. You're providing financially, but you're not really present.
25. Maybe it's your spiritual life.
    a. You come to church and know the right answers, but somewhere along the way, you've stopped actively pursuing Jesus.
26. Here's the danger:
27. ***When we stop pursuing what God has called us to, we become increasingly vulnerable to things God never intended for us.***
28.
29. *I TOOK PRESLEY TO PICK FLOWERS THIS WEEKEND...*
30. Here's the deal about a garden - when you don't take care of it - you don't have to plant weeds.
    a. They show up on their own.
31. The same thing happens spiritually.
    a. Nobody accidentally becomes spiritually mature.
    b. Nobody drifts into a healthy marriage.
    c. Nobody coasts into becoming more like Jesus.
32. *Spiritual growth requires intentionality.*
33. That's why Paul tells Timothy to "train yourself for godliness" (1 Timothy 4:7).
34. So here's the question:

35. ***What's one responsibility God has given you that you've stopped taking seriously?***
36. Bridge Family - David's problem didn't begin with Bathsheba.
37. It began with a king who was no longer paying attention to the condition of his own heart.
38. A BORED MAN IS A DANGEROUS MAN...
39. And that leads to lesson two.

(Here's where I'm going: Sin grows when we feed our desires.)

2 Samuel 11:2–5

1. Look at verse 2:
2. "Late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful."
3. David sees a beautiful woman.
4. Now, here's an important distinction:
5. ***Temptation isn't the same thing as sin.***
6. **IF YOU'RE ASKING HOW FAR CAN I GO YOU"VE ALREADY MISSED THE POINT...**
7. David couldn't necessarily control what came into his field of vision.
8. But he could control what happened next.
9. Verse 3 says:
10. "And David sent and inquired about the woman."
    a. He doesn't look away.
    b. He starts asking questions.
11. And somebody tells him:
12. "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"
13. That's a pretty clear warning.
14. **She's married.**
    a. **And her husband is one of David's loyal soldiers, risking his life in the battle David isn't attending.**
15. David knows what he's about to do is wrong.
16. But verse 4 says he sent messengers and took her.
17. Notice the progression.
    a. **David sees.**
    b. **David inquires.**
    c. **David takes.**
18. What began with a look becomes an action.
19. And that's how temptation often works.
20. Something catches your attention. A picture. A conversation. A relationship. A thought.
21. And then you have a choice.
22. Will I turn away, or will I entertain it?
23. **Sin grows when we feed our desires.**
24.
25. If you feed resentment, bitterness grows.
26. If you feed envy, jealousy grows.

27. If you feed lust, lust grows.
28. James 1:14–15 explains that desire, when embraced, gives birth to sin, and sin, when fully grown, brings death.
29. That's exactly what's happening with David.
30. But there's something else we can't miss.
31. David is the king. Bathsheba is one of his subjects.
32. He uses his authority to take what doesn't belong to him. The text places responsibility on David, not Bathsheba.
33. This isn't simply sexual temptation. It's an abuse of power.
34. God gave David authority to protect and serve his people. Instead, David uses it to serve himself.
35. And that's a warning for all of us.
36. Whether you're a parent, boss, pastor, or leader, God hasn't given you influence so you can use people.
37. He's given you influence so you can serve them.
38. **Lust sees a body. Love sees a person.**
39. **Just so we're clear - Bathsheba did nothing wrong here - David did.**
40. Now, let's make this practical.
41. We live in a world where temptation is available in our pockets.
42. And if we're not careful, we start believing that because something is accessible, it's harmless.
43. But accessibility doesn't make something healthy.
44. So establish boundaries before temptation arrives.
45. If your phone has become a doorway to temptation, change how you use it.
    a. Put it outside your bedroom.
    b. Install accountability software.
    c. Give somebody permission to ask difficult questions.
46. If a relationship is becoming inappropriate, create distance.
47. If you're constantly comparing your life to somebody else's, pay attention to what you're consuming.
48. Listen closely...
49. ***It's easier to resist temptation when you've already decided where you stand.***
50.
51. And one more thing.
52. When David asks about Bathsheba, somebody warns him that she's married.
53. That was an opportunity to stop.
54. But he ignored it.
55. Which raises a question:
56. **Who has permission to warn you?**
57. **The difference between "buddy" and "brother"...**
    a. **A buddy will celebrate with you IN your sin.**
    b. **A brother will call you OUT of your sin...**
58. Who can look you in the eye and say, "this is an absolutely terrible idea"?
59. Every one of us needs people who love us enough to tell us the truth.
60. Because sometimes the most loving thing a friend can do is interrupt a bad decision.

61. *David ignored the warning.*
62. And verse 5 says Bathsheba sent word:
63. "I am pregnant."
64. Three words that change everything.
65. David thought he could satisfy a desire and move on.
66. But sin doesn't work that way.
67. (NOW IS WHERE IT GETS INTERESTING... THE CRUX OF THE STORY)

(Here's where I'm going: Sin multiplies when we try to hide it.)

2 Samuel 11:6–25

1. David now has a choice.
2. Confess what he's done, or cover it up.
3. Tragically, he chooses the cover-up.
4. Let me summarize the next part:
   a. He sends for Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, who's away fighting.
   b. And David comes up with a plan....
   c. If Uriah comes home and spends the night with his wife, everybody might assume the baby belongs to him.
5. Problem solved.
6. **Except Uriah won't go home.**
   a. Instead, he sleeps with the king's servants.
7. When David asks why, Uriah explains that the ark and the soldiers are still in the field.
8. *How could he enjoy the comforts of home while his fellow soldiers are fighting?*
9. Do you see the irony?
10. **Uriah is thinking about everybody else.**
11. **David is thinking about himself.**
12. So David tries again.
13. He gets Uriah drunk.
14. But Uriah still won't go home.
15. And this is where the story takes a terrible turn.
16. David realizes he can't manipulate Uriah into covering his sin.
17. So he decides to eliminate him.
18. Verse 14 says:
19. "In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah."
20. The letter orders Joab to put Uriah at the front of the fiercest fighting and then withdraw so he'll be killed.
21. Think about that.
22. **Uriah faithfully carries his own death sentence.**
23. And the plan works.
24. Uriah dies. Other soldiers die with him.
25. And when David hears the news, he essentially says, *"That's war. These things happen."*
26. (PAUSE - LET IT BREATHE)

27. How did we get here?
28. *How did the man who refused to kill Saul become the king who arranged the murder of his own soldier?*
29. Well, it never started with the letter or even a pregnancy...
    a. One compromise led to another.
    b. One lie required another lie.
    c. One sin required another sin to keep it hidden.
30. **Sin multiplies when we try and hide it.**
31. WE HAD A WATER LEAK IN OUR KITCHEN A FEW YEARS AGO...
32. Thankfully we jumped on it as soon as we noticed it... BUT, imagine we DIDN'T address it...
33. What if I just decided to pretend it wasn't that bad - and simply paint over the stain?
34. For a while, the paint works.
    a. Everything looks fine.
35. But behind the wall, the water is still leaking.
36. The damage is spreading.
37. Eventually, a small repair becomes a major renovation.
38. **That's what hidden sin does.**
    a. It grows in the dark.
39. Some of you know exactly what I'm talking about.
    a. Maybe it's an addiction.
    b. Maybe it's a relationship.
    c. Maybe it's dishonesty or bitterness.
40. And you've convinced yourself that as long as nobody knows, everything is okay.
41. **But hidden sin is never harmless.**
42. Think about the people affected by David's decisions.
43. Bathsheba. Uriah. Joab. The other soldiers. Their families. Eventually, David's own family.
44. Here's the truth that nobody in our culture wants to admit...
    a. Although we can be forgiven from our sins - our sins still carry consequences.
    b. Jesus might remove the penalty from our sins - but not the results from those sins...
45. That's why confession matters.
46. Proverbs 28:13 says:
47. "Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy."
48. Confession isn't easy.
49. It may involve painful conversations, consequences, and rebuilding trust.
50. **But confession brings sin into the light, where repentance and healing can begin.**
51. So here's a practical discipleship principle:
52. **Shorten the distance between conviction and confession.**
53. When the Holy Spirit convicts you, respond.
54. Don't negotiate. Don't rationalize. Don't wait until you get caught.
55. WE ARE SO GOOD AT "TOMORROW!"...
56. BUT we are called to do it TODAY!

a. Confess to God.
b. Take responsibility for the people you've harmed.
c. And bring trusted believers into your life who can help you walk in the light.

57. Probably one of the most tragic parts of this story is that David could have stopped this spiral.
58. *But instead of confessing, he kept covering.*
59. And with every step, his heart became harder.
60. This is where it gets worse...

(Here's where I'm going: Sin hardens our hearts when we stop listening to God.)

2 Samuel 11:25–27

1. One of the most disturbing parts of this story is David's response to Uriah's death.
2. Remember who David used to be.
3. When Saul and Jonathan died, David wept and wrote a lament.
4. But now one of his most loyal soldiers has been murdered by his command, and David responds with a shrug.
5. **25** David said to the messenger, “Thus shall you say to Joab, ‘Do not let this matter displease you, for the sword devours now one and now another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.’ And encourage him.”
6. What's happened to him?
7. Sin has hardened his heart.
8. **Sin hardens our hearts when we stop listening to God...**
9. ***The longer we tolerate sin, the less it troubles us.***
    a. Something that once convicted you eventually becomes normal.
    b. Something you once would have confessed immediately becomes something you justify.
10. And eventually, you don't even feel guilty anymore.
11. That's not spiritual maturity.
12. **That's spiritual danger.**
13. Hebrews 3:13 warns us to encourage one another daily so that none of us may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
14. *Sin lies to us.*
    a. "This isn't a big deal."
    b. "Everybody does it."
    c. "You deserve this."
    d. "Nobody will know."
15. And when we listen long enough, *our hearts grow hard.*
16. Let me give you a few warning signs.
    a. You joke about things that once convicted you.
    b. You become defensive when somebody challenges your behavior.
    c. You spend more time justifying your decisions than examining your heart.
    d. You avoid people who might ask difficult questions.
17. *If any of those sound familiar, pay attention.*
18. **A tender conscience is a gift from God.**

19. You don't want to lose it.
20. Now look at how the chapter ends.
21. Uriah is dead.
22. Bathsheba mourns.
23. David brings her into his house. She becomes his wife and gives birth to a son.
24. From the outside, it looks like David has gotten away with everything.
25. But then comes the final sentence in verse 27:
26. "But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD."
27. For almost the entire chapter, God has been silent.
28. But God saw everything.
29. **God's silence is not God's approval.**
30. Just because you haven't experienced consequences doesn't mean God approves of what you're doing.
31. Just because nobody else knows doesn't mean God doesn't know.
32. And one of the main marks of maturity is allowing God's Word to define right and wrong, even when our feelings tell us something different.
33. It's not simply asking Jesus to forgive us.
34. **It's learning to let Jesus lead us.**
    a. Our thoughts. Our desires. Our relationships. Our decisions.
35. Even the parts of our lives nobody else sees.

1. When you read 2 Samuel 11, it's hard not to feel disappointed.
2. David was supposed to be different.
3. He was supposed to be the shepherd king who protected his people.
4. Instead, he used his position to take what didn't belong to him.
5. He sacrificed an innocent man to cover his own sin.
6. But here's what I love about the Bible.
7. *God doesn't hide the failures of its heroes.*
8. Because ultimately, the Bible isn't a story about how great David was.
9. It's a story about how desperately we need a better King.
10. And that's exactly who Jesus is.
11. Think about the contrast.
12. David was a king who used his power to take.
13. Jesus is a King who used His power to give.
14. David sacrificed an innocent man to cover his sin.
15. Jesus was the innocent man who willingly sacrificed Himself to cover ours.
16. **David used his power to take a life to cover his sin. Jesus used His power to give His life to cover ours.**
17. That's the gospel.
18. And it's why there's hope for every person in this room.
    a. Maybe you've been drifting.
    b. Maybe you've been feeding a temptation.

c. Maybe you've been hiding something.
d. Maybe your heart has become hard.

19. *You don't have to stay there.*
20. Jesus didn't come merely to expose our sin.
21. He came to save us from it.
22. He died on the cross for our sin and rose again to give us new life.
23. And when we turn to Him in repentance and faith, He offers forgiveness and the power to walk in a new direction.
24. That doesn't mean every earthly consequence disappears or broken trust is instantly restored.
25. But it does mean sin doesn't have to have the final word.
26. Next week, in 2 Samuel 12, we'll see that David thinks he's hidden everything.
27. *But God sends Nathan to confront him.*
28. **And the God who exposes David's sin is also the God who offers mercy.**
29. ... But you don't have to wait to be confronted.
30. You can come into the light today.
31. So let me close with three questions.
32. **Where am I drifting?**
    a. Where have I become passive in following Jesus?
33. **What am I feeding?**
    a. What desire, habit, or relationship am I allowing to grow that needs to stop?
34. **What am I hiding?**
    a. What do I need to confess and bring into the light?
35. Don't just think about these questions.
36. Do something with them this week.
    a. Reengage in your marriage.
    b. Establish the boundary.
    c. Make the phone call.
    d. Tell someone the truth.
37. Because here's what David teaches us:
38. **Sin will always take you further than you want to go and cost you more than you're willing to spend.**
39. But here's what Jesus teaches us: **Grace can meet you where sin has taken you and lead you into a new life.**

PRAYER TEAM

THE GOSPEL: Jesus Christ is the ultimate hope for every person. Though we are all sinful and our sin separates us from God, God made a way for us to be in right relationship with him again. That way is Jesus. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for our sins. God promises that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ will be saved. This is the good news of the Bible.

COMMUNION: 1 Corinthians 11

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said,[b] “This is my body, which is[c] for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”
25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

“May the Lord bless you and protect you;
may the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
may the Lord look with favor on you[b]
and give you peace.”'