

"David's Spiritual Secret: Overcoming Life's Unending Struggles"

Unguarded Moments

1st Kings 15:5

This morning think about ***the unguarded moments of your life*** as we examine again the life of David.

We will see this morning that in David's life--unguarded moments led to sin; sin had inevitable consequences that led to pain; painful godly sorrow brought repentance, and humble obedience led to joy!

All that is what David learned in the most horrible time of his life. As we open to 1st Kings 15 we are looking at David, the most commemorated man in God's Word. We are returning to **the life that God wrote the most about** in the book He left us called the Bible.

We have already seen over these past weeks, that God gave His Divine record for us to see how David lived as a young boy and then as a man. We have seen him struggle, run, hide and become totally depressed and discouraged. Then we saw the Lord bring him out of all his troubles.

May I remind you that we know more from the perspective of God through His inspired Word about David's life (by the sheer mass of 141+ chapters devoted to his life in God's Word) than any other human that has ever lived. That means—

- We know more about David's boyhood, youth and growing up years than any other Biblical character.
- We know more about David's struggles, pains, emotional turbulences, and depressions than any other Biblical character.
- We know more about David's career choices and successes than any other Biblical character.
- We know more about David's finances and treasured possessions than any other Biblical character.
- We know more about David's family struggles than any other Biblical character.

We begin this morning the next phase of this series which I am calling "David's Spiritual Secret: Overcoming Life's Unending Struggles". As we do so we sadly enter into another area of David's life we know more about.

- We know more about the sin of David's unguarded moments than we do about

- anyone else;
- We know more about the pain of the consequences that followed for years to follow. But most of all—
 - We know more about David's humble obedience prompting the marvelous grace of our loving Lord—grace that exceeded David's sin and his shame. We see David's joy in his last days as he returns to joy, peace, fulfillment and blessings from God.

As we enter into this final phase of David's life, where we meet him this morning--he is at the top of his career. He is a successful king, powerful ruler, undefeated general, wealthy businessman, and surrounded on every side by God's blessing. David is writing worship music, serving the Lord in public worship, practicing personal worship and loving the Lord.

But, there is an incredible postscript to an incredible life that should stop each of us dead in our tracks. Look with me at 1st Kings 15:5 and listen as I read and emphasize that one word God emphasizes for us.

1 Kings 15:5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. NKJV

God forgives the sins, and God forgets the iniquities. But the consequences and loss are recorded in the Bible, God's forever settled in Heaven Word.

Pray

We on this side of the cross have many advantages, one of them the finished revelation of God in this book called the Bible. Two of the greatest New Testament writers simplify our daily lives. Peter says that every day of our lives we are stalked by a ravenous lion called the Devil. Paul adds that we will get devoured if we don't take heed. Here are their words.

[1 Peter 5:8] "***Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*** [1 Corinthians 10:12] ***Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.***" NKJV

Beware of allowing any unguarded moments in your life, thinking that you are safe from sin's reach, and that it won't bother you anymore; it is at that moment the ravenous devourer himself is crouching and preparing to spring. That is what David discovered, only it was too late!

We begin this morning a careful look at the three final eras of David's life. They need to be studied and heeded by all of us.

- **Unguarded Moments lead to SIN—Uriah and Bathsheba.** First is the saddest chapter, the darkest and the one we all wince at—his sin with

Bathsheba. 2nd Samuel 11

- **Inevitable Consequences lead to PAIN—Absalom and Shimei.**

These are the chapters that record the many years of painful consequences because of David's sin. 2nd Samuel 12-21, 24

- **Humble Obedience lead to JOY—Solomon, Psalms and the Temple.** And last, the final days of David's life. When we see that despite the failures of Bathsheba incident—David truly was after God's own heart. We see him end well, using his final days for God's glory. 2nd Samuel 22-23

There are lessons to be learned from David that are very difficult but so necessary. For any and all of us today ring Paul's words across the twisted wreckage of so many lives that litter the highway of the redeemed—

1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.
NKJV

Why would David ever drop his guard and have these dangerous and unguarded moments in his life? Well, think of how far he came.

1. FROM HIS YOUTH WE HAVE PSALMS 19, 23... The bottom line of life is—who do you want to please? There are only two possible choices at the deepest level. Either we please God or we in one way or another are seeking to please ourselves. David wanted God to be pleased. It started way back in his youth as we saw in Psalm 19.

Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

David broke with the crowd, stopped getting and seeking approval from his peers and went straight to the top. He wanted God and God alone to be his goal. And that was still his desire.

2. FROM HIS FUGITIVE YEARS WE HAVE PSALMS 56, 142...in these days we find him trusting and following the Lord against all odds.

3. FROM HIS GREATEST DAYS OF HIS CAREER WE HAVE PSALMS 15, 24, 68, 101, 132... Next we find David's testimony of God's closeness during life as David was in his peak or his strong years/career.

- *Psalm 101* was David's pact for purity. He fled to the Lord as his refuge from sins of his youth. *David feels the loneliness of those struggling years of unending work in his career.* David writes of his desires to serve the lord as he enters his career as King David over Israel.
- *Psalm 132* may be David's confession after being anointed king by Samuel and looking back and remembering god's hand on his life.

Unguarded Moments Lead to Sin

Did you know that one of the greatest events in history was the climactic moment when a little boy—a teenaged shepherd boy met the greatest warrior of his day alone? With no sophisticated weaponry David plus God defeated the mighty giant Goliath.

What's amazing when you think about Scripture is that one of the greatest events in history has an equally tragic sequel. You know in our world books have sequels and movies have sequels. Well, there's a sequel to "David and Goliath" and it's almost more tragic than the glory of the initial run of David and Goliath. Because after David and Goliath, there is a horrible sequel, "David and Bathsheba". This is when David was killed by a giant.

Wait, didn't David kill Goliath? Yes, wonderfully by God's power this humble teenaged David slew God's enemy Goliath. But 25+ years later a proud David ignored God's Word and allowed another giant to come right into God's city Jerusalem. David welcomed God's enemy into the presence of this man after God's own heart, and David in midlife—perhaps in his early 40's—was slain by the giant named LUST! And that story is forever contained in the Scriptures.

Far more dangerous than the Goliath that he faced as a teenager, the Giant of Lust had crept slowly into David's own inner chambers. In a moment blinded by his own selfish desires—David was slain. Look at Paul's command to all of us this morning in 2nd Timothy 2:22.

*2 Timothy 2:22 **Flee** [P A Impv. 'I command you to always flee'] also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. NKJV*

Note he doesn't merely say when you are a youth to flee. No, he says 'youthful lusts' the lusts that we nurture and feed as young people--are going to chase us through life. So we must all decide to flee lust, no matter what our age.

The command is so clear--FLEE, run at all costs, leave the presence of lust when you see it start to smolder and come to flame of passion. When you see it start to raise its wicked head in your life, run from it. The Lord will always make an escape route for us.

David the giant killer, killed by the giant of lust, took six dreadful steps downward. He was enticed, baited, hooked and reeled in by lust. Then lust destroyed David's life and testimony. It's very insightful how this occurred, note his downward steps.

1. David Desensitized his conscience by incomplete obedience (II Sam 5:13).
2. David Relaxed his grip on personal purity (II Sam 11:1).
3. David Fixated his heart on physical desires (II Sam 11:2).
4. David Rationalized his mind about wrong decisions (II Sam 11:3).
5. David Plunged his life into lustful sin (II Sam 11:4).

6. David Destroyed his testimony by the sin of a moment of stolen pleasure. Death, deceit, murder, immorality and spiritual oppression, poverty and famine of the soul are only a few offspring of this act of momentary pleasure.

First, David desensitized his conscience by incomplete obedience.

Turn with me to II Sam 5:13.

This verse reminds me of a warning signal, or message on the control panel of David's life. But David disabled it so he wouldn't notice the warnings flashing at him. He ignored God's Word that protects us from disaster when we obey.

I remember in the early days when seatbelt buzzers first encouraged us to buckle up. If we ignored that buzzer, it would annoy us the whole time we didn't have our seatbelt on. I remember finally finding the part of the car that made that noise and I pulled it out. Soon after I discovered it was attached it to something else, and my car wouldn't start so I had to put it back in. David wasn't so fortunate.

When we disable God's warnings in life like David, we desensitize our conscience by incomplete obedience. David was a great guy. He loved the Lord, he was writing the Scriptures. He was writing songs to worship God, but he didn't obey God completely in his life. He was involved in socially acceptable things that were unacceptable to God. We have the same conflict in our lives.

David desensitized his conscience by incomplete obedience. This is the first sign of what was going to happen. This was just carelessness, a slight wandering, just a tiny *loosening* in a socially acceptable area. I actually believe that the entire horrible mess of the sin of David's unguarded moments with Bathsheba was sparked by small disobediences back in the earlier days.

David relaxed his grip on the way God asked him to live. Watch the unfolding of the story of these deadly little things David allowed into his life. Here is the record of his early days as king:

2 Samuel 5:13 And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem,

[Remember David has already been king for seven years. This verse sounds like you're just reading the news—nothing major, nothing bad, it's kind of neutral-- after he had come from Hebron.]

Also more sons and daughters were born to David.

[So you ask, was it really wrong? Didn't all the men back then do it? Didn't Abraham have multiple wives? You know Jacob had several wives. Why they're all God's people is it really so bad? But if God says it is wrong, it is

wrong even if everybody does it! Yes, but 600 years after Abraham God told Moses to ***write down*** His rules for future kings.]

Now turn back with me to Deuteronomy 17. This was the only instructions for he King of Israel given by God. David was the second king, following one who crashed and burned because of his disobedience. So I am sure David would have carefully listened to these words from the God he so loved. Follow along as I read God's instructions for His leaders in Deuteronomy 17:15-20.

Deuteronomy 17:15-17 you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. 16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. NKJV

[Have you seen the sign in Missouri along I-44 that says, "**What part of Thou Shalt Not" is unclear**"? This is the code that the kings were supposed to live by. It's very powerful. This contains God's instructions for His leaders—very powerful words: But David personally disobeyed God because he multiplied for himself wives and possibly multiplied for himself wealth. God says don't do that—]

18 "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites.

[The Pentateuch or first five books of the Bible has 5,852 verses and just under 160,000 Hebrew words. At normal speed, it would take a minimum of 900 hours to hand copy the Hebrew letters with ink and quill onto an animal skin or parchment; that is 6 months of work, non-stop at 8 hours a day! To be God's man you had to give up most of your first year as king doing this Bible Study!]

19 "And it shall be with him,

[He has to carry it around with him]

and he shall read it all the days of his life,

[Some people might say where does it say in the Bible that we're supposed to read the Bible all the time? RIGHT HERE- it says you're supposed to have a personal copy, you're supposed to keep it with you all the time--- you're supposed to be in it meditating on it, reading it all the days of your life. For what reason?]

That he may learn to fear the Lord his God

[A continued exposure to this Book causes us to learn about God and to live a life that acknowledges our fear of Him]

and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 "that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren.

[So that he doesn't think that he can look over the rooftop of his house and look at anybody's wife that he wants and take them. That's exactly what happened! His heart was lifted up and he said boy I'm the #1 warrior, I'm the giant killer, I'm the wealthiest guy in the land—I'm the greatest—I'm the king of God's people and I can have whoever and whatever I want, whenever I want it. God says don't let your heart be lifted up.]

that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

So, because of that little warning from God ignored, David's life moves on without God's protection.

1. David Desensitized his conscience by incomplete obedience II Sam 5:13
- 2. David Relaxed his grip on personal purity II Sam 11:1**
3. David Fixated his heart on physical desires v. 2
4. David Rationalized his mind about wrong decisions v. 3
5. David Plunged his life into lustful sin v. 4
6. David Destroyed his testimony by the sin of a moment of stolen pleasure. Death, deceit, murder, immorality and spiritual oppression, poverty and famine of the soul are only a few offspring of this act of momentary pleasure.

Second, David relaxed his grip on personal purity (II Sam 11:1)

David had let little things slide in his life—things went so well he forgot to be on guard. David relaxed his grip on personal purity. Think of what we sometimes see in T-ball and Little League. Those early ball players at the beginning of the game are in their positions. They're ready for anything that comes, especially if they're an infielder. They've got that glove on and they're looking like pros. Then by about the second inning they've turned around, they aren't watching the game, and they're throwing dandelions. ***They've lost their grip on their position.***

David at the height of his life ***lost his grip on purity*** and he was playing with dandelions in the presence of the ravenous lion of lust.

We need to be doing what it takes to maintain purity in our lives.

Jesus told us once how serious we must be about sexual sin. Most people dismiss His words as hyperbole, overkill or something. But at this moment in David's life—maybe we should read Christ's words again and ponder them personally?

Please turn back to the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5, and listen with new ears to His Christ's words:

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell" (Matthew 5:27-30).

Now, let me share part of an article from someone I really respect, that I read in a magazine once that was written about this verse.

Jesus, the radical¹

"Why does Jesus paint this shocking picture? I believe He wants us to take radical steps, to do whatever is necessary to deal with sexual temptation.

Now, the hand and eye are not the causes of sin. A blind man can still lust and a man without a hand can still steal. But the eye is a means of access for both godly and ungodly input. And the hand is a means of performing righteous or sinful acts. We must therefore govern what the eye looks at and the hand does.

If we take Jesus seriously, we need to think far more radically about sexual purity. The battle is too intense, and the stakes are too high to approach purity casually or gradually.

So ... if you can't keep your eyes away from those explicit images, don't ever go to a video rental store. *Come on. Everybody goes into those stores.*

No. If it causes you to sin, you shouldn't. Period.

Do your thoughts trip you up when you're with certain persons? Stop hanging out with them. Does a certain kind of music charge you up erotically? Stop listening to it.

If these things seem like crutches, fine. Use whatever crutches you need to help you walk.

¹ <http://afajournal.org/2003/september/903purity.asp>