

Sermon followed by Service

July 17, 2022

2 Samuel 11

List 5 of the greatest heroes in the Bible. List 5 of the biggest disappointments in the Bible. Who is on both lists? David. Today we see one of the reasons he makes the biggest disappointment list.

We fast-forward. David's no longer a man on the run, hiding here, hiding there, hiding out in the back of caves; now David is resting easy in the palace of the king. That's right; he's not longer being chased by King Saul, he's replaced King Saul and become king himself. As king, life is good for David and the people of Israel. Israel's no longer under attack fighting for its national survival; instead, David's taking the fight to their neighbors, expanding their borders. At least that's the way it used to be. Now, at the time of our lesson, David's living the life of a king who thinks he has it made. He's living in a palace built with cedar imported from Lebanon. He's taken more wives than I can name. And instead of leading his army out to war, while his army is out in the field, David's living the palace life. The hero has become a home-body taking life easy.

Taking. Instead of taking seriously his role with God, he's taking life easy. Instead of taking seriously his role for his family, he's taking life easy. Instead of taking seriously his role for his people, he's taking life easy. I'm not saying that David was taking a vacation from all his duties; he could have been busy in the morning doing this and doing that. But instead of taking the role, the mission, the life that God had for him, David was taking it easy.

Taking. Taking a walk on his roof-top patio. Taking in the sights of his beautiful city, Jerusalem. Taking in the sights of his

beautiful neighbor washing herself. He sends to find out who she is. “Isn’t she Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah?” Even if David didn’t know Bathsheba, he knew those people: Eliam was a somebody; Uriah was one of his special forces soldiers. But that didn’t stop David. David had become used to taking. He sends his messengers to take Bathsheba and to bring her to him. And then he ... enough said.

Or is it enough said? People want to make Bathsheba into an exhibitionist, a manipulator of a king too weak to control himself. People want to make David and Bathsheba into victims of forbidden love or maybe just lust. But there is nothing in our lesson - or the rest of Scripture - that points to Bathsheba as guilty. Instead, David sends to take her. And to cover up his guilt, David sends for her husband Uriah. And when that doesn’t work, David sends his faithful soldier Uriah back to the battle lines with David’s handwritten orders to have Uriah killed by the enemy.

What had happened to David?

Was it the pressure of being king? Too many expectations, too much to do, too many people wanting answers? Was he feeling restless, overwhelmed, needing to flex some muscle to feel good about himself?

Or was he feeling entitled, spoiled? As a warrior, he was a success. As a king, he was a success. He had heard his people cheering him. He had heard neighboring kings surrender to him, or seek to partner with him. Why? He was specially chosen by God; he was specially blessed by God. So, had success so gone to David’s head that he was used to having his way and taking what he wanted? Was he so in love with his success and power ... was he so deceived

by his success and power ... was he so taken in by his success and power that he thought he could do whatever he wanted?

Pressure, power, success. Pressure can be a blessing that God uses to forge us. Power can be a blessing that God uses to accomplish his will. Success can be a blessing that God gives us to set us up to be a blessing to others. Pressure, power, success - do you see how God has used, or is using, those powers to bless you - to be a blessing for others? I can see that in you. Now, if we lose our focus - those same forces - pressure, power, success - can all be forces the devil uses to distract us from God. I imagine we've all seen that too, especially in other people. How about for yourself? When you are under pressure, when you're in power, when you're enjoying success - how does the devil use that pressure, that power, that success to distract you from the life God has for you? Pressure, power, success - they all have their dangers, don't they?

Or was it something as simple as this? Idle hands are the devil's workshop. When you step back from work, who do your hands and minds get busy with? The God who created you and designed you for his purpose? Or when you have free time, do you find Satan and his world out there distracting you away from God? It can be a good thing to be busy with God.

Back to our lesson - David and Bathsheba. So how did it work out? By the end of the chapter, David had a new wife, a new son, and Uriah was out of the picture. It looked like David might have gotten away with it. Except we're told: **"But the thing David had done displeased the LORD."**

Next week, we'll look at what that meant for David and for us. This week, I want to fast-forward again, to the New Testament. Scan

through the New Testament and what do we see of our lesson? Only that Bathsheba was Uriah's wife. What do we see of what David did to Bathsheba? Nothing. What do we see of David and Bathsheba together? Only this, that both David and Bathsheba are listed in the line of our Savior. And we hear our Savior again and again called: "The Son of David."

Let me back up to a question I just asked and answered. "What do we see of what David did to Bathsheba? Nothing." Some see that silence as a sign of male privilege, and the Bible's disregard for victims, a failure of justice. David and the Apostle Paul see that silence as a sign of God's grace. **"Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against him."** That's too good to just hear once. **"Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against him."** Look throughout the New Testament and what do we see of David? God doesn't identify David by his worst moment. Let me say that again too - God doesn't identify David by his worst moment.

Isn't that great?! It doesn't always feel great, does it? There are times we want to see more punitive, punishing justice - the bully bullied, the abuser abused, the scammer scammed, the cheater cheated, the taker took, the killer killed, the guilty canceled. Instead, our God works - and offers - another kind of justice, he cancels guilt. Not just with a wave of his hand, but with a stretch of his arms. With a stretch of his arms, Jesus put himself in the place of the taker, the liar, the cheater, the entitled, the spoiled, the killer. With a stretch of his arms, on the cross and all the way to the cross, Jesus put himself in my place and yours. What does that get to mean for us? With Jesus, God sees your guilt gone. It gets better - baptized into Jesus, God sees

you covered with Jesus - covered with a perfect life busy for God and busy with God. Baptized into Jesus, God sees you covered with Jesus, living a life of caring for others instead of just taking for self. He sees you covered with Jesus, living a life where pressure, power, and success all work blessing. With Jesus, that's how God sees you ... all the way to heaven!

Isn't it great God doesn't identify us - me, you - by our worst moments? Amen.

July 16 & 17, 2022

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

IN OUR WORLD TODAY... what happens when we lose focus, when we lose our sense of mission and purpose? We go off track, don't we? What happens when we lose our focus on God? We go off track from God and against God.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see what happened when David lost his focus, his sense of mission and purpose. We also see how Jesus did not and has not lost his focus, his sense of mission and purpose, but even today promises us forgiveness with God!

OPENING HYMN (SATURDAY)

"Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus"

Hymn 704

Let us ever walk with Jesus, follow his example pure,
flee the world which would deceive us and to sin our souls allure.
Ever in his footsteps treading, body here, yet soul above,
full of faith and hope and love, let us do the Father's bidding.
Faithful Lord, abide with me; Savior, lead; I follow thee.

Let us suffer here with Jesus, to his image e'er conform;
heaven's glory soon will please us, sunshine follow on the storm.
Though we sow in tears of sorrow, we shall reap in heav'nly joy,
and the fears that now annoy shall be laughter on the morrow.
Christ, I suffer here with thee; there, O share thy joy with me.

Let us also die with Jesus; his death from the second death,
from our soul's destruction, frees us, quickens us with life's glad breath.
Let us mortify, while living, flesh and blood and die to sin,
and the grave that shuts us in shall but prove the gate to heaven.
Jesus, here I die to thee, there to live eternally.

Let us gladly live with Jesus; since he's risen from the dead,
death and grave must soon release us. Jesus, thou art now our head.
We are truly thine own members, where thou livest, there live we;
take and own us constantly, faithful Friend, as thy dear brethren.
Jesus, here I live to thee, also there eternally.

+ HOLY BAPTISM +
Eliza Julie Wintrone

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HYMN (SUNDAY)

"God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It"

Hymn 679

God's own child, I gladly say it: I am baptized into Christ!
He, because I could not pay it, gave my full redemption price.
Do I need earth's treasures many? I have one worth more than any
that brought me salvation free, lasting to eternity!

Sin, disturb my soul no longer: I am baptized into Christ!
I have comfort even stronger: Jesus' cleansing sacrifice.
Should a guilty conscience seize me since my baptism did release me
in a dear forgiving flood, sprinkling me with Jesus' blood?

Satan, hear this proclamation: I am baptized into Christ!
Drop your ugly accusation, I am not so soon enticed.
Now that to the font I've traveled, all your might has come unraveled,
and, against your tyranny, God, my Lord, unites with me!

Death, you cannot end my gladness: I am baptized into Christ!
When I die, I leave all sadness to inherit paradise!
Though I lie in dust and ashes faith's assurance brightly flashes:
Baptism has the strength divine to make life immortal mine.

There is nothing worth comparing to this lifelong comfort sure!
Open-eyed my grave is staring: even there I'll sleep secure.
Though my flesh awaits its raising, still my soul continues praising:
I am baptized into Christ; I'm a child of paradise!

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

PRAYER

Let us pray.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by your Holy Spirit, that we may love you and praise your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 11:1–17, 26–27

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.

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, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent him to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. 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. But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house.

David was told, "Uriah did not go home." So he asked Uriah, "Haven't you just come from a military campaign? Why didn't you go home?"

Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my commander Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open country. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and make love to my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

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. 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.

In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."

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

When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. 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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 38B

Refrain

LORD, do not for - sake me; quick - ly come to help me.

LORD, do not rebuke me in your / anger
or discipline me / in your wrath.
Your arrows have / pierced me,
and your hand has come / down on me.
My guilt has over- / whelmed me
like a burden too heav- / y to bear. *Refrain*

All my longings lie open be- / fore you, Lord;
my sighing is not hidden / from you.
LORD, I / wait for you;
you will answer, / Lord my God.
I confess my in- / iquity;
I am troubled / by my sin.
Come quickly to / help me,
my Lord and my / Savior.
**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

GOSPEL

Luke 13:1–9

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

“ ‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray”

Hymn 873

Rise, my soul, to watch and pray; from your sleep awaken!
Be not by the evil day unawares o’ertaken; for the foe, well we know,
is a harvest reaping while the saints are sleeping.

Watch against the devil’s snares lest asleep he find you;
for indeed no pains he spares to deceive and blind you.
Satan’s prey oft are they who secure are sleeping and no watch are keeping.

Watch! Let not the wicked world with its lies defeat you
lest with bold deceptions hurled it betray and cheat you.
Watch and see lest there be
faithless friends to charm you who but seek to harm you.
Watch against yourself, my soul, lest with grace you trifle;
let not self your thoughts control nor God’s mercy stifle.
Pride and sin lurk within,
all your hopes to shatter; heed not when they flatter.

But while watching also pray to the Lord unceasing.
God protects you day by day, strength and faith increasing,
so that still mind and will shall unite to serve him and forever love him.

SERMON

+ CORPORATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION +
CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

CW p. 279-280

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.

Let us confess our sins to God and ask for his forgiveness.

Almighty God, merciful Father,

I confess to you that I have not loved you with all my heart.

In what I have done and left undone,

I have pursued my ways instead of your ways.

I have not loved others as you command.

For this I deserve your punishment now and forever.

I am sorry for my sins.

I repent of them.

I beg for your mercy.

Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us.

Cleanse me from my sins.

Release me from my guilt.

Grant me your Holy Spirit to amend my sinful life.

Jesus says to his people, "If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven." Do you believe this?

Yes, I believe.

In the name and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ,
I forgive you all your sins.

Amen.

EXHORTATION

Our Lord Jesus Christ has forgiven us, has reconciled us to God, and has promised us the power to forgive and love one another. Relying on his promise, therefore, be reconciled with one another.

Brothers and sisters, may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, in our words, and in our actions.

PRAYER

Let us pray.

God, our Father, by the sacrifice of your Son you reconciled the world to yourself. We thank you for the precious gift of forgiveness. Refresh us with the joy of our salvation, that we may walk in the way of peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Renew our minds and wills, that daily we may speak your word of peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Individually packaged wafers are gluten-free.)



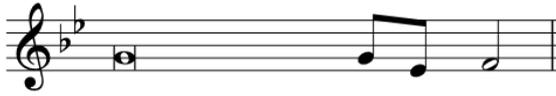
The Lord be with you.



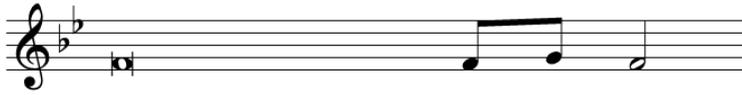
And al - so with you.



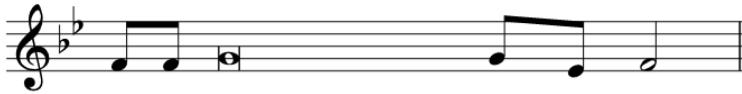
Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,



God of might. Heav-en and earth are full of your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -
 san - na in the high - est!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord God, you are worthy to receive thanks and praise from all people. You created the world and all who live in it, and in your mercy you saved us. We give thanks to you for the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though in very nature God, he took the nature of a servant and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He offered himself as a sacrifice for sin and redeemed us from its curse and penalty. He rescued us from the terrors of death and restored eternal life with you. He conquered our enemies and gained for us the kingdom of grace and glory.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood, and lead us to remember his suffering, death, and resurrection. Forgive our sins and fill us with the hope of new life in heaven. Hear our praise and receive our thanks as we worship you—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my T body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us your peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"I Come, O Savior, to Your Table"

Hymn 670

I come, O Savior, to your table, for weak and weary is my soul;
O Jesus, you alone are able to satisfy and make me whole.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

O grant that I in manner worthy may eat and drink and be restored,
and, dwelling on your boundless mercy, look only unto you, O Lord.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

I should not be your sheep, dear Savior; I stray in sin's accursed terrain.
And yet you pardon my behavior; my faithful Shepherd you remain.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

O let me loathe all sin forever as death and poison to my soul,
that I through willful sinning never may see your judgment take its toll!
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

Your holy heart has one obsession, one blessed thing it burns to do—
to cleanse the sinner from transgression; so I, a sinner, come to you.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

My soul is burdened; Lord, relieve me, by all this weight of sin oppressed!
Though sinful, yet, in grace receive me and feed me as your grateful guest.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

Within me, Lord, your vision traces a heart of deep humility
that mourns its sin and yet embraces the merit you have earned for me.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

By faith I call your holy table the testament of your deep love,
for by your gift I now am able to know the heart of God above.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

This meal with blessing is abounding:
to poor ones wealth, to weak ones pow'r,
to angels joy, to hell confounding, and life for me in death's dark hour.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

My heart has now become your dwelling, O blessed, holy Trinity.
With angels I, your praises telling, shall live in joy eternally.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

CLOSING PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways”

Hymn 705

Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways to keep his statutes still!
Oh, that my God would grant me grace to know and do his will!

Order my footsteps by your Word, and make my heart sincere;
let sin have no dominion, Lord, but keep my conscience clear.

Assist my soul, too apt to stray, a stricter watch to keep,
and should I e'er forget your way, restore your wand'ring sheep.

Make me to walk in your commands— 'tis a delightful road—
nor let my head or heart or hands offend against my God.

OFFERING

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