

The Life of David - Part 8

The Deadly Dangers of Sinful Silence

Midrand Bible Church

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Intro:

- We have been doing a whistle stop tour of the life of David. Here is where we have been really briefly.
 - Israel and Judah spilt and far from God.
 - Saul anointed king. Sinned against God.
 - David then anointed (heart over appearance), Saul starts to unravel.
 - David leads Israel to a victory over the Philistines.
 - David and Saul's lives begin to intertwine in complex ways.
 - David on his way up to the throne, Saul on his way down off it.
 - Saul desires to kill David. Jonathan is a great friend to him.
 - David runs from Saul for at least 8 years, living in caves with a gang of scrappers, but hanging on to the promises of God.
 - David becomes king of Israel and the region gets temporary peace. The Ark of the Covenant is returned, and God gives an affirming covenant to David but doesn't allow him to rebuild the temple.
 - David sins with Bathsheba and against Uriah, and God disciplines him through the prophet Nathan.
- Tragically, we are going to see the consequences of that sin and the patterns that led to it and from it play out dramatically in the narrative we look at today.
- In essence, we will see how much destruction passivity in the face sin leads to. David is going to be astonishingly silent and passive in the face of a lot of sin, and it brought about consequences in his family and in his legacy that were terrifying.

- I want to speak particularly but not exclusively to the men today, as this is really a text about terrible fathering and broken masculinity and the impact that has on future generations.
- We will jump into the text in a sordid tale of abuse and molestation. It is tough to read. It is hard to consider than David's family had come to this.
- One of David's sons Amnon lusts over his half-sister Tamar. She is the actual sister of Absalom (David has children with multiple wives giving him a large and very complex family).
- One of Amnon's friends, Jonadab, helps to come up with a plan to get Tamar alone with Amnon, showing the danger of bad friendships and the disgusting conclusions of men who think that they own women.
- Amnon pretends he is sick and persuades David that only cooking from Tamar would make him feel better.

Passage and Main Points:

⁷ Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him." ⁸ So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, where he was lying down. And she took dough and kneaded it and made cakes in his sight and baked the cakes. ⁹ And she took the pan and emptied it out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Send out everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, that I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. ¹¹ But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." ¹² She answered him, "No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this outrageous thing. ¹³ As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the outrageous fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you." ¹⁴ But he would not listen to her, and being stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with very great hatred, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, “Get up! Go!” ¹⁶ But she said to him, “No, my brother, for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me.” But he would not listen to her. ¹⁷ He called the young man who served him and said, “Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the door after her.” ¹⁸ Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves, for thus were the virgin daughters of the king dressed. So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. ¹⁹ And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she wore. And she laid her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went.

²⁰ And her brother Absalom said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? Now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this to heart.” So Tamar lived, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom’s house. ²¹ When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. ²² But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had violated his sister Tamar. ¹

1. Silence in the face of sin creates a legacy of injustice

- a. Gosh this is heartbreaking. I struggle to even read it. As a dad of a little girl, and just even as a human being, it repulses me.
- b. Part of what troubles me deeply is David’s response. He is really angry, but what does he do? Nothing so far as can tell from the rest of the narrative. Nothing. Passive.
- c. What does this lead to?
 - i. The ongoing shame, isolation and misery of Tamar.
 - ii. The deep sin of Absalom. Absalom says nothing, but he is angry and hurt, and in the face of passivity from his dad he hatches a plan of violence and goes on to kill Amnon.
- d. Passivity in the face of sin leads to more sin.
- e. Let me chat to the men in the room quick:

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 2 Sa 13:18–22.

- i. We live in one of the most dangerous places on the planet for women. That is the culture of South Africa. We can deny that all we want but it is a culture that has been created.
 - ii. In 2015 there were 42,596 reported rapes in South Africa. Research shows us that somewhere between 4% and 7% of rapes in South Africa are ever reported. If you do some very basic calculations, it starts to make the actual number quite terrifying.
 - iii. A 2010 study showed that in Gauteng in their sample survey (which was fairly significant statistically), nearly one in three South African men were prepared to admit to having had sex with someone without consent. 1 in 5 men said that it could never be classified as rape when you are in a relationship with the person at the time. We have a problem, men. We have a problem.
 - f. David gave in to sexual deviancy and it haunted his family his whole life and here we see his children inherit a culture of it that results in rape and murder.
 - g. We cannot be passive in the face of a culture that treats women as objects for our own pleasure, and when we continue to live lives that are passive in the face of that narrative, we perpetuate that culture of violence for our daughters.
 - h. Not all of us have powerful, public voices to speak into this, but all of us can pursue holiness in a way that refuses to objectify women.
- So Absalom kills Amnon and flees from David. You would think that this would awaken David from his passivity, but watch his response here.

³⁷ *But Absalom fled and went to Talmi the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day.* ³⁸ *So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there*

three years.³⁹ *And the spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom, because he was comforted about Amnon, since he was dead.*²

- David's friend Joab then intervenes and gets David to come to his senses a little bit, but it doesn't awaken him fully. Clearly.

²¹ *Then the king said to Joab, "Behold now, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Absalom."* ²² *And Joab fell on his face to the ground and paid homage and blessed the king. And Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his servant."* ²³ *So Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.* ²⁴ *And the king said, "Let him dwell apart in his own house; he is not to come into my presence." So Absalom lived apart in his own house and did not come into the king's presence.*³

2. Silence in the face of sin creates a legacy of unforgiveness and separation

- a. This right here is the difference between a peacemaker and a peacekeeper. David is a peacekeeper, Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers.
- b. David has a brilliant opportunity to repent, to forgive, to be restored to his son, but instead he just prefers the appearance of peace. Absalom is home, so all looks fine. There is a commitment to keep the peace, but it doesn't work.
- c. Sin isn't named and so sin isn't solved and it goes on to have disastrous consequences for everyone, as Absalom doesn't learn and the distance to his aloof father makes him bitter and angry.
- d. How many of us have done this in relationships? Things need to be said, sin needs to be named, but keep the peace and live in proximity with people but the distance to them grows steadily.

² *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 2 Sa 13:37–39.

³ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 2 Sa 14:21–24.

- Absalom grows restless living close to the king but removed from him. He calls Joab and Joab doesn't come so he sets his field on fire, then he arrives.

³³ Then Joab went to the king and told him, and he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.

15 After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

² And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," ³ Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you." ⁴ Then Absalom would say, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice." ⁵ And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

⁷ And at the end of four years Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the Lord, in Hebron." ⁸ For your servant vowed a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If the Lord will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will offer worship to the Lord.' ⁹ The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron. ¹⁰ But Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, 'Absalom is king at Hebron!'" ¹⁴

3. Silence in the face of sin creates a legacy of deceit

- a. What has Absalom learned from watching his dad? He has learned how to lie, and how to deceive.
- b. Because David had managed to live with him for two years without seeing him, and then had kissed him without repenting or rebuking, Absalom was

⁴ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 2 Sa 14:33–15:10.

being trained on how to look like you are one thing and live like you are another.

- c. How many of us are actually fostering and facilitating elements of this in our lives and in our relationships? We are terrified of rejection and so we never publicly repent. We are all too aware of hypocrisy and so we never publicly rebuke.
 - d. We end up in double lives of deceit.
- This leads to a battle between David and Absalom. David flees his home, his city and his people and finds himself once again hiding out in the caves and villages with band of loyal followers.
 - The king is on the run, and Absalom wants nothing but to kill him and to establish his throne. Gosh I love that the bible is honest enough to put David's train wreck of a family legacy in here.
 - It really does save us from thinking that we have to manage the perception of perfect lifestyles.
 - What happens next is sordid and sad.

¹⁵ Now Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. ¹⁶ And when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" ¹⁷ And Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" ¹⁸ And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, for whom the Lord and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. ¹⁹ And again, whom should I serve? Should it not be his son? As I have served your father, so I will serve you."

²⁰ Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What shall we do?" ²¹ Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house, and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." ²² So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof. And Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. ²³ Now in those days

*the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.*⁵

4. Silence in the face of sin creates a legacy of repeated sin

- a. This is pride and sexual deviancy that is difficult to describe.
 - b. Absalom definitely no longer looks like a virtuous man hell bent on defending the honor and dignity of vulnerable women does he?
 - c. He is a sexual deviant like his dad, and that is kind of the point.
 - d. If we won't publicly and humbly deal with our weaknesses, we will hand them as patterns of normality on to the next generation.
 - e. I have told you before that the things that trouble me most in my son Daniel are the things that he clearly gets from me. I can observe that and let it take its course, or I can humble myself and teach my son about my failures and in so doing, hopefully spare him from repeating the same patterns.
 - f. This isn't just true in parents and children, but in faith communities. The scripture tells us to warn people who repeatedly sin publicly....why?....so that others might look on in fear, that's why. Bring it to light so that it is dealt with and not passed on as normal to others.
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- What happens next is that David's friend Hushai gives Absalom some different advice, and in so doing saves David's life. He tells Absalom to go and command an army himself in pursuit of David, which he does.
 - David's army lines up for battle and David asks them to deal gently with Absalom. It is a tragic figure of a broken man and a beaten king.
 - David's men win dramatically and in fleeing, Absalom gets caught in a tree by his hair, and Joab kills him.
 - Messengers run to take the news of victory to David.

⁵ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 2 Sa 16:15–23.

³¹ And behold, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, "Good news for my lord the king! For the Lord has delivered you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you." ³² The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And the Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man." ³³ And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" ⁶

5. Silence in the face of sin creates a legacy of loss

- a. David is heartbroken. His opportunity to engage his son is over. There is so much that he would love to say that he can't. Such a price that he is prepared to pay but he can't.
- b. He lived in the property of David for two years and he said nothing, and now he can't anymore. Now he cries out...my son, my son.
- c. I see Christ so beautifully foreshadowed here though:
 - i. A son of David will die in his place for his sins.
 - ii. He too will suffer the curse and shame of hanging on a tree until death because of sin, just not his own.
 - iii. He wonderfully calls us to walk in transparency when it comes to our sin, promising that he will cover our shame. That is the opposite of David who tries to hide shame and ends up having it exposed.

Conclusion:

- What do we want our legacy to be? What culture do we want to hand to our children?
- We start by being open and honest about our own sin, and then we can lovingly oppose the sin of others.
- The great news is that Christ stands ready to hide our shame.

⁶ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), 2 Sa 18:31–33.