

HOW TO SPOT A TROUBLEMAKER 2 Samuel 15:1-11

1. Beware of people who are overly concerned with the external

Now in all Israel there was no one who was praised as much as Absalom for his good looks. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he cut the hair of his head—at the end of every year he cut it because it was heavy on him—when he cut it, he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels according to the king's standard. (14:25-26)

2. Beware of people who create illusions

After this it happened that Absalom provided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. (1)

3. Beware of people who are constantly critical of others

Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your case is good and right; but there is no deputy of the king to hear you." (3)

4. Beware of people who make great promises

Moreover Absalom would say, "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice." (4)

5. Beware of people who always tell you what you want to hear

And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. (5-6)

6. Beware of people whose private life doesn't match their public devotion

Now it came to pass after forty years that Absalom said to the king, "Please, let me go to Hebron and pay the vow which I made to the Lord. For your servant took a vow while I

dwelt at Geshur in Syria, saying, 'If the Lord indeed brings me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord.'" (7-8)