

Through the Bible at 30,000 Feet

2 Samuel / *Sin Ravishes but God Restores*

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Recap: *If you are just now joining us for the first time here is what have we seen so far...*

- **Genesis:** *God creates the universe, and everything He does is good; Adam & Eve rebel against God's word, and sin & death enter the world; but God promises to send a Hero who will crush the power of sin & save His people. God **chooses** Abraham & his family to be His special family through whom that Savior would come. And the rest of the Bible follows the story of that special family.*
- **Exodus:** *God rescues His family from slavery & teaches them how to love & worship*
- **Leviticus:** *God makes a way to **dwell with** them through purification laws & Tabernacle*
- **Numbers:** *God leads them to the edge of the Promised Land, but they choose fear instead*
- **Deuteronomy:** *God reminds the next generation of the choice between blessings/curses*
- **Joshua:** *God leads them into the Promise Land, drives out their enemies, and gives rest...but when Joshua & his generation dies, another generation arises that doesn't know the Lord, and that begins a downward cycle of sin throughout the land.*
- **Judges:** *God raises up judges to save His people as they fall deeper & deeper into sin*
- **Ruth:** *God gives a picture of redemption through the love story of Ruth & Boaz*
- **1 Samuel:** *This book records the transition from the leadership of the judges to the leadership of the kings. God establishes the throne in Israel – rejecting Saul & choosing David*
- **2 Samuel:** *God blesses the land under the reign of King David*

THE BIBLE

As we spend these few minutes meditating on the message of 2 Samuel together, let's just take a moment to consider this book that we hold in our hands. In this book we have the words of our Maker. This is *God's* book. *He* is the Author. These are *His* words. This is *His* masterpiece, and every story in it continues to unfold exactly as He planned before the beginning of the world. The stories are graphic and honest and beautiful and heartbreaking and hopeful. These words expose the lies of this world and opens our eyes to true reality. It's a window through which we behold the breathtaking glories of God. And it is constantly pointing to the Main Character in all of history: *Jesus the Messiah*.

There is no other book in the universe like this book! It's alive and active and changing lives all across the world every day. I recently read **an article** (published in August of this year) which listed 52 countries across the world where the Bible is illegal (or severely restricted).¹ *Why?* Because it's powerful. Because it puts unearthly power in the hands of every person who reads it and believes it and obeys it. Because it convicts of sin. Because it exalts God as the only sovereign Authority in the universe. Because it changes hearts, and it moves people to give up everything for the sake of following Jesus.

¹ <https://churchleaders.com/youth/403760-how-many-countries-is-the-bible-banned-in.html>

There is a reason that the Bible continues to be the best-selling book in history --- because there is simply no other book that compares to it.

Now, most Christians would probably affirm everything I just said. They would affirm that the Bible is the Word of God, but I wonder how many Christians in our country love these words the way that David loved these words...

“Oh, how I love Your law (this book)! It is my meditation all the day.”
~ Psalm 119:97

I wonder how many Christians in our churches today treasure these words the way that Jeremiah treasured them...

**“Your words were found, and I ate them,
And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.”**
~ Jeremiah 15:16

Or the way Job treasured them...

“...I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”
~ Job 23:12

III. I was in the **barber shop** this past week, and I was studying 2 Samuel while I was waiting.² So one of the barbers sat down next me and asked me what I was reading. He seemed genuinely interested, and so I told him all the things that we (as a church) have been seeing together in our journey through the Bible. At one point in the conversation, he asked me how many times I've read the Bible, and I said, *“Man, I've read this book many times – because I love it!”*

He asked because it's unusual to see somebody studying the Bible in the barbershop. But it's not unusual at all to see a crowd of people scrolling through social media on their cell...

How insane is that!

- The everlasting, life-changing, breathtakingly powerful Word of God is strange in a public setting...
- While the empty, meaningless, fleeting, and life-sucking trivialities on our cell phones are totally normal.

Christian, if an unbeliever were to have shadowed your life this past week, I wonder what would they conclude about your love for this book...

- How much time was your Bible open in front of you compared to how much time your television set was turned on?
- How much time did you spend looking into the Word of God compared to how much time you spent scrolling social media?

² I love my barber shop, but they definitely run on African time. 😊

Did you know that **the average American** spends over **5 hours** on their phones & over **3 hours** watching television every day... and the average Christian in our country spends less than **15 minutes** in their Bible?

Q. What does that mean?

A. It means that this book is way more important on our lips than it is in our hearts.

Why spend so much time with this question?

Because **2 Samuel** is the story of the greatest king in Israel's history (King David), and his entire life was shaped by his love for God's Word.

- Was David perfect? No. Not by a long shot (and we will see that today).
- But even in his sin, his response is shaped by his love for the words of God.

And with all my heart I want for us to be a church that builds our lives in the Word of God.

- I want us to know it and to love it the way David did.
- I want us to trade our cable subscriptions for the more time in the Word.
- I want us to care more about this sacred message than we do about social media.
- I don't want us to reflect the average American.
- I want us to prioritize the Bible in the morning.
- I want us to bring our own copies when we gather.
- I want us to talk about the Word when we go out for lunch and when we grab coffee.
- I want us to orient our priorities around the Bible
- I want us to take risks together because of the Bible
- I want us to make decisions based on the Bible
- I want us to encourage one another with promises from the Bible.

And I want this because (as we see in **2 Samuel**) God blesses His people when His Word is central in their life.³

Far too many churches have traded God's blessings for Netflix and YouTube, and I don't want that for North Center.

2 SAMUEL

As with every book that we have looked at so far, there is so much that we can glean from 2 Samuel, but one of the most pronounced messages of 2 Samuel is the **devastation** that comes from sin **AND** the sovereign faithfulness and mercy of God to **redeem** and to **restore** those who come to Him with a heart of repentance.

It's about the ruins of our sin and the restoration from our Savior.

³ As you read the story of Israel's first king (Saul) in **1 Samuel**, it is clear that he didn't care half as much about the Word of God as he did about his own kingdom – *and God rejected him.*

And as you read the story of Israel's second king (David) in **2 Samuel**, it is clear that he didn't care half as much about his kingdom as he did the Word of God – *and God blessed him forever.*

CONTEXT

Last week (in **1 Samuel**) we saw the transition from the time of the judges to the time of the kings. Samuel was the last judge in Israel. Toward the end of his life, God's people began to ask for a king so that they could be like all the other nations around them (**1 Sam. 8:20**).

So God tells Samuel to anoint Saul as Israel's first king. But (as Cody pointed out last Sunday), Saul cared more about his own image & his power than He did about the Word of God – and so God rejected him and chose David, a man after God's own heart (**1 Sam. 13:14**).

But even after David was anointed as the next king of Israel, Saul would continue to occupy the throne for quite a few years...as his relationship with God continued to decline until the very end.

- Saul had an incredible beginning, but he repeatedly turned his back on God's Word, and it destroyed his reign, and it destroyed his life.

At the end of **1 Samuel**, Saul dies.

Chapters 1–10 highlight David's ascent to the throne and God's blessing over David's reign.

- **Chapter 1:** David mourns over the death of Saul & over the death of his best friend, Jonathan.⁴
- **Chapter 2:** David is anointed as the king of Judah, but one of Saul's sons is anointed as the king over the rest of Israel. This lasted for over seven years.⁵
- **Chapters 3–4:** some of the tension between this divided kingdom during those 7 years.
- **Chapter 5:** David is finally made king over all Israel, and the Bible says that he reigned for a total of 40 years (**5:4**). He captures Jerusalem (which is why it became known as the City of David), and then he defeats the Philistine army.
- **Chapter 6:** the Ark of the Covenant (which was central in Israel's worship) is brought into Jerusalem, and David celebrates – big time! 😊
- **Chapter 7:** God makes a covenant with David to establish his throne forever (**7:16**), and David responds with an awesome prayer of thanksgiving in **7:18–29**.
- **Chapter 8:** David continues to have victory after victory...and this is probably the pinnacle of David's reign.
 - "...the Lord preserved David wherever he went" (**8:6, 14**)
 - "...David administered judgment and justice to all his people" (**8:15**)

⁴ David's relationship with Jonathan was something really, really special.

⁵ David is King over only a small fraction of the land, yet he continues to trust in God's plan and in God's timing.

- **Chapter 9:** David shows tremendous kindness to one of Saul's sons (Mephibosheth) who was lame in his feet – and he makes him part of his family. The son of David's enemy “ate continually at the king's table” (9:13) as if he were one of the king's own sons (9:11).⁶
- **Chapter 10:** he continues to defeat the enemies of God's people.

Several key themes in these first 10 chapters are: David prayed; David obeyed;⁷ and David worshiped⁸ - and God blessed David.

But then the story takes a sharp turn in **Chapter 11:** David chose sin over God, and the consequences were unspeakably devastating.

- From our vantage point, David's sin starts out as a small thing...but here's the thing about sin – it never stays small. If you are making sinful choices in your life that feel small right now...they won't stay that way.

III. My small campfire becoming a forest fire! That's the way sin works. Either you put it out (*by the grace of God*) or it will become a destroying fire. That's exactly what happens in David's story...

Read: **11:1–17**

Notice how the sin continues to grow...

1. David stays home when he is supposed to be leading his people (1)
 - *Abdicating responsibility*
2. David lets his eyes linger on a woman who is not his wife (2)
 - *Lust*
3. Instead of repenting of his lustful thoughts and asking God for forgiveness, David pursues this woman (3)
4. David uses his authority to bring her into his home and then sleeps with her (4);
 - *Rape*
5. Bathsheba becomes pregnant, and David tries to cover up his adultery by having her husband come home from the battle to sleep with his wife – so that everybody would think it was his child (5–13).
 - *Deception*
6. When that doesn't work, he writes a letter to the commander of his army, telling him to make sure that Bathsheba's husband gets put into a situation where he would be sure to be killed in the battle, and so Bathsheba's husband was killed in battle (14–17).
 - *Murder*

⁶ This is a beautiful picture of how we are welcomed by the King of Kings. We were an enemy with nothing to offer and no hope of any meaningful life, but God welcomes us into His presence and gives us a seat at His table and makes us part of His family.

⁷ See: 2:1–2; 5:19, 23

⁸ See: 6:14–19; 7:18–29

The second half of this book is basically a chronicle of the ongoing consequences of David's sin:

- **Chapter 12:** David & Bathsheba's child dies shortly after he's born.
- **Chapter 13:** David's oldest son (Amnon) basically repeats David's sin, but instead of raping the neighbor girl, he rapes his sister. And then another one of David's sons (Absalom) spends the next two years waiting for the right opportunity to kill Amnon – which he does.
- **Chapter 14–17:** Absalom engages in treason against David, takes over David's throne in Jerusalem, rapes David's concubines (in front of all Israel), and then tries killing David.
- **Chapter 18:** there's war, and the commander of David's army kills Absalom.
- **Chapter 19:** David returns to Jerusalem, but the people are now divided over how to respond to David.
- **Chapter 20:** a man leads a rebellion against David and more people die.

David loved God, and God loved David.

But that didn't mean David was immune from sin – or from the consequence of sin.

David's sin ravished his life and the lives of so many others.

Satan will always try to make you believe that your sin won't really affect you & that it certainly won't affect other around you...and he's been spreading that lie since **Genesis 3**.

But the truth is that there is always a price tag to our sin:

- It's never free.
- There are *always* consequences.
- And they *always* affect more people than you think.

Adam & Eve found that out in the Garden, and David found that out in the palace. Sin ravishes.

In the final chapter of **2 Samuel**, we read that over 70 thousand people in Israel died because of David's sin.

And we are reminded of the consequences of sin every time we celebrate the Lord's Table.

- If ever you question whether or not there are any consequences for your sin...look at the cross. Look at the blood poured out for you and the body broken for you.
- Jesus was tortured, butchered, stripped, and nailed to slab of wood on a hill outside of Jerusalem because of my sin...and because of your sin.

Sin ravishes life, but the story doesn't end there for David.

In **chapter 12**, the prophet Nathan comes and confronts David about his sin – which was a really courageous and loving thing to do (*and is part of the reason why Asher's middle name is Nathaniel*).

And David responds the way he always does when he is confronted with the word of God concerning his sin: *he repents*.

So David said to Nathan,
“I have sinned against the Lord.”
And Nathan said to David,
“The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.”
~ *2 Samuel 12:13*

See if you can finish this promise from the New Testament...

“If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins
And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
~ *1 John 1:9*

David confessed his sin, and though he would live with the consequences for the rest of his life, God forgave him of his sin, and then God redeemed the situation! God took what Satan meant for evil, and He used it for good (just as he had planned to all along).

After David & Bathsheba’s son died, the Bible says that David “went into the house of the Lord and worshiped” (**12:20**), and then he spent time comforting Bathsheba – and then she became pregnant again, and they named the boy Solomon (**12:24**).

Now not only would Solomon become the wisest king in human history, but more importantly, we read in the first chapter of Matthew’s gospel that Solomon was part of the family line of Jesus!

“And Jesse begot David the king.
David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.”
~ *Matthew 1:6*

Isn’t that amazing! Not only did God forgive David of his sin after he repented, but He then used David’s sin to advance the storyline of Christ.

The story of David & Bathsheba is horrifically dark and profoundly sad...but God is still working. Aslan is still on the move!

He took a story that was tragic to the core, and He used it to bring us one step closer to Jesus! He took what the enemy meant for evil, and He redeemed it.

Just like He did on the cross.

At the Lord’s Table, we remember (with joy and hope and thanksgiving) that Jesus took what the enemy meant for evil, and He used it to redeem us. As Satan was driving nails through Jesus’ feet on the cross, Jesus was crushing Satan’s head.

Yes, sin is costly, but it isn't the end of the story for those who repent and come to God for forgiveness.

CLOSING SONG: *Oh Come to the Altar*

As our music team makes their way to front, I want us to prepare our hearts for the words that we are about to sing.

Are you hurting and broken within?
Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin?
Jesus is calling

Have you come to the end of yourself?
Do you thirst for a drink from the well?
Jesus is calling

**O come to the altar
The Father's arms are open wide
Forgiveness was bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ**

Leave behind your regrets and mistakes
Come today, there's no reason to wait
Jesus is calling

Bring your sorrows and trade them for joy
From the ashes, a new life is born
Jesus is calling

*Oh what a Savior
Isn't He wonderful?
Sing Hallelujah,
Christ is risen
Bow down before Him
For He is Lord of all
Sing Hallelujah,
Christ is risen*