

Take the Exit Ramp

David's Sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11)

I. INTRO

- A. Wrong turn up by Batsto... drove full on to Shamong, NJ (GSP to Rt 206)
 - 1. I kept wondering if I should turn around, but I just kept going
 - 2. Surely there's a gas station just around the next bend... NOPE
 - 3. I should have stopped... I should have turned around... I didn't...
 - 4. Ever notice that's sort of what a fight with your spouse is like?
 - 5. Actually, it's what all sin is like, isn't it?
 - 6. Just blow past every opportunity to turn around
- B. There are plenty of times in your life when, if you ignore all the exit signs and warning lights, you end up in a giant, hot mess
 - 1. All of us know this from personal experience
 - 2. Refusal to bite your tongue turns into nobody wanting to be around you
 - 3. The little credit card overspending turns into a mountain of debt...
 - 4. All those fights and pleas for counseling turn into divorce papers...
 - 5. The desire for control turns into bullying or manipulation
- C. *James 1:13 And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. 14 Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. 15 These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*
 - 1. We see a process in sin that is clear and predictable
 - a) **YOUR Desire → Temptation → Sin → Death**
 - 2. You have a desire (e.g. to be right) so you have a temptation (e.g. to say something you shouldn't) so you sin (e.g. you argue/be mean) and it creates death (separation in your marriage, relationships, etc)
 - 3. This is the exact process we see unfolding in 2 Samuel 11, and all of it could have been interrupted with REPENTANCE
- D. Up to this point, David has not been depicted as flawless, but he is seen as suitable for his role and faithful in fulfilling its duties.
 - 1. His obedience has thus far led to success.
 - 2. He commits a grave sin, and the consequences of his sin tarnish the rest of his reign, and lead to a host of problems for his family and the nation

II. *[1] In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.*

- A. In chapter 10, David and his army were fighting the Ammonites
- B. Besieging the capital of Rabbah was a big deal, could've taken over a year
- C. B/c traveling during the rainy season was miserable, a lot of military ventures would hold off until the spring

- D. But we see something kind of thought-provoking here... In the spring is when “kings go out to battle,” → but David sends Joab in his stead
- E. Scholars will debate if this is a dig at David or not. Who knows. I have my opinion (which is yes, I think it is), but there’s something else to note
 - 1. None of the following would have happened if David was busy doing what kings were supposed to do

F. Idleness is a seedbed for temptation

- 1. Warnings for not working, for stay-at-home ladies without kids, boredom
- G. I think you could safely argue that David’s first failure wasn’t adultery — it was abdication of responsibility. There are plenty of things he could have been doing
 - 1. He was supposed to be on a mission & leading, but he stayed home.
 - 2. Idleness creates spiritual vulnerability. It creates a vacuum for sin to fill
- H. Put another way, **when we step away from our purpose, temptation finds room to grow.**

- 1. We have clear directives from God in this life... <give examples>
- 2. To toss them aside so we can live a life of vegging is like playing with fire
- 3. When you toss aside your responsibilities as a husband, father, wife, mom, disciple, etc → don’t be surprised when temptation consumes

I. What’s the first EXIT RAMP to take in your fight against sin? Stay faithful to what God has called you to do.

III. *[2] It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king’s house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful.*

- A. Notice that the first thing that happens is David’s siesta goes too long → into the evening technically. He’s not busy. He’s not preoccupied. He’s chilling while his friends fight his wars. So, he goes for a walk...
- B. James 1:14, Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away.
 - 1. Desire itself is not sinful, but uncontrolled desire entices, even drags us
 - 2. David could have turned away. David could have gone inside. David could have worked on all his kingly duties... but instead, he lingered, looked, and inquired.
 - a) This is where sin whispers its lies.
 - 3. A friend told me the other day, *“Sin always overpromises and underdelivers.”*
 - a) That’s SO true, isn’t it?!
 - b) Sin always promises pleasure but delivers pain.
 - c) It promises satisfaction and delivers devastation.

- C. Now, David had an exit ramp here. He could have starved the desire. He could have said, “No,” to his flesh... but he feeds it instead, he entertains the thought

D. What’s the second EXIT RAMP to take in your fight against sin? Recognize the subtle whisper of your flesh’s desires and say, “NO!” // walk away

IV. *[3] And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”*

- A. James 1:15, "Desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin."
- B. Well, David is now incubating a potential for sin. It's not necessarily sin yet, but he is blowing past another exit sign.
 - 1. David's thought becomes action. Desire "conceives."
 - 2. Dangerous at this point, but still not acting on sin YET
- C. Who is this lady?
 - 1. David probably already knows. The fact that she's close to the palace means her family is well-connected
 - 2. Unusually, both her father's name and that of her husband are given. This is the author's way of telling you PAY ATTENTION
 - 3. First of all, Eliam, the son of Ahithophel, is one of David's elite soldiers known as the 30, his closest SEAL Team → this is her DAD
 - a) Let that sink in... Imagine your friend hitting on your daughter when she's in her 20s.
 - 4. Second of all, her Grandfather, Ahithophel, is David's CHIEF OF STAFF
 - 5. Thirdly, her husband is Uriah the Hittite. He too is a member of "the thirty," and is currently serving with Joab, while David obsesses over his wife
- D. David is so obsessed with Bathsheba that he doesn't care about these factors.
 - 1. Oh, by the way, David also doesn't seem concerned about the death penalty for adultery, required by the Hebrew Law
 - 2. I would guess that David believed he could manage the consequences — but sin never stays small. It grows, and gets worse.
- E. Lots of exit ramps again, but David ignores them all
- V. *[4] So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. [5] And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."*
 - A. Well, David went ahead and chose sin
 - B. So consumed he is with his lust that he acts like a pagan king instead of a king of loving kindness and covenantal faithfulness
 - C. He sends the palace guard to her and takes her.
 - D. Did he rape her? Was she willing? We have no idea. What we do know is this: she is now pregnant, and based upon her ritual purifying from menstruation, the baby is not Uriah's
 - E. Desire → Temptation → Sin... Once that train leaves the station, it's tough to stop.
 - 1. The longer you delay, the harder it is to get off the train
 - 2. The train goes faster and faster and faster
 - 3. Before you know it, you start to panic and wonder how on earth you can possibly get yourself out of the predicament you've created
 - 4. And that is exactly what David tries to do, but it just makes it worse
 - 5. Exactly like the Bible warns → Sin, when full-grown, gives birth to death
- VI. *[6] So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. [7] When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. [8] Then David said to Uriah, "Go down*

to your house and wash your feet.” And Uriah went out of the king’s house, and there followed him a present from the king. [9] But Uriah slept at the door of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. [10] When they told David, “Uriah did not go down to his house,” David said to Uriah, “Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?” [11] Uriah said to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.” [12] Then David said to Uriah, “Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. [13] And David invited him, and he ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk. And in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

A. Uriah proves to be far more admirable than his king → *“The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing.”*

1. Well, Uriah, David did it for you...

B. Now, David is in a situation.

C. Remember the way to stop the train is REPENTANCE → David could repent right now. He could own his sin right now and face the consequences. He could fall on his face and beg forgiveness from Uriah, from God, and his country...

D. Instead, just like Adam in the garden, he tries to cover it up

VII. *[14] In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. [15] In the letter he wrote, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and die.” [16] And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. [17] And the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite also died. [18] Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting. [19] And he instructed the messenger, “When you have finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, [20] then, if the king’s anger rises, and if he says to you, ‘Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? [21] Who killed Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?’ then you shall say, ‘Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.’”*

[22] So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell. [23] The messenger said to David, “The men gained an advantage over us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. [24] Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall. Some of the king’s servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.” [25] David said to the messenger, “Thus shall you say to Joab, ‘Do not let this matter displease you, for the sword devours now one and now another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.’ And encourage him.”

[26] When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. [27] And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

- A. The final stage of sin's life cycle: death.
- B. Death of trust, death of character, death of peace, death of reputation, death of credibility, death of your marriage, death of a friend.
- C. When you refuse to stop, just realize that sin runs up a tab... and it always collects
- D. Sin may be secret for a season, but death is always the harvest unless you cut it short

VIII. CONCLUSION

- A. Let's review from David's life
 - 1. Idleness led to a vacuum for sinful desire
 - 2. Desire leads to temptation
 - 3. Temptation leads to sin
 - 4. Sin gets worse, and worse, and worse until it brings death
- B. That's the problem.
 - 1. The reality is you WILL face temptation. You WILL face sin.
 - 2. The enemy doesn't want you in the fight; he wants to take you out of the fight. Sin is a great and primary tactic
- C. The Good News is fourfold
 - 1. Jesus defeated sin when he paid the penalty you deserve
 - 2. Jesus defeated the end result of sin (death) when he rose from the grave
 - 3. You can trust in Jesus to free you from the consequences of sin and the reality of eternal suffering.
 - a) His blood washes our conscience and our ledger clear
 - 4. You can have victory in the fight against sin today by taking the exit ramp of repentance
 - 5. AND You can avoid a lot of temptation if you stay focused on being faithful with your life today!
- D. **Idleness** → stay focused on being faithful with what God has called you to today
- E. **Desire** → the more you redirect those desires to the Spirit, the more you crave the Spirit (starve the flesh, feed the Spirit)
- F. **Temptation** → 1 Corinthians 10:13, No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide a way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.
- G. **Sin** → 1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- H. **Death** → Or, you could ignore all the warnings.
- I. Life is hard. Suffer for righteousness, yes, but not for your sin. Take the exit!
- J. Turn to Jesus for forgiveness, yes, but also for victory and freedom today!