

The Fall of a Great Man

2 Samuel 11:1-5

I don't know of another sinful act recorded in the Bible that has received more attention than the sin of David and Bathsheba (with the possible exception of the sin of Adam and Eve). Many authors refer to this sin as "the scarlet sin"—Adultery.

In this message we will see the failures that lead to David's fall. Next week we will see the forgiveness and restoration from his fall (2 Sam. 12).

Sexual affairs have landed numerous Christian men who were at the top of their game on the casualty list of fallen heroes. David's affair is a warning to all of us lest our name be added to that casualty list.

Several years ago *Christianity Today* surveyed a thousand of its subscribers who were not pastors and found 23 percent admitted they had an extramarital affair and 45 percent indicating they had done something they themselves deemed sexually inappropriate. One in four Christian men are unfaithful, and nearly one half have committed sexual indiscretions! Shocking statistics! Especially when we consider the readers of *Christianity Today* tend to be church leaders. If this is so for the Church's leadership, how much more for the average member of the congregation?

Remember, David was a man after God's own heart, but still fell prey to this "scarlet sin." The lesson is obvious—No one is immune to sin. Anyone of us could fall into deep sin. The Bible warns, "*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*" (1 Cor. 10:12). If you think this could not happen to you, you've already taken that first step towards the fall!

The Bible is an honest Book. It never flatters its heroes, but portrays them with their "warts" and all. Most Christian biographies you read only tell you of their heroism, devotion, sacrifice, and exploits, but seldom mention their failures, deficiencies, shortcomings, or their sins. All heroes have feet of clay and we must recognize this, lest we "*think of men above that which is written*" (1 Cor. 4:6).

When we realize that the heroes of the Bible are made of the same stuff we are made of, and all have fallen natures, it will help us to avoid the things that lead to their failures.

God did not record the account of David's sin so we can bash David, but that we might learn not go down that same path of moral ruin.

Do not think that because you've never committed adultery, this message does not pertain to you. The principles that lead to David's fall apply to all kinds of sin, not just sexual sin.

I. THE SET UP. What set David up for the fall?

➡ David did not fall suddenly. He did not get up and say, "My, what a beautiful day. I think I will commit adultery today!"

A. David was living an **UNRIVALED** life. He was at the "top of his game." David is at the height of his reign.

- His military power was unrivaled.
- Under his leadership all Israel had been united.
- He had enlarged the boundaries of Israel to its largest extent.
- He had unquestioned authority.
- His financial coffers were full.
- He had a beautiful new home.
- His fame was wide spread.
- He had strung one success after another for the last seven chapters.

1. Idleness (v. 2). Idleness does not promote holiness. *"Behold, this was the iniquity of...Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her..."* (Ezek. 16:49).
2. Our most dangerous times spiritually, are not the hard times of life, but when things are going well and we begin to relax and let down our guard (cf. Jer. 5:7-8). David was at a point where he had everything he needed and more, and didn't have to depend upon God.

B. David was living an **UNGUARDED** life.

- Just when we think we are the safest and let down our guard—temptation will come!

- Some subtle cracks in David's character began to erode at the foundation of his life. Over time, his spiritual neglect made him more vulnerable to sin, so when temptation came, his resolve crumbled.
1. Neglect of the Word of God (2 Sam. 5:13 cf. Dt. 17:14-17).
Compromise desensitize a person towards sin. David had already taken that first step on the slippery sloop of sin.
 2. Discontentment—David had a harem of wives. He was not some sex-starved man. He never learned to be content with just one woman as God intended. If David's multiple wives could not satisfy him, why would he think adding one more would satisfy him?
 - SIN NEVER SATISFIES. One sin leads to another. The only thing that can satisfy a Christian is doing right (Mt. 5:6).
 3. Permissiveness of our culture sets us up for sin. Although God forbade polygamy, the culture of David's time considered it to be socially acceptable. David's indulgence in polygamy desensitized him to God's clear command in his Word.
 - Today society views certain sensualities as socially acceptable. These will desensitize you to sin—long hours of indiscriminate TV viewing; provocatively dressed women; pornographic magazines, etc. Society's approval of them sets men up for a fall.
- C. David was living an **UNFOCUSED** life (vs. 1-2).
- ➡ David was unfocused on God's will for His life—Leading his men on the battlefield. Instead, David was focused on another man's wife.
1. David was in the wrong place at the wrong time—He was not where he was supposed to be.
 - a) The world is filled with places that encourage sin. Stay away from unwholesome places— Unchaperoned parties/ events... Taverns... Back seats of parked cars, being alone with someone who is not your spouse.

- b) Alone on his balcony, David, who had been a man after God's own heart, became a dirty, lustful old man.
 - c) David would have been safer on the battlefield in his armor than on his balcony without his armor!
2. Satan diverted David's focus away from God. David was not thinking about God. He was not thinking about being a man of God. He was not thinking about his position as the leader of Israel. He was not thinking about the consequences of sin. He was only thinking about gratifying his lust.
 - This is one of Satan's most effective tactics to set us up for temptation—Take our mind off of God. He doesn't seek to make us hate God—Just forget God.
- D. David was living an **UNREASONABLE** life (v. 3).
1. God was warning David's through one of his servants, "David, don't do this! Don't take the devil's bait!"
 2. But David's servant could not reason with David. David was being unreasonable. David could not be dissuaded.
 3. That is what sin does. It makes a person irrational. You cannot reason with sin or the devil. If you try, you will lose every time. You don't reason with Satan—You resist Satan.
 - David never thought about the consequences of his sin (v. 5).
 - David's reign went downhill from there on.

II. The **COVER-UP**.

- David had two choices: (1) He could have confessed and repented of his sin to God. (2) He could try to cover it up (vs. 6-25).
 - Plan A— Call Uriah back from battlefield. He been gone a long time and surely he must want to enjoy making love with his beautiful wife. It didn't work. Uriah had more character than David. He slept with the servants.
 - Plan B—Feed Uriah and get him drunk so he would go lie with his wife that night. That plan failed also. Uriah again slept with the servants. Uriah was a better man drunk than back-slidden David was sober.

- Plan C— Had Joab put Uriah on the front lines at the most intense point of the battle, then withdraw men from him so he will be killed.
- A. Now David, already guilty of adultery, has added murder to his crime of passion.
- ➔ When sin is not dealt with, but is covered up, will always lead to greater sin. Both sins were capital crimes in Israel.
- David broke the 10th Commandment (coveting).
 - By coveting a woman that God had not given him he broke the first two commandments by putting his wants ahead of God—Idolatry.
 - He committed adultery, breaking the 7th Commandment.
 - He stole what belonged to Uriah and broke the 8th commandment.
 - He murdered Uriah and broke the 6th commandment.
 - He broke the 9th Commandment by bearing false witness.
 - This all brought dishonor to his parents and broke the 5th Commandment.
- B. How could a man after God’s own heart allow this to happen? When we fail to deal with sin in our lives, we enter into the “crazy zone.” You are deluded if you think you can cover up anything before the God who can see everything. Sin cannot be swept under rug or hid in the closet. Skeletons will come out of the closet. *“Be sure your sin will find you out.”*
- Proverbs 28:13— *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

III. The FALL-OUT.

- ➔ David was deceived thinking he had gotten away with his sin (v. 26-27a).
- The sword never would depart from David’s house.
 - His wives would be publicly humiliated.
 - The unborn child would die.

SUMMATION: But the most tragic thing was *“the thing that David had done displeased the Lord”* (v. 27b). The one who was hurt most my

David's sin, was God Himself. God was left with the fall out—God was left to clean up the mess and damage David's sin brought upon His reputation (12:14). When we try to cover up our sin and it later comes out in the open, we give cause to the unbelieving world to say, "I knew that church stuff wasn't true all along."

I don't want to sin because it would hurt my wife... my family... my friends. But most of all, I don't want to sin because of the reproach and pain it would inflict upon the God who loves me and died for me.