

***Themes in the Life of David***  
***Lesson 4 – The Power of God’s Mercy - The Failures of David***  
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**Introduction:** David was considered one of the greatest men of the Bible.

- A. Outside of Jesus, no other Bible character has as much written about him.
  - 1. God gave this testimony of David: “a man after my own heart.” **(1 Sam 13:14)**
  - 2. Towards the end of David’s life God describes him as “the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel” **(2 Sam 23:1)**
- B. An even greater blessing is that he named with Abraham in the line of descendants from which Christ would come. **(Mt 1:1, 17; Acts 13:22-23)**
  - 1. When Jesus was raised from the dead He was raised to sit on “David’s Throne” at the right hand of God. **(Acts 2:30-33)**
  - 2. If you were to meet a man like David today, what would he be like?
  - 3. How many would have nothing to do with a man like David in his later years because of his “reputation?”
  - 4. Are we like God or the Pharisees in our evaluation of others?  
**(Lk 18:9; Lk 7:39)**
- C. What would be on your list of David’s failures?
  - 1. Our God wants us to know not only how to avoid sin, but how to come back to Him when we do sin. **(Ps 51:14-17)**
  - 2. Do you understand and rejoice daily in the grace of God?

***I. David’s uncontrolled anger at Nabal***

- A. David had dealings with a fool. **(1 Sam 25:2-3, 25)**
  - 1. What is a fool? **(Prov 1:7; 12:15; 23:9)**
  - 2. Nabal was a rich but had no sense.
  - 3. Nabal would take advantage of others. (
- B. Nabal tried to cheat David and spoke harshly about David.
  - 1. Often one of the worst things that could happen to a man is success.  
**(1 Tim 6:9-10)**
  - 2. Nabal had become blind to the true riches! One of the easiest ways to see worldliness in another is to see how they treat other people! Our tongues will say much about whom we serve.
  - 3. Nabal spoke harshly to David through his servants. **(1 Sam 25:5-12)**
  - 4. This action was out of greed because he owed David for his protection and care for his flocks. Here is an evil man trying to cheat another out of a few dollars. **(1 Sam 25:14-17)**
- C. Nabal would not listen to others. **(1 Sam 25:17)**
  - 1. Nabal name has the meaning of "fool" or "rude, ill-bred."
  - 2. Truly this is the action of a fool. **(Prov 1:7; 12:15; 23:9)**
  - 3. Sometimes we may use the word "stubbornness".
- D. Nabal was also a drunkard. **(1 Sam 25:36)**
  - 1. It is not uncommon to see "stubbornness", anger, and drunkenness

together in one person. This will produce horrible fruits. (**Prov 4:17; Prov 20:1**)

2. Should Abigail have left Nabal? NO!

E. David decided to kill Nabal and all of the males of his household.

1. David was a powerful man, but he still approached Nabal in a very humble way. (**1 Sam 25:8**)

2. After such a harsh rebuke, David's wrath was kindled. (**1 Sam 25:13, 21-23**)

3. Nabal had pretended not to know David and even referred to him as a runaway servant. (**1 Sam 25:10-11**)

4. Often the foolish and wrathful answer stirs more wrath. (**Prov 15:1-2**)

5. David had time to rehearse his insult and to take quick action. This was not wise. (**Jas 1:19-20**)

6. How many have used the "swords of their tongues" without thinking?

F. Abigail was quick to respond to do good. (**1 Sam 25:18-20**)

1. If we would restrain our anger and unleash our good deeds this wisdom will bless all. (**Jas 3:17-18**)

2. This took a great humility!

G. She responded to David in absolute humility. (**1 Sam 25:23-25**)

1. There are some that cannot confess their wrong. They hope that others forget because they have stopped their neglect.

2. Here Abigail makes a public confession that showed a great humility.

H. Abigail had a great faith in God. (**1 Sam 25:26-31**)

1. This was not just advice for David, Abigail had humbly lived with this man. Personal vengeance was the "easy" way out. This did not show faith in God. (**Rom 12:19-21; 1 Pet 2:23; Heb 11:35**)

2. Unlike Nabal, David heard this true wisdom and changed. (**1 Sam 25:34-35**)

a. How many foolish men fail to listen to the good advice of their wives?

b. Often the difference between the foolish and the wise is found here.

3. David showed these qualities in not seeking vengeance upon Saul. He finally was made king.

### ***Class Discussion:***

1. Why was David angry? Was he right to be angry?

2. How did David's anger become sin? (**Eph 4:26-27**)

3. What did David plan to do and why was this wrong?

4. How was David kept from doing wrong?

5. How can we keep our anger from becoming sin? (**James 1:19-21**)

## ***II. David's sins concerning Bathsheba***

A. How could this happen – what was he thinking? (**2 Sam 11:3-5**)

1. This likely was not just a spur of the moment issue. (**James 1:14-15**)

2. What steps did David take to commit this sin? How many others did he openly involve to commit this sin?
  3. Did he know Bathsheba's husband? (**2 Sam 23:39**)
  4. How many wives did David have?
  5. What compromises had David already made before this happened?
- B. What warnings did God give about this sin?
1. What consequences are involved with the sin of adultery? (**Prov 6:25-31**)
  2. What does God's law say about the consequences? (**Deut 22:22**)
- C. What does David do to Uriah?
1. He devises a plan to deceive him. (**2 Sam 11:6-11**)
  2. He then gets him drunk. (**2 Sam 11:12-13**)
  3. He then commands Joab to have him murdered at the hands of the enemies of Israel. (**2 Sam 11:14-17**)
  4. He covers it up and goes on for over a year as if nothing happened.
- D. Nathan convicts David of his sin and David repents.
1. David had a righteous anger over something far smaller. (**2 Sam 12:1-6**)
  2. Why are we like David often blind to our own faults?
  3. David truly repents and is forgiven. (**2 Sam 12:7-11**)
  4. The earthly consequences are enormous. Make a list of the people and families affected by the present sin.
  5. Who will be affected by the future consequences?
- E. What are the elements of true repentance?
1. He knew the character of God. (**Ps 51:1-2**)
  2. He made no excuses or cover-up. (**Ps 51:3**)
  3. Godly sorrow was what changed him, not earthly consequences. (**Ps 51:4**)
  4. He wanted a good relationship with God and a clean conscious. (**Ps 51:6-11**)
  5. He was determined to walk with God come what may.

***Class Discussion:***

1. What steps did David take towards sin before he committed adultery with Bathsheba?
2. Did David know Uriah? What was their relationship?
3. How many people knew of some part of each sin David had committed?
4. Why did David not immediately repent and seek forgiveness of sins?
5. Why was Nathan needed to bring David to repentance?
6. What are the elements of true repentance?

***III. David's loss of his kingdom to Absalom***

- A. The problems start in David's family.
1. One of the sons of David rapes one of his daughter's from another wife. (**2 Sam 13:1, 13-16**)
  2. Amnon then refuses to marry her.
  3. Tamar was Absalom's sister.

4. Absalom plots a careful revenge but withholds all of his thoughts from David. David does nothing about this but be angry. **(2 Sam 13:19-22)**
5. David's children had lost respect for him. Why?
- B. Absalom deceives and uses David to murder Amnon. **(2 Sam 13:25-29)**
  1. Absalom flees for 3 years and David wants to receive him back with no consequences! **(2 Sam 13:37-39)**
  2. Joab through deceit makes it possible for David to pardon Absalom. **(2 Sam 14:19-21)**
  3. David is not thinking clearly. What consequences will this bring?
  4. How does David attempt to get around the consequences? **(2 Sam 14:24)**
- C. Absalom begins to undermine David.
  1. He acts like a child and gets David to go back on his pledge not to see Absalom. **(2 Sam 14:28-33)**
  2. Absalom used his good looks and the riches from being the king's son to sway the people. **(2 Sam 14:25; 15:1)**
  3. He then began to publicly undermine David's government by promising hope and change. **(2 Sam 15:1-5)**
  4. What did David do about these very public things? *Nothing!*
  5. David loses his kingdom. **(2 Sam 15:13-14)**
- D. God brings David back but only after Absalom is killed. **(2 Sam 18:28-33; 19:5)**
  1. Joab had killed Absalom in direct violation of the King's orders. Joab did not respect David.
  2. David bitterly mourned his son.
  3. David is not mindful of all of his men that fought and won the battle for him. **(2 Sam 19:5-8)**

***Class Discussion:***

1. Why does bloodshed begin in David's family?
2. What consequences has David already experienced because of his previous adultery? How does this affect his family?
3. What consistent weakness does David show towards Absalom? Why does he do this?
4. How do parents make the same mistakes today?
5. Can we have a blind spot when it comes to our children? How can we be helped in avoiding this blindness?

***IV. David's numbering of the people***

- A. Even Joab sees the vanity involved in this action. **(2 Sam 24:1-4)**
  1. What is the purpose of this numbering?
  2. Did numbers mean anything to David when he fought his past battles? **(Ps 44:6-7)**
  3. Why could David not see this?

B. After the action was completed, David's conscience allowed him to see his sin.  
**(2 Sam 24:10)**

1. It was good for him to act quickly and not need one to come to him.
2. Even though King, he could admit wrong.

C. David faced three very unpleasant choices. **(2 Sam 24:11-14)**

1. 70,000 innocent people died because of David.
2. David grieved at his sin and the consequences. **(2 Sam 24:17)**
3. He was given an opportunity through sacrifice to stop the plague.

**(2 Sam 24:18, 22-25)**

#### ***V. The future practices of Solomon?***

A. Solomon fell because of the influence of his wives. **(1 Kings 11:4-8)**

1. God does not blame David.
2. Still the practice of polygamy was learned from David.

B. David did not do well with his family.

#### ***VI. Lessons about God's mercy and Grace***

A. In spite of these very public sins, David walked with God and loved Him.

1. Read the Psalm he wrote when he fled from Absalom. **(Ps 3:1-8)**
2. David was under tremendous pressures and had great temptations because he was king.

B. David was a man who trusted God and Prayed to Him. **(Ps 4:3-8)**

1. He had an awareness of God's protection and providential care.
2. Because of God's forgiveness he had a clear conscience and peace within.

C. David knew that our God does not give up on us. **(Ps 6:1-4)**

1. David knew that God was merciful.
2. He also knew that God was faithful!
3. Do you know this? **(1 Cor 10:12-13)**

D. David knew the great power of God and the smallness of man. **(Ps 8:3-5)**

1. Whatever goodness God gave man was an act of grace.
2. He knew that God was full of blessings if man would turn to him.

E. David knew to always turn to God, especially when he sinned. **(Ps 19:12-14)**

1. He learned of all these things about God from His word. **(Psa 19:7-11)**
2. What do you know?

#### ***Class Discussion:***

1. Why would pride invade David's life so late in his reign?
2. Why is David recognized as a great man of God even after committing these sins?
3. What is the difference between what Saul did and what David did?
4. How does a proper knowledge of God help us in our weaknesses and sin?
5. What do many Christians fall away?
6. How was David able to bear the terrible earthly consequences with a heart of peace and joy?