

SLIDE HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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: FILLER EPISODE

You ever find yourself watching through your favorite TV show,

- and you get to an episode...
 - that seems to halt the progression of a series?
- You watch it and say,
 - *“Well, that episode seems to serve...*
 - *function or purpose...*
 - *no overarching plot.*
 - *I hate that episode!*

Well, in the world of Television,

- those episodes have gained the rather negative term:
- a “filler episode.”

But there is often more than meets the eye on these “filler episodes.”

You see, a “filler” episode can provide an opportunity...

- to clarify a show’s main themes and messages,
- and can even develop deeper traits in the characters.

TRANSITION

Well, 2 Samuel chapters 2 through 5 can, sorta be seen, as filler chapters.

But I don't mean that in a negative way.

- You see, the next three chapters...
- are David slowly assuming the role of King of Israel.
 - But it doesn't happen overnight.

And these will be far from simply throw-away sermons!

- So, while you may not remember these stories...
- or may have never even read these stories,
- or almost certainly have never heard sermons preached
 - on these chapters...

I really believe God has important things to reveal to us in these chapters.

So, here we go. 2 Samuel chapter 2. Let's pick it up in verse 1.

2 SAMUEL 2:1a

[1] After this...

EXPLAIN

Alright, stop! So, remember,

- David now knows of the death of King Saul.
- He has been given the crown of Saul,
- and he is now posed to be the next King of Israel.

BUT do you remember where David is residing at this point?

- Ziklag. Yeah, he's living in Philistine territory.
- **He's living in the enemy's territory...**

But now he has the option to go home.

- Saul is dead, and so, what is David going to do?

2 SAMUEL 2:1

[1] After this David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?” And the LORD said to him, “Go up.” David said, “To which shall I go up?” And he said, “To Hebron.”

EXPLAIN: INQUIRY

So, David inquired of the Lord.

- And this piggy-backs on last week,
- but David is in full submission to God.
 - He doesn't want to move without God leading him.

Now, you're like,

- *“Well, I'd definitely follow God if he was this clear with me!”*
 - Like, *“God, where do you want me to move?”*
 - *Aurora?*
 - *You sure?*
 - *Alright...thanks...*
 - *I guess.*
- Like, how easy would that be?

But I want you to remember,

- God directing like this was incredibly rare in the Old Testament.
- God rarely gave these kinds of leadings...
- and it almost always happened to the King alone!
 - Not to everyday Israelites.

And this wasn't like,

- David was doing his quiet time in the morning...
 - with his Prayer Journal and a cup of coffee...
- and God was just speaking to him audibly, “Go to Hebron!”

No, in David's crew he had a priest, Abiathar.

- And he had the ephod,
- a priestly garment worn and used to inquire of the Lord.

So, David is likely inquiring of the Lord...

- in the prescribed method,
- through a priest of God.

This is different from Saul constantly taking matters into his own hands.

- HOW we GO ABOUT doing things...
- matters JUST AS MUCH AS the things we do.

EXPLAIN: HEBRON

Now, Hebron is one of the most important cities in southern Judah.

- In Genesis 13, Abram builds an altar to the Lord at Hebron.
- Abraham's wife, Sarah died and was buried in Hebron.
- Additionally, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Rebecca, and Leah...
 - were all buried in the same cave in Hebron.

So,

- David is being told to leave the enemy's territory...
- and to return to the place of the covenant...

God's telling him to return to the Promised Land.

POINT: COME HOME

And it's my first point today:

God is telling David to **SLIDE COME HOME**

Remember how I said last week:

- that you never achieve the PURPOSES of God...
- by breaking the PRECEPTS of God.

Well, I'll add to that idea by saying this:

- You can never walk in the PROMISES of God...
- while living away from the PEOPLE of God.

David is still living in enemy territory!

- And, yes, God has promised him that he would be king!
 - That's God's promise to him!

But for a year-and-a-half David has been living with the enemy.

- He's been fighting with the enemy.
- He was even planning on fighting AGAINST JUDAH...
 - for the enemy!
- And now God's call is: COME HOME.

So, I wonder what's going on in David's mind?

- *"My people know I've been living with the Philistines.*
 - *I wonder if they think I'm a traitor?*
 - *I wonder if they think I've betrayed my people?*
 - *I wonder if they think I've betrayed my homeland?*
 - *I wonder if they'll hate me?*
 - *I wonder if they'll reject me?*
 - *I wonder if they'll ever welcome me back?"*

But God says, *"David, it's time to COME HOME."*

APPLICATION

And I wonder, church, if the same thing might be true for some of us.

- Listen, we've got enough newer people here...
 - or people checking out the church...
 - that I'd guess that there are some similar thoughts here.

- *“Man, I’d love to come back to church...*
- *But I’ve been living with the enemy for a long time now.*
- *I’ve kinda cut myself off.*
 - *I haven’t been following...*
 - *I haven’t been faithful...*
 - *I haven’t been very spiritual...*
- *I’ve been gone for a long time...*
- *and I wonder...if I come back...*
 - *Will they hate me?*
 - *Will they reject me?*
 - *What will they think of me?*
 - *Will they judge me?*
 - *Will they ever welcome me back?”*

And with the PEOPLE OF GOD the answer is always: COME HOME.

- COME HOME to the people of God.
- COME HOME to the promised land.
- COME HOME to the church.
 - You’ll never walk in the PROMISES of God...
 - while living away from the PEOPLE of God.

So, David inquires, and God says,

- *“It’s time to leave the enemy’s territory,*
- *and COME HOME.”*

Verse 2:

2 SAMUEL 2:2

[2] So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel.

EXPLAIN: WIVES

Remember, David actually has 3 wives...

- and he will amass more...
- and it's a problem.
 - But we'll get into that next week.

Verse 3:

2 SAMUEL 2:3

[3] And David brought up his men who were with him, everyone with his household, and they lived in the towns of Hebron.

EXPLAIN: EVERYONE!

So, the thing I want you to notice...

- is the completeness with which David leaves Ziklag,
- and heads to Hebron.

It's complete separation!

- He takes his wives,
 - but also his 600 men,
 - and their wives and children.
- And then it says **everyone in his household**.

They all go!

ILLUSTRATION: BURN THE SHIPS

And that made me think of this illustration:

In 1519, Spanish Captain, Hernán Cortés...

landed on the shores of Mexico...the new world.

He was a Spanish conquistador,

- and his goal was to seek out the cities of the Aztek empire,
 - led by the infamous Montezuma,
- and raid them for the gold they had amassed.

Cortés knew the capital Aztek city was there,

- hundreds of miles inland,
- but he had not seen it.

He also knew he would face imprisonment or death if he returned.

And so, his only alternative was to conquer and settle part of the land.

- Some of his men's loyalty wavered,
- and they conspired to seize a ship and escape.

But Cortés moved swiftly to quash their plans.

- To make sure such a mutiny did not happen again,
- he famously decided to burn and sink his ships.

With no way to retreat...

- he and his men marched inland,
- found the famed city,
- and massacred the inhabitants.

POINT: BURN THE SHIPS

Now, I'm not a proponent of the genocidal conquest of Mexico...ok?

But I think this illustrates what David did.

- He made a complete break from the enemy's camp.
- They all go.
- They leave nothing behind.

And it's my second point.

In essence, they **SLIDE BURN THE SHIPS**

It's a complete break.

- He's done with Ziklag.
- He's done with the Philistines.
- He's done running!

AND...he's not leaving any reason to return.

- He's not keeping their options open.
- He's not hedging his bets.
- He BURNED THE SHIPS.

APPLICATION

Hey, some of you...

- You've COME HOME.
- You're back in church.

BUT is there still a part of you that's in the enemy's territory?

Is that you?

Man...you gotta BURN THE SHIPS.

EXAMPLES

You've COME HOME...

- but you're still holding onto that porn addiction.

You've COME HOME...

- but you know you're still drinking too much...
 - when life gets stressful,
 - or you want to cut loose.

You've COME HOME...

- but you're still clinging to that unhealthy relationship...
 - with that man or woman.

And you feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit...

- everytime you relapse back into that thing. Right?
- And you're going,
 - *"Again? God, how did I get here again?"*
 - *I made the same promises,*
 - *and I took the same steps,*
 - *and yet here I am again!*
 - *What is wrong with me?*
 - *I mean, I prayed!*
 - *And I was serious!"*

But I just wonder...have you BURNT THE SHIPS?

PORN

If it's PORN...

- Have you set up any real accountability with another Christian?
 - Wasn't enough?
- OK, have you paid for filters on your phone?
 - Yeah, it's gonna cost some money.
 - Still not working?
- Have you gotten rid of your phone?
 - You're like, *"I can't get rid of my phone.*
 - *I need it. Plus it cost me \$1000."*

Hey, you gotta BURN THE SHIP.

- You're like, *"I can't.*
 - *That's too costly.*
 - *That's too much."*
- No... **It's not YOU CAN'T...it's that YOU WON'T.**

How much would you pay to be free of that porn addiction?

- Seriously, how much?
- You wanna be free?
 - Get a dumb phone! They sell those!
 - Get rid of your TV, if that's your temptation.

BURN THE SHIPS.

ALCOHOL

If it's ALCOHOL.

- You made the resolution, *"I'm done drinking."*
 - Not working?
- Did you get rid of all the alcohol in your home?
 - *"Well, I have a pretty decent bourbon collection."*

Hey BURN THE SHIPS!

- *"Well, all my friends go to the bar on Friday night."*
- *I don't want to lose my friends."*
 - Hey, you might need new friends.
- *"Well, I get tempted everytime I go grocery shopping..."*
- *now that they sell alcohol at King Soopers."*
 - Ok, stop grocery shopping.
- You're like, *"I can't. How am I gonna get groceries?"*
 - Get grocery delivery.
 - Order them online.
 - Do curbside pickup.

It's not that YOU CAN'T...it's that YOU WON'T.

BURN THE SHIPS!

RELATIONSHIPS

You keep going back to an unhealthy RELATIONSHIP?

- Unfollow and block that person on Social Media.
 - That's not working?
- Delete your accounts!
- You still have their number in your phone?
 - Delete their number!
- They keep texting you?
 - Change your number!
 - *"But everyone knows that number!"*

Hey, BURN THE SHIPS!

APPLICATION

- Where are you saying I CAN'T...
- when in reality, you're just saying I WON'T?

You say, *"that sounds pretty costly."*

- Yeah!
 - Welcome to the promised land!
- It's gonna cost you everything!

Here's how Jesus pleads with us on this idea:

SLIDE MATTHEW 5:29–30

[29] If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. [30] And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

TRANSITION

Now, that's obviously hyperbole.

But Jesus is saying:

- You should be willing to take whatever drastic step necessary...
- to get out of the enemy's territory!

SLIDE BURN THE SHIPS

- Why would you ever expect freedom from these things...
- if you're still milling around in the territory of your enemy?

So, David's move...

- is to COME HOME.
- To BURN THE SHIPS.

And finally, verse 4:

2 SAMUEL 2:4a

[4] And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

EXPLAIN

So, finally, David is anointed as the King.

- But notice: David is ONLY made king of Judah.
- That is ONLY one of the tribes of Israel.
- There are another 11 tribes.

There's still a long way to go.

Let's keep going.

2 SAMUEL 2:4b-7

When they told David, “It was the men of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul,” [5] David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead and said to them, “May you be blessed by the LORD, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord and buried him. [6] Now may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you. And I will do good to you because you have done this thing. [7] Now therefore let your hands be strong, and be valiant, for Saul your lord is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.”

EXPLAIN: JABESH-GILEAD

So, the first official act of King David,

- is to honor the men who honored the body of Saul.

The men of Jabesh-gilead showed their devotion to Saul...

- by giving him an honorable burial...
- when his decapitated body...
- was hung on the Philistine wall.

So, when David comes to power and hears of their deed,

- the first thing he did was to commend,
- congratulate,
- and bless these brave men...
 - but he also invites them to join him.

TRANSITION

Again, this is just a glimpse into the character of David.

And then look at what happens in verse 8:

2 SAMUEL 2:8-11

[8] But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim, [9] and he made him king over Gilead and the Ashurites and Jezreel and Ephraim and Benjamin and all Israel. [10] Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. [11] And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

EXPLAIN

Well, dang. Things were looking so good for David.

- He had COME HOME to the promised land.
- He had cut all ties with the enemy Philistines.

But in comes Abner.

If you remember...

- Abner was Saul's right-hand man.
 - And as we will see next chapter,
- he is well aware that God has promised the kingship to David.

Not all of Israel knew, but Abner definitely knew.

- And so, in opposition to God's chosen king, David...
- Abner takes Saul's fourth son, Ish-bosheth,
- and makes him king over the other 11 tribes.

So, Israel thinks they are being led by the rightful heir to the throne...

- but they're not.

POINT 3: OPPOSITION

And this is where I'll make my last point in this section.

- Even when you COME HOME...
- and even when you BURN THE SHIPS...
- you can **SLIDE EXPECT OPPOSITION**

ILLUSTRATION: RUNNING

An illustration I like is running.

So, imagine you're out for a run,

- and as you go running,
- you have the wind at your back,
- just pushing you and giving you an extra step,
 - you just feel like you're killing it.

That is, until you turn to run back home.

Because with the wind at your face, it's now working against you.

- As you run into the wind...
 - you feel sluggish,
 - and you feel the struggle,
 - and you feel the battle.

This is kinda how it feels following Jesus.

- Sometimes the wind's at your back...
 - and you just feel like you're cruising.
- Other times it's a head wind...
 - and every step feels like a fight.

And listen church,

- even when you get back with God's people...
- and start the good and hard work of burning the ships...
- the enemy is going to oppose that.

You can EXPECT OPPOSITION.

APPLICATION: SMOOTH SAILING

Now, doesn't that seem a bit contradictory?

Like, normally when I think,

- *"Man, I'm in the PLACE God wants me to be...*
- *doing the STUFF God wants me to do."*
 - I don't normally equate that with much opposition.

But the Bible shows us something different.

And I think it's something to note here:

- Even when you burn the ships...
- it doesn't mean smooth sailing.

This is where a lot of us can get into trouble,

- because we often determine whether we are in God's will or not
 - based on whether or not we feel good,
 - or are comfortable,
 - or have no perceivable roadblocks.

But every big move of the Lord in my life...hasn't come easy...

- but has come with sweat...
- and tears...
- and PERSEVERANCE.

So, listen, if you sense the Spirit speaking to you today...

- to COME HOME...
- or to BURN SOME SHIPS...
 - just remember...
- you can EXPECT OPPOSITION!
 - But DON'T GIVE UP!
 - STAY! PERSEVERE!

We'll see more of this in the next couple chapters.

CONCLUSION **SLIDE W/PADS**

So, let me close like this:

I think there's probably some work we need to do here, this morning.

- Gosh, I think there are probably people today...
- who need do some work...
- in each one of these camps.

First, gosh, I'm sure there are some of you...

who really just need to take the first step to COME HOME.

- You've been living away from the people of God...
 - for so long now...
- and Jesus is saying, "*COME HOME.*"

My prayer for you is...

- that like the Prodigal Son,
 - who leaves his Father's house...
 - to squander his fortune in licentious living...
 - only to find himself in the lowest of lows...
 - longing to eat the slop that he was feeding to pigs.

Here's what the text says:

SLIDE LUKE 15:17a

[17] "But when he came to himself..."

That's my prayer for you!

- That you would **come to yourself!**

Oh, what a sweet gift it is to be convicted by God's Spirit!

God says to David,

- *“It’s time to leave the Philistines.*
 - *It’s time to leave enemy territory.*
- *It’s time to go to Hebron.*
 - *It’s time to COME HOME.”*

Is he speaking that to you today?

- Don’t be afraid.
- COME HOME.

BLANK SLIDE Second, you might have COME HOME...

- but are you still fooling around in enemy territory?
 - Like, have you kept your options open,
 - or hedged your bets,
 - or just kept one foot back there?

If so, it’s time to BURN THE SHIPS.

- Do you need to go and pour out all the alcohol in your house?
- Do you need to throw that vape pen in the trash?
- Do you need to get rid of Social Media?
- Do you need to get rid of your phone?

Hey, I’m serious about this... **what are you willing to pay to be free?**

BURN THE SHIPS.

And third,

- if you’ve done a lot of that work,
- and you’re looking around wondering,
 - *“when’s stuff gonna start getting better?”*

Gosh, maybe your expectations were skewed.

- After you burnt the ships,
- did you really expect only smooth sailing?

Oh, how I wish that's how it worked.

But remember Jesus' words:

SLIDE JOHN 16:33

[33] I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Church, the promise isn't that Jesus makes everything in life better.

No, the promise is that Jesus is better than life!

EXPECT OPPOSITION.

- Expect trials.
- Expect tribulations.
- Expect suffering.

And PERSEVERE! DON'T GIVE UP...cause He's better!

BLANK SLIDE

- COME HOME
- BURN THE SHIPS
- and EXPECT OPPOSITION

So, let's do some work, church.

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*.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. Focus on the Bible Commentaries. 2 Samuel: Out of Every Adversity.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *The Kingdom of God is Like*.
- Tsumura, David Toshio. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. The Second Book of Samuel.