

Finding Victory Over Failure
May 3rd, 2020

Andrew and our worship team continue to amaze me and to bless us all! Amen? I'll be so excited when I can hear them again in person in the worship service! In the meantime, thank God for the technology that allows us all to be together for worship this morning. Wherever you are physically, we are glad you've joined us this morning and by His Holy Spirit we will leave this gathering changed in some way for the better! Please know your staff and leadership will continue to work hard to figure out the best way for us to regather as soon as safely possible. With that being said, our message today is one of great importance for all of us. Let's Pray and ask God to teach us some truths today that will change our very lives! Let's Pray

The title of our message today is Finding Victory Over Failure! In order to find victory over failure, one of the first things you must do is...

Trust God's Pardon

As we continue our look at King David's life, we're going to see that even though he had been a man after God's own heart, he fell into sin and lost his direction in life. He was going to need a pardon from God to find victory over his epic failure!. And we'll see that David struggled with trusting God's pardon, like some of us! So before we talk about David's need to trust God's pardon, we're going to learn some very practical lessons from David's actions that caused the need for the pardon. Take your Bibles and let's turn to 2 Samuel 11 beginning with verse one. You're about to see an example of the stages of sin...

David was not where he was supposed to be!

2 Sam 11:1 In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army.

They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.

For some reason, David chose to send others to do his job. For some reason, David chose to shirk his God-given responsibility to lead his troops. This placed him clearly outside of God's will and plan for his life. I think most of us could go back and look at our own lives and discover that many times temptation to sin has been strongest when we were not where we were supposed to be! Temptation will come even when you are in the will of God, and walking with The Lord, but temptation will be exponentially stronger when you are outside God's plan for your life and not walking with Him! Whatever the circumstance, when temptation comes, we have a decision to make. David made a tragic choice...

Instead of looking away, David explored further

2 Sam 11:2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful,
2 Sam 11:3 and David sent someone to find out about her...

For some reason it seems to be embedded in human nature to want to flirt with sin, and to see how close we can get to it without becoming entangled in its web. We tell ourselves it's not a problem to flirt with sin as long as we don't give in. But you will find, as David found, your objectivity and clarity becomes clouded and jaded when you are playing with sin. Have you ever experienced the mesmerizing effect of sin? Now I want to share with you an insight God gave me years ago when I was a youth evangelist. I shared this insight with many youth groups. Here's what God's Word says we are to do if Satan himself comes to do battle with us...

James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

That just absolutely amazes me. God's Word tells me if I am submitted to God I can resist the devil and he will flee! But listen to what God's Word tells us to do in a situation like David...

2 Tim 2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth...

The King James Version says...

2 Tim 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts:

Amazing! I can resist the Devil himself, but I am to flee youthful lust!

David ignored the warning signs

2 Sam 11:3 and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

Eliam was one of David's elite special forces soldiers. She was the granddaughter of one of his advisers. Uriah the Hittite was one of David's most faithful soldiers and obviously lived close to David's palace. The man David had sent to find out about her was pretty brave in that he knew the answer to the question he was asking. God was using him to warn David of the terrible path he was about to go down. Have you ever ignored warning signs God has placed in your life or the wisdom of a close friend or family member? Dr. Nave pointed out something to me the other day: David had reached a pinnacle in his life. He was the King. He could pretty much do what he wanted to do! That's a privilege most people desire. But having no accountability proved tragic for David as you will see. God's Word tells us...

Prov 10:17 He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray.

Ironically that passage was later written by Solomon, one of David's sons. So when you find yourself aggravated by someone who is trying to hold you accountable, you should instead be thankful! Remember there is always a progression on the path to sin. Here's the next step in the progression...

Evil fantasy leads to evil action

2 Sam 11:4 Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (She had purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she went back home.

Remember this passage from the book of James?

James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

James 1:14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

James 1:15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

We are certainly going to see that tragically play out in our story today because...

The consequences begin

2 Sam 11:5 The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

David should have repented of his sin right then and there, and trusted God's willingness to pardon him. It's not that God takes a light view of sin, He doesn't, and there would have been consequences, but God would have forgiven him and helped him to get back on the right path and direction in life. The sooner we confess sin and allow God to begin His redemptive work the better! But David takes the human approach and...

The coverup begins

2 Sam 11:6 So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent him to David.

2 Sam 11:7 When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going.

2 Sam 11:8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him.

2 Sam 11:9 But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house.

2 Sam 11:10 When David was told, "Uriah did not go home," he asked him, "Haven't you just come from a distance? Why didn't you go home?"

2 Sam 11:11 Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open fields. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

2 Sam 11:12 Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next.

2 Sam 11:13 At David's invitation, he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk. But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master's servants; he did not go home.

David realizes he has messed up and that the integrity of his kingship and leadership might be destroyed if his sin is uncovered. So he begins a desperate coverup attempt. But Uriah was such a loyal soldier and could only think of his fellow soldiers back on the front lines, and he was very loyal to David, his king. It's almost as if Uriah is now in the same place David was in with Saul and David is now acting like Saul. There may be someone in this room today and you're in the beginning stages of a coverup. Please stop the coverup and bring your sin to God trusting His willingness to pardon you and help you before you get any deeper. There will be consequences but if you don't come clean now, you'll be like David where...

The coverup takes a very dark turn

2 Sam 11:14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.

2 Sam 11:15 In it he wrote, "Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."

2 Sam 11:16 So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were.

2 Sam 11:17 When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.

How tragic. An innocent man is now dead in David's attempt to cover up his sin. Here's a stark reality: Man cannot cover his own sin and any attempt to do so will only lead to greater sin. God, on the other hand, doesn't just cover up our sin, He takes the sin away and begins the process of redeeming us and helping us to deal with the consequences of our sin, but we must let Him!

The sooner we let the process of forgiveness and redemption begin the better because

The circle of sins effect widens

2 Sam 11:18 Joab sent David a full account of the battle.

David's coverup plan had indeed led to the death of Uriah, but there was collateral damage. Others had died as well.

2 Sam 11:25 David told the messenger, "Say this to Joab: 'Don't let this upset you; the sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it.' Say this to encourage Joab."

2 Sam 11:26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him.

2 Sam 11:27 After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD. David has now involved Joab in his plot and knows Joab would be deeply troubled once he discovered the truth. He tries to mitigate the damage to his top commander. The loss devastates Bathsheba, Uriah's wife and she goes into mourning. And worst of all, God, the One who had called and appointed David to be Israel's king, the One who had done so much for David is greatly displeased! But here's an amazing thing. You would think after such an epic and hideous failure that God would just get rid of David and choose someone else. But that's not the way God works. There's an old gospel song that puts it this way... "He looked beyond my fault and saw my need!" You might wonder why God had rejected Saul because of his disobedience, and yet did not reject David after such a grievous sin? Remember, God knows the heart! Saul had not been responsive to the conviction and correction of God and was unwilling to change! What will happen with David?

God begins His efforts to redeem David by convicting his heart

2 Sam 12:1 The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor.

2 Sam 12:2 The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle,

2 Sam 12:3 but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

2 Sam 12:4 "Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him."

2 Sam 12:5 David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die!

2 Sam 12:6 He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity."

2 Sam 12:7 Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.

2 Sam 12:8 I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more.

2 Sam 12:9 Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

2 Sam 12:10 Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'

When David heard the story of the little lamb he was incensed and angry. He can't imagine someone doing such a thing and declares that one who had done such a thing deserved to die. So David pronounces the death penalty along with a fourfold repayment. So when he realizes that he's that man, and that the sword would never depart from his house he assumed that he was a dead man!

David believes there will be no pardon for his sin

2 Sam 12:13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die."

David is thinking, "I'm a dead man! I've crossed the line this time! There's no hope for me!" Nathan assures David that he will not be put to death for his sin. He is assured of God's pardon. David had walked away from his calling and purpose in life, but God had not walked away from David or abandoned His plan for him. This faithfulness of God to an unfaithful David is called grace. However...

David is pardoned but consequences remained

2 Sam 12:14 But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die."

And it's at this point we must learn one of the most important lessons of this story for our own personal lives. God does pardon, and even though there are unavoidable consequences to sin, God does not leave us to face those consequences alone. David would discover this through the many consequences he would face. What was done could not be undone! Uriah the Hittite was dead. And there were things to come as a result of David's sin. I want to share something very important with you here. In this situation, we see a direct connection between David's sin and the death of this child. As I've told you many times before, I do not fully understand all of the reasoning or the whys of certain things in the Old Testament. Let me say this...

While there was certainly mercy and forgiveness from God to individuals under the Old Covenant, there is still a stark difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, many times, immediate punishment was the response of God to sin. God's justice required death for death! This fact hasn't changed, but under the New Covenant, God has taken this requirement on Himself by allowing His One and Only Son Jesus to take the punishment for our sin on the Cross! And while there are still consequences which accompany our sin, they are consequences, not punishment. Sometimes people will do something wrong and then when something bad happens, they immediately think God is punishing them for the wrong thing they did. However, under the New Covenant we find these words from Paul...

Rom 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
Rom 8:2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Rom 8:3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,

Rom 8:4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

So you can get the "God is punishing me" thought out of your mind when something bad happens. However, you need to understand two more things: Sometimes God does discipline us, but it's not to punish us, it is to guide us and direct us and to protect us! And why do I say "to protect us?" Because when we sin the consequences are painful, and even tragic. God wants to protect us from that by helping us avoid making sinful choices. Wouldn't you all agree it would be better if we listened and followed God's principles in the first place? Of course! But when we don't and there's consequences, God is so gracious He will help us get through the bad stuff! God knows that sin hurts and destroys and deceives, so He desires to save us from our sins, and to turn us away from our sins! But here's a testimony to God's mercy: If we mess up and sin, He offers a pardon! He doesn't condemn us, but He does convict us! His Holy Spirit brings conviction in order to pull us away from the things that will hurt us. As I said, He would rather us not have to go through the bad consequences. I love the way John put it in his letter...

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Now that's a wonderful, wonderful truth, Amen? But John said I write this to you so that you will not sin! In other words, let's listen to God and trust God's wisdom and turn from wickedness before we sin so we can avoid tragic consequences and the need for discipline! This is so important for us to think about because sometimes consequences come in the form of the bad example our sin sets for others. David's children learned from him and one of his sons struggled with moral issues like his dad and abused one of his half sisters. One of his other sons would later take revenge by killing the brother who had done the deed. You can only imagine the sadness this brought to David. As a result David struggled with accepting the fullness of God's pardon. Sometimes when we are going through the consequences of our sin we may feel unforgiven. But God's Word promises...

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

So we have to trust God's pardon. If we don't we may get discouraged and go right back to the very lifestyles that caused us to mess up in the first place and we sow more bad seeds and then have to face another harvest of bad consequences!

God's Word says this...

Gal 6:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Gal 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

So don't give up! You'll get through the consequences with God's help! If you're here this morning and you're struggling with trusting God's pardon because you think you've done too much and gone too far and that you are beyond God's reach, then you've forgotten that we're talking about an infinite, almighty God who has the ability to reach any distance. Even if you have run light years from God and have fallen deep into sin, and even if you barely have the strength to whisper a cry for help, whisper that cry and God will hear with His supersonic, bionic, infinite, ears and His response time will beat the best and most impressive first responders response time!

And by the way, if you have a wreck and are injured, our firefighters are not going to roll up on the accident scene and say, "Okay whose fault was this? Oh, it was your fault, well we're not going to help you, this is your fault!" The only way our guys and gals won't help you is if you refuse the help! It's the same with God. The only difference is He already knows who's at fault and responded anyway! The amazing thing about God is the fact that even when we've let Him down, even when we've disappointed Him and broken His heart, He still pardons and forgives and renders assistance and first aid as we deal with the results of our sin. God doesn't harshly say, "well you've made your bed now you'll sleep in it!" Quite the contrary.

He knows that consequences hurt, that's why He tries to get us to avoid sin in the first place, but if we've messed up and we're willing to confess our sin He's willing to pardon and to help! Remember what I said earlier? Man cannot cover his own sin and any attempt to do so will only lead to greater sin. God, on the other hand, doesn't simply cover up our sin, He takes the sin away and begins the process of redeeming us and helping us to deal with the consequences of our sin, if we'll let Him! This is where the New Covenant comes in through Jesus Christ...

2 Cor 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

This one verse showcases the incredible cost God paid that day! Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God took on the sin of the world. And the perfect fellowship that had always existed between The Father, Son and Holy Spirit was broken that day. David had even been given a glimpse into this before it ever happened.

Psa 22:1 ... A psalm of David. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?

Psa 22:7 All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads:

Psa 22:8 "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

Remember, Jesus quoted this Psalm from the Cross. Jesus was trying to get the religious leaders to think back to the prophecy they had read, in hopes they would see it was happening right before their very eyes. It was Jesus' way of trying again to reach them with His love. And let me say this: The Father didn't turn His back on the Son, but He did turn and look away when Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the world! He looked away to allow Jesus to become our Savior and bring us victory over our failures! Now we have to decide whether or not we will make the same decision David made.

David decides to trust God's pardon

David was under the Old Covenant, but God showed him some New Covenant like mercy. But David sure had a hard time receiving it. Remember, David was a musician and just as God had used music in David's life when he played for King Saul, God was about to use music in David's life to finally give him the ability to trust God's pardon. God inspired David with lyrics to a song that had prophetic words about the New Covenant and what Jesus would someday do on the cross. Listen to this song he wrote after his conversation with Nathan the prophet and being confronted with his sin.

Psa 51:1 For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

Psa 51:2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

Psa 51:3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

Psa 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Psa 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Psa 51:6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts ; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

Psa 51:7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Psa 51:8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

Psa 51:9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

Psa 51:10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Psa 51:11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

Psa 51:12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Psa 51:13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

Psa 51:14 Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

Psa 51:15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

Psa 51:16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

Psa 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

You and I could never sacrifice enough or bring enough offerings to cover our sin! Remember, we don't possess the ability to cover or remove sin, but God does and God will if we call upon Him and trust Him to cleanse us through the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ! Please hear this...

If you're going to trust God with your future you have to trust Him with your past!

Just like David, we must have a broken spirit and a contrite heart over our sin, but then we must trust that God is moved by our repentance and offers a full pardon, forgiveness, redemption and a new life with purpose and power to rise above our past and embrace our future in Christ! We can find Victory over Failure when we allow Jesus to be our Savior! If you don't know Jesus as your Savior, simply follow the ABC's of salvation!

Admit you've sinned and need a Savior!
Believe Jesus died on the Cross to be your Savior!
Call upon His name and ask Him to be your Savior!

Let's worship our Savior with another song! Love you all so much!