



[Title Slide] David was Israel's favorite king. The hero of the story, dedicated to God, slayer of Goliath, God's anointed king. The people loved him, and God blessed him.

But all that changed in 2 Samuel 11. From his palace roof, he spied on a naked Bathsheba, a married woman unaware she was being watched. After finding out she was the wife of one of his most loyal soldiers, the daughter of one of his most loyal soldiers, and the granddaughter of one of his trusted chief advisors,<sup>1</sup> David made a choice:

[Slide] *2 Samuel 11:4a (ESV) David sent messengers and took her.*

They took her. When the king's "messengers" show up, you don't get to say no. This wasn't an affair. Nowhere in Scripture is Bathsheba described as having sinned, because it wasn't adultery. She was a victim. In fact, in Matthew 1, she is one of only four women highlighted as part of the genealogy of Jesus. Why? Because something about her story enhances and contributes to the story of Jesus. Her suffering points to His redemption. God was able to work something beautiful out of her pain and loss in the eventual arrival of the Messiah.

David took her, slept with her, and then sent her home. But it didn't end there; she became pregnant. And the coverup began, ultimately resulting in David having her husband killed. 2 Samuel 11 ends with these words:

[Slide] *2 Samuel 11:26-27 (NLT) <sup>26</sup> When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. <sup>27</sup> When the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to the palace, and she became one of his wives. Then she gave birth to a son.*

David assumed it was over. The coverup succeeded. He could move on.

[Slide] *But the Lord was displeased with what David had done.*

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<sup>1</sup> Sandra Glahn, *Vindicating the Vixens: Revisiting Sexualized, Vilified, and Marginalized Women of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2017), 101.

It doesn't matter how successful we think we are at covering up sin. It always catches up to us; sometimes immediately, sometimes years later, sometimes in eternity when we stand before God. We may not know when, but we will face it.

Today, we will learn two powerful truths: first, we are called to thoughtfully and courageously challenge others to grow. Second, we must remember that God will always forgive when we come to Him with a repentant heart.

We don't know exactly when, but David's sin caught up to him after the child was born, so some time had definitely passed. David probably thought it was all over. He had gotten what he wanted, and he had gotten away with it.

[Slide] *2 Samuel 12:1-18 (NLT) <sup>1</sup> So the Lord sent Nathan the prophet to tell David this story:*

To us, this parable is an obvious retelling of what David has done, but for David, this was business as usual. As king, he would regularly hear about disagreements, injustices, and cases that needed to be decided. He thought this was just one of many that he would hear and pass judgment on.

*"There were two men in a certain town. One was rich, and one was poor. <sup>2</sup> The rich man owned a great many sheep and cattle. <sup>3</sup> The poor man owned nothing but one little lamb he had bought. He raised that little lamb, and it grew up with his children.*

[Slide] *It ate from the man's own plate and drank from his cup. He cuddled it in his arms like a baby daughter. <sup>4</sup> One day a guest arrived at the home of the rich man. But instead of killing an animal from his own flock or herd, he took the poor man's lamb and killed it and prepared it for his guest."*

A man in power taking from someone without power. This word "took"? It is the same ancient Hebrew word used to describe how David took Bathsheba.<sup>2</sup> It was an act of power, greed, and violence.

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<sup>2</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 279.

[Slide] <sup>5</sup> David was furious. “As surely as the Lord lives,” he vowed, “any man who would do such a thing deserves to die! <sup>6</sup> He must repay four lambs to the poor man for the one he stole and for having no pity.”

David was outraged at the injustice. It’s the same outrage that demanded Goliath’s death for mocking God and the Israelites. His judgement was that the man must give back four lambs; David recognized that this injustice demanded action.

[Slide] <sup>7</sup> Then Nathan said to David, “You are that man!”

How shocked was David to realize Nathan had found him out?

More importantly, how much courage did it take for Nathan to deliver this message? Nathan knew he might be headed to his own death; David had already killed to cover up his crime. What’s another body to add to the coverup?

Confronting David was no simple task. He continued:

“The Lord, the God of Israel, says: I anointed you king of Israel and saved you from the power of Saul. <sup>8</sup> I gave you your master’s house and his wives and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you much, much more.

Notice the contrast: David took, God gave.

[Slide] <sup>9</sup> Why, then, have you despised the word of the Lord and done this horrible deed? For you have murdered Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites and stolen his wife. <sup>10</sup> From this time on, your family will live by the sword because you have despised me by taking Uriah’s wife to be your own.

David’s sons would go on to fight and kill one another.

[Slide] <sup>11</sup> “This is what the Lord says: Because of what you have done, I will cause your own household to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man before your very eyes, and he will go to bed with them in public view. <sup>12</sup> You did it secretly, but I will make this happen to you openly in the sight of all Israel.”

David’s son, Absalom, would go on to do exactly this.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When you hear David's story in 2 Samuel 11–12, what stands out most to you, David's sin, Nathan's courage, or God's forgiveness? Why?
- What's the difference between "confronting to punish" and "confronting to restore"?
- How do you think Nathan felt when God told him to confront David? What risks did he take?
- Why do you think it's hard for us to admit when we're wrong, even when we know we're caught?
- Have you ever had to confront someone you cared about? What did you learn from that experience?
- Who in your life might God be asking you to lovingly challenge to grow? What would be a thoughtful way to do it?
- Is there anything in your own life right now that you need to confess to God? What's holding you back?
- How might confessing to another trusted believer (James 5:16) help you experience healing?
- What are some ways you can remind yourself that "God's mercy is greater" when you feel weighed down by guilt?



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