

Today we are looking at the well known story of David and Bathsheba. David has come far. He's no longer a shepherd boy. He has risen to the top of his game. Life is great for David. He is on top of the world. And yet with one incident, one temptation, David's perfect life begins to unravel, and he suffers the consequences of his choice for the rest of his life.

David, a man with a heart for God, more successful than any Israelite king before or after him (perhaps with the exception of his son Solomon), anointed and filled with God's Spirit, and yet he fell to temptation. I believe it demonstrates that no matter how much we think we've got it all together, we are still vulnerable to temptation and sin. No matter what our status in life, we all fall to sin.

As Christians each one of us has at least one chink somewhere in our armour, a weakness, a place where Satan will try to poke and prod us, to exploit us and get us to fall, and it only takes one time to ruin the rest of your life.

For David his weakness was a common one among men, which is lust. And let's just be clear that lust is not always about sex. We can have lust for other things in life – the lust for wealth, the lust for control and power. And so David struggled with lust even before this incident with Bathsheba. We know this because tucked back in the book of Deuteronomy, written over four hundred years previously, God spoke of the day the Israelites would become a nation and they would desire a king.

Here's what Deuteronomy 17 says - When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, 'Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,'¹⁵ be sure to appoint over you a king the LORD your God chooses. He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray.

And from what I can work out, David had 7 wives. The reason I believe David struggled with lust long before this incident was because David knew this passage, David knew that God knew his inner heart – good and bad. And yet David had taken advantage of his position as king and continued to accumulate wives for himself. Why? Because David was a passionate person (whether for God, in battle, in music or writing poetry), and with that came a passion or lust for women.

David fed his desire. The lie Satan wants us to believe is that if we feed our own desires then we and society will be more content. The anything goes society. When enough people fall for this lie, it becomes the norm in society.

Society has opened up the door to more and more liberal values. David had already opened the door to a weakness which he knew was wrong in God's eyes.

And then in verse 1 we read that, "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." At the time when kings go off to war to fight with their troops, where was King David? The end of verse 1, "But David remained in Jerusalem." While David's troops were off fighting, David stayed at home. If David was with his troops he wouldn't have been in this predicament in the first place.

Most of our temptations happen when we are not doing what God wants us to do in the first place. We place ourselves in a position where there is vulnerability. I doubt David had any clue what he would see that night walking out on the rooftop, but the opportunity presented itself because David ignored his responsibilities as a king and left his army to go off fighting without him. And so folks, where we know our areas of vulnerability then do whatever we can to avoid those situations. We know ourselves better than anyone, so we know the signs.

We have to be careful not to place ourselves in dangers way. Once you know the chinks in your armour then stay away from the things that you know are going to put you at more risk. Don't linger. That's where David failed. He lingered. Rather than diverting his attention, going back to his room, being on the battlefield with his army, he stayed behind, he lingered, and then he coveted. It didn't take long to go from just looking, to coveting, wanting for himself.

Folks, when temptation comes, we should run. Get away from the temptation, do whatever it takes to get it out of your mind. The longer we entertain the temptation, the sooner we will fall for it. A great example of the correct response to this situation is earlier in the Bible with the story of Joseph when he was faced with a similar situation as David. The difference between Joseph's and David is that Joseph was directly propositioned. Joseph was the head servant for a man named Potiphar, and one day his boss' wife came to him scantily clad and invited Joseph to the bedroom. What did Joseph do? He literally ran.

And so where do we turn to. We need to remember that God will never allow us to be tempted so much that we cannot stand up against it. But we must stand up to it in God's strength and not in our own. Paul wrote in Ephesians that they would be strengthened in their inner being with power from God's Spirit. We must hold tight to the promises of God and his love to protect us. That through the strength of his Holy Spirit in us he is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine. Remember that God will give you the strength to face any temptation.

Unfortunately however there are always consequences from our actions. For David the consequences were on Bathsheba and Uriah. Uriah was dead, David had married Bathsheba, there was nothing to trace back to David's sin. It seemed as though David wouldn't face any consequences for his action, but you can't hide sin from God. And yet the first consequence David experienced was guilt. David shows us this as he writes Psalm 32. While our sin might be a secret, God knows. You can't hide your sin from God. Do you want to walk with that guilt sitting over you?

The consequences may well continue in relationships. Because of David's sin, there would be strife in his family for the rest of his life. In the very next chapter his oldest son, Amnon, raped his daughter, two years later another of his son's, Absalom, murdered that son. Later, Absalom made a run for the throne over David through deception. David's giving in to the temptation didn't just affect a couple people, it affected a whole family.

But as we finish, I'd like you to remember that our actions do not have to leave us devastated. Fortunately when he was confronted with his sin, David owned up to it, and he confessed his sin before God. And God being more merciful than we deserve, forgave him, just as he promises to forgive us, if we confess our sin.

28th July 2021 – 2 Samuel 11:1-15 David's Sin

Folks, our past does not have to define what our future will be. But if we do not honestly bring those things of our past before God, and earnestly repent of them, then they can continue to burden our thoughts.

Perhaps today there is a temptation you have fallen for, you have messed up, sinned against God. Know that whatever our past has been, it does not define our future if we bring it and those we have hurt before God in repentance.