Bathsheba's Advent Love — Delivery Transcript

2 Samuel 11–12 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, December 22, 2024 · *Advent 2024*

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Have a Bible you can open it to the book of 2 Samuel 2 Samuel chapter 11. I know your notes sheet says 1 Samuel but we're going to be in 2 Samuel. That's a typo on my part. And we're looking at the last mother of Jesus in a series we've been in on advent, looking at the mothers of Jesus and the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew chapter 1. And I know for most people genealogies are boring. And they're relevant, but in the ancient world they were extremely relevant, and Jesus' genealogy is extremely interesting, not because of the men that are mentioned, but the women who are mentioned.

The men are who you might expect, guys like Abraham and king David and some of the other greats. But there are four women mentioned. Most of them are not Jewish. Many of them came from unseemly lines of work like prostitution. They came from desperate situations like childlessness or being a widow, and yet somehow, because of their faith and hope and joy in the Lord, God was able to use them greatly to advance his redemptive purposes. And specifically to pave the way for the coming of Messiah. And so today's the last mother of Jesus.

We skipped her last week to go straight to Mary and skipped her because I thought Mary's life demonstrated joy better than the others. But the story of David and Bathsheba is what we're looking at this morning in 2 Samuel chapter 11. And David and Bathsheba's story is a compelling story of advent love. And it doesn't just show us advent love as it's received from the Lord and how God's divine love is unique. But it also shows how there's a human tendency in all of us to pursue love and try and find love, but in all the wrong ways and in all the wrong places.

And some of the ancient church fathers like St. Augustine and others like him talked about that in terms of disordered love. That our love gets disordered in life. In other words, we don't just love the wrong things. That's uneasy, no, right? I shouldn't love bad things. But a lot of us that's not our problem. We don't love bad things. Our problem is we love good

things too much. Or we love even great things. As though they're the greatest thing, and we take the greatest thing and love it less than we should, and that's called disordered love.

It's textbook idolatry. I know the Bible presents idolatry sometimes as bowing down to wooden statues and worshiping the creation instead of the creator. And we might look at ourselves and say, well thank goodness I'm not an idolater. But when you disorder love in your heart, when your priority of affection is greater for something or someone other than God. Then and give to something other than God what you should reserve for God alone. That's a disordered love and it is the source of all of the chaos and brokenness in your life.

And it doesn't just impact you personally, as we're going to see in the story of David and Bathsheba, it impacts us relationally as well. Because what happens when you love wrongly. The person you love wrongly is caught up in that crossfire. They are damaged by the disordered love in your heart. And then sometimes it's not that you love a person wrongly, it's that you love a thing. Wrongly and in your love for that thing, that love gone wrong creates fallout for all the people who are caught in the crossfires. An easy example of this is what happens when people find themselves in an addiction.

Their addiction is a misaligned or excessive love for something more than they should, and in their pursuit of that thing the people who love them or the people who are caught in between are caught up in that crossfire and it results in brokenness in their life as well. And so the source of all of our brokenness, relationally and individually, usually stems from a mis prioritized affection in the heart. Disordered love is at the root of all of the brokenness and chaos in our life and relationships. And I want to try to show you that David and Bathsheba Illustrate that dynamic powerfully, and because they their story is our story, because their problem was our problem.

And we see God's intervening, amazing grace. In meeting them in that brokenness, redeeming it, and healing them so that they could love rightly. And that's the most beautiful part of this story of David and Bathsheba. I know it's family service. You shouldn't be talking about David and Bathsheba in front of kids. It's a very adult story with adult themes and that's why I've got veggie Tales in here in just a minute. But what David and Bathsheba illustrate is not just the damage that disordered love create, but how God's love heals our heart.

And C. S. Lewis said, when whenever you love God more than your earthly dearest, whether that's your wife or your kids or your whatever, when you love God more than that earthly dearest, you'll actually find within yourself a greater capacity to love them than you do right now. You'll love them better than you do right now. And that's what God's love does to us. We love because He first loved us. So let's turn to 2 Samuel chapter 11. David's story, he's king of Israel at this time. He's gone from little shepherd boy hiding from Saul in caves to king of the castle, well loved by the people.

Brought Israel to a place of great military and economic prosperity and success, and it was from that season of great success and prosperity that he suffers from a temptation that ultimately takes him out and releases chaos in his life. It says in chapter eleven, verse one that it was the springtime, and during the springtime, kings would march out to war. But instead of David marching out to war, He sent Joab with his officers and all of Israel, and they destroyed the Ammonites. They besieged Rabbah But David remained in Jerusalem. Kind of an interesting way to begin his story in the spring.

The verse two says that while David was kind of bored and sitting at home while his men fought the battle, he got up from his bed and he strolled around on the roof of the palace, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing, a very beautiful woman. And so David sent someone to inquire about her. And he said, I think even before he went to get the information, said, isn't that Bathsheba? Daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite, and David sent messengers anyway to go and get her.

And when she came to him he slept with her. And now she had just been purifying herself from her uncleanness, and afterwards she returned home. And the woman conceived and sent word to inform David, I am pregnant. Now again I that's an adult story, adult themes. I'm going to try to be gentle in the way I talk about it. But because a lot of kids don't know what all is going on in here, I found a veggie tail clip that shows king George, not king David. But king George selfishly taking from someone else what he never should have taken.

And you can see it in this clip that I'll show you right now. Because I love my duck. I don't know why I even bother love my duck You just can't reason with this guy because I love my duck it's time to face the facts I think we're all a little Oh let the army run a mic I fear the kingdom's out of luck because I love mite yes undoubtedly we're stunned go let the army run a mic Oh boy we're really out of luck. Because I love mic hey, what's that?

Give me a quarter. It's beautiful. I want it. What? The house? No, the ducky. Oh. But you already have a ducky. What are you saying? That I shouldn't have whatever I want? Well, I must have it. I must get it. You must go and get it for me if you want me to be happy then you'll show me you adore me don't rest another minute till it's sitting here before me if you want to do your best I would suggest you go and bring me back that duck the best part about the clip, I had to cut it due to time, but the Bob the Tomato goes and gets this wardrobe.

He opens it and he says, but king George, you've already got duckies and there's like a hundred ducks in the wardrobe and king George goes, those are yesterday's duckies. I want my duck I want his ducky. And of course ducky stands for something else in the actual Bible. But the point is the same. David was selfishly longing for something that didn't belong to him and he took it. And if you watch VeggieTales you see what happens after that. But that that's what's going on here. Now his story, David's Fall from grace is, I think, a another

gentle reminder for us that you can be a super godly man, super godly woman, and you are not immune from moral catastrophe.

In your life. And it's usually as I've seen from the Bible, it's when success, it's in seasons of success and prosperity and when everything is going well, that's usually when temptation strikes the strongest. And in David's life, the way that the sin came to fruition began with a kind of a growing blindness to his personal duty. It says that it was the springtime and in springtime the kings were supposed to go out to war, but David didn't go to war, right? He sent Joab, he sent the other army, but he stayed behind.

And I think that demonstrates how all sin begins. All sin begins with a growing blindness to your personal duty and I'm going to call that irresponsibility. And it looks at a lot of different ways for a lot of different people and it almost always begins innocently. I'm sure David justified it in his mind. I'm sure he thought to himself You know, I am a king after all and I've been working hard and we're super successful and you know Joab he can take care of business and you know I've I deserve a little rest and relaxation.

Nothing wrong with that, right? But in David's case, this decision to stay at home but stemmed from a disordered love in his heart. He was choosing personal comfort. Over duty to his nation and to his men. And they would have noticed, right, because David was known as a warrior. He was super popular. He killed Goliath, you know, chopped off his head. They don't tell you that part kids in the Bible story. But he took down Goliath and he was a man of valor, a man of courage, and his absence would have been deeply felt by the men on the field and yet he chose to do so anyway and in and being blind to his personal duty he found himself in a position where temptation could take him out.

And the same happens for you and me today. It starts innocently enough. You justify it in your mind. Well You know, my kids have just been so demanding here lately. I'm going to neglect my duty and just spend a little bit more time on my phone or you know vegging out on Netflix. I'm just going to lock myself in my room and let them blow up the house You know, whatever the case may be. Or it you don't have to talk about parents, you may if you don't have children, you say, I know that I'm supposed to love the Lord with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.

I know I should probably get up in the mornings and read my Bible and pray and spend time with God That's my duty, but I'd rather, you know, spend an extra hour of sleep or you know spend my time doing something else. You've elevated comfort and ease and those kinds of things over duty. And that irresponsibility is a seedbed for sin in your life. And I can't tell you the number of times in my life, this is how it begins. It begins with a growing laziness or apathy or indifference towards the things of God.

And it put David in a context where Satan could take him out. And that's what happens, right? David is on the roof strolling around on the roof, which by the way, if you go back and read verse two, it is not how I remembered the story growing up. I remember the Leonard Cohen version of the story. You guys remember Leonard Cohen, the song Hallelujah Your faith was strong, but you needed proof. You saw her bathing on the roof. The beauty and the moonlight overthrew ya. Hallelujah, which is a weird thing to say for adultery, but whatever.

You know, pretty very pretty melody, terrible theology. As usual. But that's not what happens, right? If you look in verse 2, what happens? It's not her roof. She's not bathing on her roof. He's on his roof. From his roof he saw a woman bathing. She was probably in her house in her bathtub, which by the way they probably didn't have a bathtub back then. They had pr they had public bathing areas where people would go, and usually if you were in the public bath you kept your clothes on for obvious reasons.

But she probably had a private bath and it wouldn't have been a bathtub, you know, to get water back then you had to actually go get a bucket and carry the water up so it's not like you just turn on the bath and get soapy bubbles and look all sensual. That's not what's going on here. She's probably in her house, private quarters, walls concealing her, but David's on the roof, right? He's geographically at a point of ascent which is giving him the ability to kind of see what other people wouldn't see.

And he should have turned away, right? He should have gone, Oh, that's you know not that's not my wife, that's a naked lady, and turned away, but he doesn't. He doesn't turn away. He looks again and looks again and again and from that point of sensual lust calls her to himself. And it's even s established in the in verse two that the guy that he asks, who is that woman, before he even goes and gets the information, it's like he's telling David, You don't want that girl, right? She is Uriah's wife.

She is Eliam's daughter. And David would have known both of those men very well, because if you look in 2 Samuel 23, both Eliam and Uriah were part of an inner circle of elite warriors. Called David's heroes. I think there was thirty to thirty-three of them. So these would have been men very loyal to the nation, very gifted, very kind of high up, prioritized. I think for Eliam he would have been a counselor for David in terms of political wisdom, a confidant. And so this woman was off limits f just for one reason she was married.

But even if she wasn't, even if she wasn't married, the guy to whom she was married was a friend of David, or a very minimal someone to whom he owed respect and allegiance, much less the daughter of Eliam who was much the same. And even though he receives that warning, he says, I don't care I want her anyway, which is what disordered love does in the human heart. It will blind you to your responsibility and then it deafens you to sound judgment, wisdom, warning, and you can probably testify in your own life when you find yourself wanting something you shouldn't want.

There will be people who love you who say you shouldn't want that. You probably shouldn't do that. That would that's a mistake. And you say nana boo boo I can't hear you and you do you go and you do it. Anyway, because that's what disordered love does. It has a way of deceiving the soul so that you're blind to your personal duty and you're deaf to words of warning. So he sends messengers. Notice the plural messengers. He doesn't send one person. He sends multiple people. To get Bathsheba, and when she came to him, he slept with her, and she had just been purifying herself from her uncleanness, and then afterwards she returned home, and the woman conceived and sent word to inform David, I am pregnant.

Those are the only words Bathsheba speaks the entire time, and she doesn't even speak them with her mouth. She writes them down she is voiceless, in my opinion. She's very defenseless in this story. Again, it's not how I heard the story growing up. I heard Dave was just kind of minding his own business, doing his chores up on the roof. And some sensual woman's taking a bath up on the roof and like what are you doing taking a bath on the roof? You're just trying to tempt king David and make him sin sexually.

But that's not necessarily how the text presents itself upon second reading from my perspective. And she does go to the palace, right? She does consent to go with these messengers, but it was two messengers, not just one, and we don't know what the invitation was, how it built itself initi initially. Maybe I know she did know David. Uriah was friends with David, or at least they had interactions with each other. Maybe she did or didn't know what she was getting herself into, but the point is David takes her. And sins against God and Uriah with her by doing what he should not have done, and that's what happens with a disordered love.

It begins with a distracted heart grows into a deaf ear, and then it begins to justify immoral actions in your life. And you do the things you never thought you would do, and you find yourself justifying them for one reason or another, just like David justified his act. Now in this text the details matter. If you'll go back to the verse, it says that she had was cleansing herself from from her uncleanness. That doesn't mean she got muddy and she needed a bath. It was a ceremonial cleansing from a ceremonial uncleanness.

Specifically for the case of Bathsheba, her ritual uncleanness due to a monthly cycle. And I'm not going to go into all how that works and all that stuff, but women have a monthly cycle as part of their reproductive prowess. And in this case, she had just finished her monthly cycle and there was a cleansing ritual that women would go through to prepare themselves for worship so that they could go into the presence of the Lord. Now I don't know why God had it that way. I mean God is holy. We're sinful.

It was a way to establish the need for cleansing. So don't get distracted by that. The reason it's mentioned here, I believe, is to contrast her submission and obedience to God's law with

David's utter disregard for God's law. The only person who could be the daddy of the baby is David because she had just finished her monthly cycle. Which means there's no other candidates. In view. David is guilty for this immoral action, and it was evil in the eyes of the Lord. Disordered love makes us immoral. It numbs the soul to bad behavior.

And so when he finds out that she's pregnant, he goes into cover-up mode. He sends orders to Joab verse 6, send me Uriah the Hittite. And so Joab sent Uriah to David. Again, I didn't bring my map, but the map is instructive, right? They are a way away off there across the Jordan River. It would have taken days to get to them. But Uriah comes in and when he comes in, David tries to convince him to go home with Bathsheba. David asked, you know, how's Joab? How's the troops doing? How's the war going?

And then said, okay, that sounds great. Go down to your house, wash your feet. Which is a way of saying, get cleaned up and go to bed with your wife. And so Uriah left the palace. A gift from the king followed him, but Uriah slept at the door of the palace with all of his master servants, and he did not go into his house. So plan A I'll get your Ray on site. We'll get him all, you know, loosened up and happy about while things are going. Hey, while you're here, go be with your wife.

Enjoy the evening. And he doesn't go. What does he say? How c how could I? How could I go and sleep with my wife? If you'll go to the next verse. When it was reported to David Uriah didn't go home, David questioned Uriah, haven't you just gone on a journey? You know, why not go home? And Uriah said, the ark the ark of the Covenant, Israel, all my friends, Judah, other friends, are dwelling in tents, and my master Joab and his soldiers are camping in the open field. How can I enter my house and eat and drink and sleep with my wife?

As surely as you live, I will not do this. Stay here today also, David said then, and tomorrow I will send you back, so Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now, David, I think, is probably thinking to himself, plan A failed. If I send him home or he's not going to go home, so I'm going to have to send him back on the field. Maybe I can try again some other way, stay here, buy some time. And let's try this again. So he stays there that night, he stays there the next day, and the next day David invites him to eat and drink, come to the party, and David got him drunk, and he went out in the evening to lie down on this cot with his master servants, but he still didn't go home.

Now, what I see in this threefold attempt for David to try to cover up his sin is a very anxious, insecure man who cannot hide what's about to come out. And what's so ironic is he's the king, right? He's the sovereign of the nation. As a sovereign, he ought to be able to do what he wants. When he wants, with whom he wants, no question. I have utter control as king. And yet the one thing he cannot control is his sin getting out. And it makes them insecure and anxious, and you just see it escalating, growing and growing and growing.

And that's what disordered love does to you and me. You find yourself doing things you never wanted to do, you never imagined you would do those kinds of things. And because you don't want it out, you don't want the shame to be public, you hide and you conceal and you lie and you cheat and you do all the things that you need to do to control the narrative to control the appearances and David's attempt to do that made him tremendously insecure, as your attempts will probably do for you as well.

And if you've ever suffered from disordered love for any length of time, you know exactly what I'm talking about. You find yourself anxious and afraid of what people are going to think about you. And so you do things to try to cover up. The wrong. So David can't do anything through Uriah. He's going to do something with Uriah. So the next morning he wrote he wrote a letter to Joab. Joab is his chief general. He sent it with Uriah, he puts his death sentence, he puts Uriah's death sentence in his hand, and says, go deliver this news to Joab What's the news in the letter he wrote?

Put Uriah at the front of the fiercest fighting and then withdraw from him so that he is struck down and dies. This is this is intentional murder. There's no other way to put it. He's not just saying, hey, he's a brave guy, put him at the front of the battle and see what happens. He's saying no, he's a brave guy, so put him at the front of the battle and then make sure he dies make sure that you withdraw from him so that the Ammonites Amorites can take him out. And David's not just himself engaging in a murderous plot.

He's forcing his inferior Joab to execute the murderous plot, which shows you what disordered love does. Disordered love, when it gives birth to sin in your life, sin has babies, right? Bashiva had a baby. Sin has a baby in your life and sin begets sin and you sinned against God, but in order to cover the sin that you sinned against God, you sin against God again, and the sin gets increasingly sinful as you try to cover up the sin. That you started out with and it grows and grows and grows just like it did in David's life.

Disordered love doesn't just make you immoral, it doesn't just make you insecure. In David's case, it's going to numb his soul so that even his increasing levels of sin don't seem to bother him. And that's what happens. Joab gets the letter, he does what David asked. He puts Uriah at the front of the battle. They go up against this army, and they had the high ground, and the army used their high ground to shoot bows and arrows down on the Israelites and Uriah dies. But not just Uriah, there's also a lot of other soldiers that die, which was devastatingly bad news.

And so when Joab sends the message back to David about the military Situation and the dead soldiers, he anticipates David is not going to be happy with this. And so I'm going to preface this news with the statement that Uriah was among the dead. So don't get angry. Don't get high and mighty with me, David. I was just doing what you asked me to do, and in

kind of finishing off your murderous plot, some other men died. And David should have been bothered by it. David should have been like cut to the heart.

He shouldn't have done it in the first place. But when David hears the news that Uriah was dead, even though it killed a bunch of other soldiers in the process, he sends a letter back to Joab and says, it's all good, man. It's all good. Don't worry about it. It's in verse 2025. David sent the message. Don't let this matter upset you, because the sword devours all alike. Intensify your fight against the city and demolish it. Encourage him. How calloused do you have to be to send a message like that to someone who just killed somebody for you?

Don't let it bother you, Joab. I'm not going to let it bother me. You just see the increasing calcification of his conscience. As he persists in this season of sin in his life. And then to make matters worse, Bathsheba hears that her husband's dead. She is destroyed by it. And she begins to mourn. This is in verse twenty-six and twenty-seven. When Uriah's wife heard that her husband had died, she mourned for him. But then as soon as her mourning ended, which there was a certain number of days, they would grieve somebody David brought her into his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son, and the Lord considered what David had done to be evil.

You just see this contrast again between David's seared conscience, his calloused soul, and the right response of Joab, who's like this is bad, and Bathsheba, who says this is tragic. And David's saying it doesn't matter. And that's what disordered love does. It makes you insecure, it makes you irresponsible, makes you act immorally, it makes you irrational. But the worst thing sin does in your life, the worst thing that a disordered love does in your life is it makes you insensitive to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. I think in your notes I said insane, but I changed my mind.

Because he's not just insane, he is insane. Love makes you stupid, stupid love makes you really stupid. I didn't say stupid in front of a bunch of kids. I'm so sorry. It's not just that he's crazy and insane. He's insensitive. He's he's calcified in his heart. That's why when the Bible talks about repentance, it says, if you hear the voice of the Lord, don't harden your heart. Because every time you harden your heart against the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, your heart gets a little harder for the next time.

And a little harder for the next time. And it's not like you hear God's word and don't respond. You're responding with disobedience, and every time you respond with rejecting the work of the Lord. It becomes a little more difficult for God to get through the next time. And that's what disordered love does. It makes you insensitive to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, which is why it's so dangerous. And why God and his grace will not leave you in that state without trying to break through, which is exactly what happens with king David.

Now that I know that's a bunch of eyes and maybe it's forced a little bit, but I can I'm telling you, as someone who has has played this game. And has allowed myself to enter into seasons where love for God was not preeminent in my life. This is the blueprint. This is how it works. It begins with a distracted heart. It grows into a stubborn mind. You won't listen to the people who are trying to warn you. You justify immoral actions, small ones at first, but they grow, and you find yourself justifying things you never thought you'd justify, and then in an attempt to cover up the discrepancy between who you really are and who you want people to think you are, you suffer from encrippling anxiety and insecurity to the point that you no longer can live with yourself, so you harden your heart against the convicting work of the Holy Spirit until God makes a breakthrough and gets your attention.

Okay. That's what disordered love does. That's why it's so dangerous to the human heart. So what does God do in response to David? Well, he sends a messenger to David to penetrate that hardness of heart. And that guy's name was Nathan. But in the VeggieTales story, he's not Nathan. So let's listen to the VeggieTales version and then we'll finish up. Now finally I can take that bath. Oh, I feel just terrible. Oh, that's alright. I still have time for my bath. What? Are you the only one you think about? No.

I've been thinking about this ducky for quite some time now. Since Thomas has lost his marbles, he won't be needing it. So come on, help me out with that bath. Oh greats, come in. I did. I see. And who are you? You remember me. I am Melvin, that slightly odd wise man who shows up every so often to tell you things. Ah yes. Well, what is it? I have to tell you a little story. Not now. I'm going to go take a bath. Come back at bedtime. It's important. Oh, okay.

What's that? It's a flannel graph to illustrate. Ooh, flannel graph. There once was a man, a very rich man. He had a lot of sheep, he had a lot of lamb He threw a lot of parties, he was dapper, he was ten. Yes, there once was a very rich man. Okay, great story. I'll see you next time. I wait just a minute. My story isn't done. It's about two men and I've only mentioned one. Oh there once was a man a very poor man, he had next to nothing, just a little lamb, but he loved it like a son, and he fed it from his hand.

Yes, there was a very poor man. Then one day there was a guest at the house of the rich man. What did he do? Have you guessed to feed the guest of the rich man? Well, let's see He had plenty of sheep, so he could just share one of his sheep. Not a problem. He took the lamb of the poor man. He took the lamb of the poor man, the rich man took to feel his guest the very, very warm. What? If it's a true story. As surely as I stand before you today, my story is true.

Who is that man? Tell me! To take the lamb of the poor man! When he had lots of sheep and the poor man only had one! Man for his cruelty, he will spend the rest of his days locked in my dungeon. Who is he? Oh king George, you are what. So that's basically Nathan's story. He tells a parable about a king who had a lot of sheep and a poor man who had one sheep

and the king, even though he had all the sheep he could ever need He took the poor man's sheep, and David rightly in that moment says, this is wrong, who is this man?

I'm going to throw him in my prison. And Nathan throws his finger in his face. Doesn't say he throws his finger, but I like to imagine that. You're the man. You're the man. Now this is God graciously getting through to David, helping David see his guilt before he recognizes he's the guilt that he sees. That the sin that he sees is the sin in his own heart. And that's how often God convicts us when our hearts are seared in our conscience. God is gets he gets creative. He will he will put us in places or go through experiences where finally his word can penetrate the hardness of heart and we can see our own guilt.

And what that shows you about God's love is that it's a good it's a love that pursues unworthy sinners. God's love pursues unworthy sinners, even though David probably never would have sought the Lord, he never would have repented willingly had it not been for this pursuing grace of God. David would have been stuck in his sin with the guilt and shame for the rest of his life. But God, because he's a God of love, pursues unworthy sinners and says, please come home. You see this in Jesus' teaching in the in the Luke chapter 14, which I read this last week, and was reminded of God's pursuing love, that he's like the shepherd who leaves the 99.

And goes after the one lost sheep, or he's the woman who lost the coin in the house and searched frantically for the coin, cleaned up the whole house so that she could find her coin. And when she found it she rejoiced and said, Rejoice, I found my coin. Or the prodigal son who took his inheritance and said, you're dead to me, Dad, and he went and he spent his whole inheritance on loose living and immorality and comes to his senses and says, I might as well go back home and be my father's servant.

This life is terrible. And as he goes back home, it says his father saw him from a long distance. And ran to the sun. And before he could even finish the speech that says, Treat me like a servant, he says, no, you're not my servant, you're my son. He puts a robe on his back and a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. That's the love of God for sinners that's the love that your Heavenly Father has for you and for me, even when our hearts are out of order, even when our love for Him is less than what it should be.

Instead of getting angry or distant and saying that you deserve your misery, he says, no, I love you too much to leave you in that state. I'm going to penetrate that hardness of heart, and I want to I want you to come home while you come home. And so he pursues unworthy sinners, but he also. And you might not expect this part, he also punishes unjust behavior. And when he confronts David, he says, you're the man, and he says, how could you do this? I gave you plenty of wives, I gave you the king.

I gave you the kingdom. I gave I delivered you from Saul. I did all of this thing. How could you despise the Lord by doing what I consider evil? Now therefore, here's what's going to happen. This is in verse 10. Now therefore, the sword will never leave your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own wife. This is what the Lord says, I am going to bring disaster on you from your own family. I will take your wives and give them to another before your very eyes.

And he will sleep with them in broad daylight. You acted in secret, but I will do this before all Israel and in broad daylight. In other words, you're going to pay for this. And we don't have time to go into all these details. I wish we could, but this is a prophecy of what happens in David's life and the rest of 2 Samuel. He one of his sons named Amnon. Takes his sister and sexually abuses her, forces her against her will, and then to get vengeance on his sister Absalom, one of David's other sons.

Kills Amnon and in that act I think hardens his heart against David and the whole and the Lord and everything and he leads a revolt against David. So his family's in chaos, and then fr he's dethroned by Absalom. There's a civil war, it's very complicated. And Absalom, in order to shame his father, takes his wives and his concubines and on the roof, the same roof that David committed his sin, He defiles them in front of all of the eyes of Israel, shaming David, all because of one act. What's so crazy is elsewhere in the Bible it says that David Did right in the eyes of the Lord.

He did everything right in the eyes of the Lord except just this one thing. That's a very big thing, but it was one thing. And even so the Lord is saying, you don't get a free pass God is not mocked, whatever person sows is what he's going to reap, and it's because God is loving that he punishes unjust actions. Because he loved Bathsheba, that violence against her needed to be punished. He couldn't just let people scot free, just like if someone wronged you and murdered your someone that you love. The judge.

If he was a loving judge, wouldn't say, well, I want to be nice today so you don't have to go to jail. That would be an unloving thing for the judge to say to you. And God has to love not just sinners, but those who've been sinned against. And so he both pursues us in though we're unworthy and he punishes unjust actions. And it's an divine love will punish unjust. Behavior. And it reminds me of what the Old Testament describes of God when he reveals himself to Moses in the burning bush in Exodus chapter 34.

God presents himself in terms of this paradox where he is both gracious and kind and merciful while simultaneously being just and holy and wrathful. He says in chat this is Exodus chapter 34 you're going to have to go forward a little bit. Exodus thirty-four. The Lord passed in front of Moses and said, the Lord is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth. Maintaining faithful love to a thousand

generations, look at this, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin, but he will not leave the guilty unpunished.

Bringing the consequences of the father's iniquity on the children and the grandchildren of the third and fourth generations. So here's the paradox. God says, I will punish unjust behavior and I will forgive sinners. I will forgive the undeserving. I provide undeserved forgiveness and I punish unjust behavior, even as I pursue unholy, undeserving sinners. How can that be true? How can both of those things be true of God? He's a God of wrath and a God of mercy. He's a God of justice, yet he's also a God who justifies sinners who are guilty of their sin.

And a lot of people read the Exodus and think God's going to put a curse on their kids and grandkids. That's not what it's saying. It's saying God has structured the universe such that when you reject his design you will suffer the consequences. And it's not just that you will suffer them, but your kids will suffer them and your grandkids will suffer them. And a lot of us can testify to the fact that because my dad or granddad rejected God's design for marriage or flourishing or whatever the case may be, I still to this day deal with the fallout of his sinful choices, and that's what the Lord is saying.

I am a just God, I am a holy God, and you can't reject my design without consequence. And so how can he be both of those things? How can he forgive us and punish us? Well David's response is really instructive. When he realizes that he sinned against the Lord, he confesses in verse 13. He responded to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan replied, and the Lord has taken away your sin, you will not die. However, because you treated the Lord with such contempt in this matter, the son born to you will die.

Then Nathan went home. The Lord struck the baby that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became deathly ill. And not only did he become deathly ill, eventually he dies. And so God strikes an innocent son to punish David for his crime, even as God forgives David of his sin and says, even though you're guilty, you will not die. He is both just and justifier of David who has faith in his mercy. And this example in 2 Samuel chapter 12 is forecasting that same paradox that Paul deals with in Romans 3.

And I wish we had more time to flesh it all out. But in Romans 3, as Paul is making this argument, we are all sinful. We are way worse off than we could have ever imagined. In his great love for us, God sent a form of righteousness apart from the law, even though the law and the prophets testify to it. In other words, he sent Jesus To demonstrate God's holiness and his justice, even as Jesus was sent to display God's love and mercy. And in Romans chapter 3, this is in verses 25 and following, it says God presented Jesus as the mercy seat by his blood.

The mercy seat in the Old Testament sacrificial system was the surface on which the blood of a sacrificed animal was placed. And the blood of that animal being shed was a basically the sinner's way of saying, God, I know my sins deserve death, but in my place take the death of this animal and overlook my sin and my guilt. And that's what the Old Testament sacrifice was all about. But it wasn't that the blood of bulls and goats was going to deal with sin. Certainly not. Paul is saying those bulls and goats and all that blood was pointing to the s the mercy seat that Jesus would would would serve, that Jesus would shed his blood.

On the cross. And because he was a sinless, spotless lamb of God who lived a sinless life of love and obedience before the Father, when he laid down his life in your place for your sin, then it could absorb the wrath of God He could pay the price for sin. He did for you what you could not do for yourself, and that's how God passed over. The sins previously committed. That's how God said to David, I forgive you. I take away your sins. Not because you deserve it, but because Jesus is your mercy seat.

And that's how God demonstrated his holiness, his righteousness at the present time so that he could be both just and justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. In other words, when you look to the cross of Jesus Christ, you see two truths about God. He is a God of holiness and wrath, who by no means clears the guilty, and he is a God of steadfast love. And abundant mercy who forgives sinners who don't deserve it. And he shows you both of those things through the sending of his son Jesus, who he struck.

Just like he struck David's innocent son, he struck the innocent son, his beloved son, the Lord Jesus Christ, so that you and I could be beloved of God and forgiven and cleansed, even though we don't deserve it. And so crazy David's the end of David's story shows that very dynamic in the birth of the son in the genealogy, Solomon. Matthew chapter 1, verse 6. David has Solomon with Uriah's wife, that's Bathsheba. And in the text that we just read, Solomon's birth is really fascinating. David, after the death of the firstborn between him and Bathsheba, he comforted Bathsheba, and he went to her and he slept with her, and she gave birth to a son and named him Solomon.

And the Lord loved Solomon. He struck the first son, but he loved the second son. And he sent a message again through Nathan, the prophet, who named him Jedediah. Because of the Lord. In other words, the Lord said, Solomon will not just be known as Solomon, he will be known as Jedediah. And it's really crazy if you look at the names in the Hebrew. The name Solomon is from the Hebrew word for shalom, which means peace. He's the peace from God, and the word Jedediah is from the Hebrew word that means loved of God.

And what Solomon forecasts for us the thing that Solomon is teaching us about the advent love of God through Jesus Christ is that through Jesus we can receive a peace from God that enables us to fully receive the love of God. Otherwise, the love of God would destroy you. God's love for us is of such holiness and such intensity that when He and His love draws near

to us in our brokenness and sin, it would consume us. Something had to take the intensity of that righteous light and absorb the blow and the penalty that our sin deserved.

And God sent Jesus into the world to establish those terms of peace. Jesus, like Solomon, is the peace of God that because he absorbed our sin debt, we can now draw near to the throne of God's grace and receive his love without fear. We're not afraid of God's love, not because we're not sinful. We're certainly sinful, but Jesus has taken the fear away. Because he did for us what we could not do ourselves, and he covers us with his robe of righteousness, and he puts that ring on our finger, and he puts sandals of peace on our feet.

So that we can draw near to God and receive his love. And hear me, when you receive the love of God for you in Christ Jesus, it transforms your soul, it heals your heart. It heals you from the sickness of indifference and insecurity and irrationality and all those things that we talked about. It heals your heart from those things and it actually enlarges your heart so that you can love other people the way you were supposed to love them and the way they were meant to be loved. And you can enjoy good things in life.

You can love little Caesar's pizza with extra cheese and light sauce. But not love it too much. You know, not love it so much that it becomes a source of stumbling in your life. That only comes when you repent of sin and put your faith in the chosen Son the Lord Jesus Christ. And so I want us to respond to that invitation this morning as we let the word of God come to bear on our life and result in some practical decision of what we need to do. So let's right there where you're seated, we don't have enough time to do a long altar call, but I just want that right there where you're seated.

If you'd respond to the Lord and ask the Holy Spirit, what does your love require of me this day? And then with a heart of gratitude and thankfulness, would you bless God for establishing peace where there was no peace? For absorbing the hostility that your sins invited through the gift of his son. And would you let his great love for you in that way heal your heart? Show you this the foolishness of your sin. To remind you that there's something so much better than that. Lesser love that you can receive if you would repent and believe.

Holy Spirit, we recognize you're in this place. You're the preacher who can preach without words. And even now you have been convicting hearts of misaligned love and affection. And we don't have to argue with you. We can see it. Our lives are a mess. The people we love have been hurt. We've seen things happen we never intended. And you're so good to take all of that rebellion and all of that brokenness and pursue us. Even right now in this moment, pursuing sinners saying, I want you to come home. I want to heal you.

I want to fix this. But you've got to trust me. You got to stop. You got to you've got to love me more than this other thing in your life. And so we pray that the seed of your word would produce that genuine affection for Jesus that displaces and replaces all the lesser loves, the

counterfeits, the alternatives, the fakes, the phonies. And that we thank you in advance for how your love will not only transform but heal and restore what the enemy has taken. I said would you do that for your namesake, for your glory, for our good, and use our lives characterized by peace.

To draw others to the same fountain of grace that is in our Lord Jesus. And we pray these things in his name. And God's people said, Amen.