

SLIDE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

SLIDE INTRODUCTION

Hey, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to 2 Samuel chapter 2.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to 2 Samuel 2,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
 - under every single chair.
 - You'll find 2 Samuel 2 on page **255**.

INTRODUCTION: BREAKFAST FOR DINNER

I think there are simple things that can get complicated, very quickly.

- Things that I think we understand and we grasp...
- until someone asks us questions.

I'll give you an example.

The other night we had breakfast for dinner.

- So, we had eggs, bacon, and toast...for dinner.

And, it's not a big deal for me...

- because I understand what breakfast is,
- and I understand what dinner is,
- and I understand the difference.

But I thought, *"how would I explain this, to say, a 2-year-old?"*

Now, I fancy myself as an educated man.

- Ok...I read books.
- I have degrees.

But I'm not sure how to describe what breakfast is!

Maybe I'd say, "*well, breakfast is the first meal of the day.*"

- But that's not necessarily true,
- cause I almost never had breakfast in college.
 - I had lunch,
 - and then I had dinner,
 - and then I'd have, like...
 - a Chalupa from Taco Bell...
 - at 1 in the morning.
- Call that meal...a bad decision!

And so, if it's not the first meal of the day,

- "*well, it's bacon and eggs and cereal...*
- *wait, no, cause that's what we're having for dinner tonight.*"

And so, breakfast is really a simple idea...

- until you try to explain it...
- and then it just kinda breaks down.

MAIN POINT: IT'S COMPLICATED

Our text today is kinda like that.

David takes another step towards being king of Israel.

- It's simple.
- And **SLIDE IT'S COMPLICATED**

Like I said last week, chapters 2-5 are really one big unit...

telling the simple events...

- of David leaving Philistine territory...
- and making his way back to the promised land...
- and ultimately becoming King over Israel.

But this takes, like, 7 years.

- And the chapters that cover these events...
 - are WAY obscure.
 - And VERY under-known...even to Bible readers.
- And as you'll see,
 - it's not very easy to interpret them...
 - and apply them to us today.

PLUS...they bring up some really COMPLICATED issues...

- that we have to deal with.

TRANSITION

So, I'm gonna take a large chunk of text.

- Some of it I'll summarize.
- Some we'll read fully.
 - But we're gonna cover the second half of chapter 2...
 - and the first half of chapter 3.

And I do think there's some important stuff here.

So, let's go. 2 Samuel 2, pick it up in verse 12.

2 SAMUEL 2:12-13

[12] Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. [13] And Joab the son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. And they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

EXPLAIN: ABNER V. JOAB

So, remember, Abner was Saul's right-hand man.

- He had installed Ish-bosheth,
 - Saul's fourth son,
- as a puppet regime over the 11-tribes of Israel.

And Joab was David's right-hand man.

So, these two men, with their armies, meet head-to-head.

Now, verses 14 through 17 tell us...

- that Abner and Joab choose 12 young men to fight...
- in hand-to-hand combat,
 - similar to what we saw with David and Goliath.

Each side chose champions to do battle.

- But the 24 young men all kill one-another.
- There is no clear victor.

So, an all-out civil war breaks out.

- Abner and his men are beaten soundly...
- by Joab and the tribe of Judah.

But something happens after the battle that will affect what happens next.

Verse 18:

2 SAMUEL 2:18

[18] And the three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Now Asahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle.

- So, Joab's two brothers were with him in this battle.
- And the youngest, Asahel, was a fast runner!

Verse 19:

2 SAMUEL 2:19-23a

[19] And Asahel pursued Abner, and as he went, he turned neither to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner. [20] Then Abner looked behind him and said, "Is it you, Asahel?" And he answered, "It is I." [21] Abner said to him, "Turn aside to your right hand or to your left, and seize one of the young men and take his spoil." But Asahel would not turn aside from following him. [22] And Abner said again to Asahel, "Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I lift up my face to your brother Joab?" [23] But he refused to turn aside. Therefore Abner struck him in the stomach with the butt of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back. And he fell there and died where he was.

EXPLAIN: BLOOD FEUD

Uh oh...so, Abner just killed Joab's brother.

- Now, this was in the context of war,
 - as he was being chased,
- so this is a just killing.

But this will begin a blood feud, which will carry into next week's text.

Now, in verses 24 through 29 there is a bit more chasing,

- but ultimately, Joab calls off the pursuit of Abner and his men.
- So, this is the beginning of a civil war in Israel.

But note verse 30:

2 SAMUEL 2:30-31

[30] Joab returned from the pursuit of Abner. And when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing from David's servants nineteen

men besides Asahel. [31] But the servants of David had struck down of Benjamin 360 of Abner's men.

EXPLAIN: TALLY

A couple things to note about this whole section:

First, Abner is the aggressor in this whole affair.

- This is Abner's deliberate attempt...
- to impose himself over David's kingdom.

And we said it last week, but this should be expected.

- Opposition to God's will...
- and God's way...
- and God's kingdom come...
- should be expected.

But second, Abner lost.

- Sure, he killed Asahel.
 - But did you see the tally?
- Joab only lost 19 men.
- Abner lost 360.

And as we'll see,

- Abner clearly knows that God had promised David the kingship.
 - And as he finds himself in opposition...
 - against the will of God...
 - he loses badly.

APPLICATION: OPPOSING GOD

And it's my first question of application for us today:

SLIDE ARE YOU OPPOSING GOD?

Abner knew what God wanted...and he did the opposite.

And church, Abner is not far from any one of us.

- Let Abner's story preach to you today.
- Let him tell you that it's possible...
 - To know the truth but not embrace the truth.
 - To quote the truth but not submit to the truth.
 - To hold the truth and yet assault the truth.

IT'S COMPLICATED.

- *"I know what I should be doing.*
 - *But I'm not doing it.*
- *I know God has a true king to rule and reign over me...*
 - *but I want to be king of my own life."*

But church, God's will...will be done.

And we don't often think too much about being in opposition to God.

- We're just struggling...
- Or we're just wrestling with some stuff...
- Or we've just been wandering for a while...

But, oh my friends, consider Abner.

- ARE YOU OPPOSING GOD?
 - You know what you should do...
 - and you're not doing it.

And I think chapter 3, verse 1, actually fits here, at the end of chapter 2:

2 SAMUEL 3:1

[1] There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. And David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

TRANSITION

So, behind the scenes of all these happenings,

- God is slowly, but surely,
- strengthening his anointed king.

Abner can oppose all he wants.

- But he's outmatched against...
- the God of the Universe.

Now verses 2 through 5 get strange,

- because up till now it has seemed like...
- David a pretty good picture of...
- a man after God's own heart.

But the tone in the next couple chapters really grows ominous.

SLIDE IT'S COMPLICATED

Chapter 3, verse 2.

2 SAMUEL 3:2-5

[2] And sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel; [3] and his second, Chileab, of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmi king of Geshur; [4] and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; [5] and the sixth, Ithream, of Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

EXPLAIN: POLYGAMY

So, this is part of how God is strengthening David's house...

- by giving him heirs...sons.

And he's producing heirs through six different wives.

So, I want to take a minute,

- and talk about polygamy.

Some are going to ask the question,

- *“Well, a bunch of the major characters in the Old Testament...*
- *had multiple wives.*
 - *Even David, the man after God’s own heart.*
- *What do you do with that?*
 - *Either the Bible cannot be trusted...*
 - *or polygamy must be ok!”*

And listen to me, NO, POLYGAMY’S NOT OK.

But this is kinda a hot topic culturally right now,

- with TV shows about polygamy,
- and the rise of the acceptance of polyamorous relationships.

So, let me give you some reasons why it’s not BIBLICAL.

FIRST, we have to define marriage. In Genesis chapter 2...

- God created humans male and female...
- with the purpose that they would marry...
- and the two would become one flesh.

And the key verse, that even Jesus and Paul refer to, is verse 24:

SLIDE GENESIS 2:24

[24] Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

- That one flesh reality...the reality of marriage...
- is profoundly compromised by polygamy.

SECOND,

- The way Jesus dealt with divorce...
 - even though it was permitted in the Old Testament..
- shows us...
- a way to understand why polygamy was also permitted...
 - and yet is now forbidden.

SLIDE MATTHEW 19:7-8

[7] They said to him, “Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?” [8] He said to them, “**Because of your hardness of heart** Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

So the reason Jesus...

- NO LONGER permitted...
- WHAT HAD BEEN permitted...
 - is because of the hardness of their hearts...
 - and now Jesus is raising the standard.

And the reason Jesus didn't address polygamy...the same way...

- Was that in his day,
- the Jewish culture...
- had basically already given it up.
 - It just wasn't an issue.

But there is a way to understand the tolerance...

- of an act CULTURALLY in the Old Testament...
- which is now forbidden.

SLIDE IT'S COMPLICATED

THIRD, every biblical narrative that includes mention of polygamy...

- is saturated with strife,
- and jealousy,
- and favoritism,
- and abuse
 - and it ALWAYS leads to problems.

And FOURTH, just saying,

- *“well, because it’s in the Bible, that must mean it’s ok,”*
- is some really faulty logic.

Just because the Bible speaks of something, doesn’t mean it condones it.

- There are parts of the Bible that are PRESCRIPTIVE, right?
 - They prescribe something that we should do or believe.
- And then there are DESCRIPTIVE parts.
 - These parts describe things for us to learn from.

And good biblical interpretation will work through the differences

- between PRESCRIPTIVE...
- and DESCRIPTIVE passages.

The Bible never PRESCRIBES the taking of multiple wives.

- Yes, it DESCRIBES that it happened...
- but it never condones it.

TRANSITION

So, that’s polygamy...

But the deeper problem for us...

- is that this is King David.
- The man after God’s own heart!

How can the man after God's own heart...participate in this?

- PLUS, while polygamy is definitely wrong...
- it is ESPECIALLY wrong for the King of Israel.

Deuteronomy 17 has a section...

- specifically about how Israel's Kings...
- were to conduct themselves,
- and verse 17 says this:

SLIDE DEUTERONOMY 17:17a

[17] And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away

EXPLAIN: DISOBEDIENT

You see, it was common in those days for kings to take multiple wives.

- First, it was a show of strength.
- But also, it's how they amassed power.

And tragically, David went along more with society than God's word.

- So, listen, David...a man after God's own heart,
- is in blatant disobedience to God's law here.

But...

- Saul was disobedient,
- and he was rejected.

So, is David really a man after God's own heart or not?

Is David really the king we are looking for or not?

Well, **SLIDE IT'S COMPLICATED**

TRANSITION

Now, in verses 6-8,

- while the houses of David and Saul were at war,
- Abner was trying to make himself strong...
 - by taking one of Saul's concubines,
 - and sleeping with her.

But Ish-bosheth calls Abner out on this.

Abner gets ticked off, and makes this vow.

Look at verse 9:

2 SAMUEL 3:9-10

[9] God do so to Abner and more also, if I do not accomplish for David what the LORD has sworn to him, [10] to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba.”

EXPLAIN

So, that's how WE KNOW that Abner knew!

- Abner KNEW that the Lord had sworn to make David king.

He'd been opposing God...

- But now Abner is swearing to switch teams.
- He's going to work to establish David over all 12-tribes of Israel.

So, Abner reaches out to David,

- and asks him to make a covenant with him...
- so that he will help him become king over Israel.

Verse 13:

2 SAMUEL 3:13

[13] And David said, “Good; I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you; that is, you shall not see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul’s daughter, when you come to see my face.”

EXPLAIN: MICHAL

So, here we find a really disturbing incident involving David’s first wife.

- Michal was King Saul’s daughter,
 - and David’s first love.

But, while David was on the run,

- Saul took Michal and married her off to another man.
- Meanwhile, over 10 years, David marries six MORE wives.

And now, here we are in chapter 3,

- more than a decade later,
- David decides he wants Michal back as wife...
 - but probably not because he misses her...
 - he’s got six other wives!
 - It’s probably because he needs her for strategic reasons

Marrying her would give him a political alliance with the house of Saul.

And this leads to a terribly sad moment.

Verse 14:

2 SAMUEL 3:14-16

[14] Then David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul’s son, saying, “Give me my wife Michal, for whom I paid the bridal price of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.” [15] And Ish-bosheth sent and took her from her husband Paltiel the son of Laish. [16] But her husband went with her,

weeping after her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, “Go, return.” And he returned.

EXPLAIN

What stands out in these verses...

- is the utterly callous attitude David has...
 - toward Michal and her husband.

He breaks up a happy home for his own political convenience.

In general, we'll see that women are pawns for David.

- And, by the way, this won't be the last time...
- David takes another man's wife for his convenience.
 - We've got the infamous Bathsheba incident just ahead.

But listen:

- The Bathsheba incident doesn't come out of nowhere;
- it's the fruition of a dark pattern in David's life.
 - David, despite being a man after God's own heart,
 - has a besetting sin...
 - seeds of sin...
 - that will ultimately bring him down.

APPLICATION

So, here's my second application question for you:

First it was: ARE YOU OPPOSING GOD?

Now it's: **SLIDE ARE YOU ALLOWING SIN?**

- What might that besetting sin be for you?

Because whatever it is, the seeds of it are already there.

I've asked it like this of you before:

- if you knew that this year,
- Satan was going to take you down,
- how would he do it?
 - Sexual temptation?
 - An affair?
 - Pornography?
 - Cheating on your finances?
 - A temper problem?
 - Abuse of power?
 - Bitterness?
 - Unforgiveness?
 - Judgmentalism?

Whatever it is...

- The seeds of compromise are present inside you...
- long before they harvest in destruction.

If you were to commit some heinous sin 3-4 years from now...
what would you look back on today as the seeds of that sin?

You see, sin is like cancer growing inside of you;

- it may start out small,
 - but left unchecked,
- it metastasizes until it takes over all the organs...
- and brings the whole body down.

Is there a pet sin in your life that you are trying to domesticate?

- That you're trying to tame?
- That you're trying to control?
- That you're keeping hidden away?

You see, I think many of us hoped...

- that the day we started following Christ...
- sin would just show itself to the door.

But that's not how it works...

- especially when you make a guest room for it!
 - We don't see sin as a predator that might kill us...
 - no, we try to control it like it is a pet.

If you knew Satan was going to bring you down, how would it happen?

- Identify the seed.
- Identify the cancer.
- Identify the pet.
- And put that sin to death!

If not, you may have your own Bathsheba incident.

It's like the Puritan, John Owen, said,

SLIDE *"You must be killing sin or it will be killing you."*

And our section for today ends like this:

2 SAMUEL 3:17-19

[17] And Abner conferred with the elders of Israel, saying, "For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you. [18] Now then bring it about, for the LORD has promised David, saying, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from the hand of all their enemies.'" [19] Abner also spoke to Benjamin. And then Abner went to tell David at Hebron all that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin thought good to do.

So, God IS bringing about his king.

- David will be king over Israel.
 - What will happen to Abner, and Joab, and Ish-bosheth?
 - Well, that's next week.

CONCLUSION

Now, your reaction to this text might be,

- *"Well Pastor, that is some messed up stuff."*
- *"I mean, this is like the Bible version of Game of Thrones."*

Yeah... **SLIDE W/PADS** IT'S COMPLICATED

But what all of this reveals...

- is that the kingdom that David inherits is a mess.
- AND David himself is a brewing mess.
 - And, while David is able to bring a chapter of peace,
 - pretty soon the whole thing will unravel.

IT'S COMPLICATED.

And David, the man after God's own heart, is far from perfect.

HE'S COMPLICATED.

But to quote the great reformer, Martin Luther.

SLIDE *"God can draw a straight line with a crooked stick."*

Here's what this text ultimately shows us:

While David IS a man after God's own heart...

- **David is not the king we're looking for.**
 - Humanity needs a different Savior.
- And see, that leads us...
 - to another King will be born,
 - a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

And unlike David, this King will have no compromises of character.

- He won't use his power to take wives...
- or extort privileges from others;
 - instead, he'll use his power to lay down his life...
 - for his people...
 - even for his enemies.

And through his death and resurrection...

- he will release into the world a power...
- that can heal us at our most broken places.

David is not the King we need. Jesus is.

BLANK SLIDE

So, I pose the questions to you this morning:

- ARE YOU OPPOSING GOD?
- ARE YOU ALLOWING SIN?

Come to Jesus...the truer and better king.

Pray with me.

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

- Brown, Chris. *Second Chances*.
- Brown, Chris. *The Kingdom is Coming*.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. Focus on the Bible Commentaries. 2 Samuel: Out of Every Adversity.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *Establishing the Kingdom is a Bloody Business*.
- Greear, J.D. *New Beginnings*.
- Piper, John. *May I Have Two Wives? Six Vetoes*.
<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/may-i-have-two-wives-six-vetoes>
- Tsumura, David Toshio. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. The Second Book of Samuel.