



This last Tuesday, as I was getting close to heading home, I got a call from my wife, Gwen. One of kids had taken a shower, and the shower was not shutting off as it should. She told me the handle was turned to the off position, but water was still coming out of the showerhead in full force. I told her, "Sounds like the shower is broken." She didn't appreciate my humor, so I told her how to shut off the water to the house. Then I headed home.

When I got there, I took off the valve handle, the cover plate around the valve, and was feeling like a plumbing genius. At that point, as I was staring at the inside parts of our shower valve, I realized I had no idea what to do. So, I did what every good DIY homeowner does these days: I turned to Chat GPT. I told it what brand and style of shower hardware we had,

about what year I'd purchased it, and the problem we were experiencing with it. It let me know that the problem likely was a failed cartridge. It then told me the tools I would need and all the steps to access it – the part I'd already done – how to get a new one, put it in, and put everything back together. The whole project from start to finish, including a run to Home Depot, took under an hour and I again felt like a plumbing genius. 😂 Until I realized I'd put the new cartridge in upside down and so now hot is cold, cold is hot, and the off position is now pointing the opposite direction it should be. Chat GPT had even warned me about this, and I still goofed. But, minor details, I say. The shower now works.

So, here's the thing: Until the obvious sign something was broken, in the form of water spewing out the showerhead non-stop...until then, I had no idea the part was even there...it wasn't something I really thought about, and

probably you don't in your home either. Until today, of course. Sorry about that. But it took that water coming out when it shouldn't for us to realize something unseen was broken.

Today as we continue in our summer sermon series on the life of King David, we see this same principle played out in his life.

Something's broken on the inside of his life, and it's hard to know that until it suddenly shows itself in a very visible and damaging way. Let's turn to **2 Samuel chapter 11, 1-5** to see what happens.

So, it's easy to focus in on the visible train wreck that happened, with his affair with Bathsheba. But the verse that reveals the inner state of his heart and soul is the first verse, the one that's kind of easy to overlook because it's not headline-making material like the rest of the story. **“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” (1 Samuel 11:1).** Three things to briefly note.

1. First, it's the spring, “when kings go off to war.” Not just the armies, but kings. Kings are supposed to be out there leading their men.
2. Second, “David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army.” We see here quite specifically that David sent Joab in his place, not just with the whole army but with “the king's men” - who are distinguished from the rest of the army. It's the king's men *and* the whole Israelite army. In fact, the word there for “king's men” actually is “his servants.” We know “his” refers to David's servants, and not Joab's, because of the grammatical structure of the Hebrew. But it makes it clear that these people he's sending with

Joab really are there to serve David – but he’s not going.

3. Third, the last sentence, “But David remained in Jerusalem.” It’s clearly highlighted and contrasted with the earlier statement that this is the time of year when kings go off to war. David did not.

Why? The text doesn’t explicitly answer that question, but it is clear that something is off kilter. It could be a sense of complacency connected to pride. He’s at the height of his success up until this moment. Israel is unified, he’s king over it all, he’s recently had victories in battles, and so forth. Or, it could be that he’s fearful and is choosing to shirk his responsibilities and duties. This would put him in his predecessor’s shoes: King Saul was fearful, which we saw back in the first Sunday or two of this series. And then it’s also possible, it seems to me, though the text gives no hint at this like it does the other

possibilities...but it could be that he had perhaps seen Bathsheba before, and he was intentionally scheming, because her husband would now be off at war with all the rest of the army. So, if he stays behind, it opens the door to do what he did.

Regardless of the motivation, he's not doing what he's supposed to do, and it leads to trouble. He's idle when he should be busy carrying out his duties and responsibilities. I'm reminded of Genesis 2:15, **“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).** Work is good, it's holy, it's godly. Your job – even if it's a job you don't really like and you're looking for a new one – or the work of caring for your home and your yard, or helping your family or your neighbors, or volunteering at church or a foodbank or whatever it may be...these kinds of things are good and holy and right. It's not that we can never sit around

and watch a Mariners game or a movie, or play a board game or whatever...but our work is good and holy...work is not the enemy. In fact, when we shirk our duties and responsibilities, we tend to get into trouble, as we see with David.

We might wonder about the consensual nature of this, or if, because of him being king and her being nowhere near that level of power, did she feel coerced? Again, the text doesn't say explicitly; but from a careful reading of verse 4 we can deduce that there was a degree of coercion due to the power imbalance between them. Saying "no" to the king could be detrimental to one's future, you know? **And verse 4 puts all the action words on David, pretty strongly:**

**David saw her**

**He inquired about her**

**He sent for her**

**She came to him (in response to his sending for her)**

**He lay with her**

Hebrew has a word for rape – אָנַס, Ah-NAS – and it's not used here. But there's definitely a quick, almost terse, non-romanticized reporting of the events...and David is clearly the initiator, and from this incredible position of power. People who are in positions of power and authority need to be vigilant and careful about their interactions with others and how people perceive them and their requests and so forth. This is true in the church, in schools, in the business world, even in our homes.

Now, as many of you know: **One sin leads to another for David as David tries to hide his sin.** As we read, Bathsheba is pregnant from their union. To cover his tracks, David wants to make it look like the baby belongs to her husband, Uriah. So, in the verses that follow,

he sends word to have Uriah come back home from the battle front, in hopes he will sleep with Bathsheba and then he and others will think the baby is his when her pregnancy becomes obvious a few months down the road. But Uriah feels so guilty about not being with his fellow army guys that he doesn't sleep at home with her. David is probably as stunned as any of the rest of us: How often does a guy get brought home in the midst of a work trip so he can be with his wife? Admittedly, David didn't explicitly tell him to be intimate with Bathsheba – that probably would have been a little weird; but he presumes that Uriah would happily sleep with his wife. But he doesn't.

So, Uriah returns to the army two or three days later, and David has him bring a letter to Joab, the guy who's leading the military in David's place. The letter directs Joab to put Uriah at the very front of the battle, and then have the guys around him retreat, so that Uriah is an island

under siege from the opposition, ensuring that he will be killed. And that's exactly what happens. So, one sin leads to another as David seeks to cover up his tracks, and it costs Uriah his life.

Here's how things end, at least for now. The story does continue next week, so you really ought to be here then if you can, or at least join us online. But here's how chapter 11 ends, with **verses 26 and 27...**

Verse 27 is the kicker: **“The thing David had done displeased the Lord” (2 Samuel 11:27)**. It's a bit of a soft translation in my personal opinion, though it's not inaccurate. More literally it reads, “The thing David did was evil in the eyes of the Lord.” “The thing” doesn't likely refer to just one component of his actions here in chapter 11, but everything that David did. It's all lumped together as one despicable, evil act. And it all started with something on

the inside that was unseen – like my shower. So we see that **David was a man after God’s own heart, but even those who are most desiring to walk with God can get completely ensnared in sin.** We can become lethargic, or prideful of past accomplishments, or abuse our positions of power and authority to coerce or manipulate others...and we can keep following the trail as we cover one thing up with another, and on it goes. We are all susceptible to this. We are all susceptible to sin – whether it ends up looking the same or similar to David’s, or totally different. And it all starts on the inside, hidden away from view.

Jesus articulates this same thing in different teachings, but take, for example, Mark 7:20-23, **“He [Jesus] went on: ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit,**

**lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person” (Mark 7:20-23).**

So, we all have hearts that are susceptible to this. As “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” says, “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love...” We all can wander from God, as David does here. Even when we have a heart for the Lord, as David is described in Scripture, it doesn’t mean we aren’t susceptible to temptation. How many Christian leaders just in the last decade or two, have fallen to one kind of temptation or another – whether it’s sexual sin, financial, or something else. Any time that happens, whether it’s in the headlines, or just in the privacy of our own lives, there’s an inner heart thing, a spiritual condition, that isn’t working right. There’s a misalignment with God’s heart, and with His word. **As Jesus say, “it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come...”**

**Notice it's not even actions he's addressing, but even just at the "thought" level, we struggle with sin.** And it's all a heart issue. It's on the inside, away from what's visible.

This is something I've been thinking about quite a bit for a couple years now, because two years ago, there were a couple headline-grabbing events that got the attention of a lot of people. First was the implosion of the Oceangate submersible on its way down to the Titanic. The other was the implosion of the Pac-12 collegiate athletics conference.

Obviously, one is more tragic than the other and I'm not trying to call them equal in any way. But both happened within weeks of each other. And both had seeds that were sown years earlier – a decade earlier in the case of Oceangate – that led to their ultimate demise. There were prideful decisions made in both of those events, where both organizations had a sense of superiority and arrogance about their

product...and decisions were made out of the view of the public eye, until all of a sudden in spectacular and visible implosions, both met their demise. Their ends seemed very quick to the public, but they had been burning slowly for many years. What was needed was a change, a transformation, on the inside: pride had to be rooted out, and an acknowledgement of help and assistance needed with new plans for going forward. Instead, they denied all of that, and stuck to their prideful ways.

And as I've reflected on that, and again with my busted shower hardware this week, I've thought they were good analogies for our own inner selves and how: **What's on the inside is ultimately manifested on the outside; You can't keep it in forever.** Pride, lethargy, lust, indifference, whatever it was that was at work on the inside of David's life, manifests itself in his sin...and it displeases God. We are no different, and we're lying to ourselves if we tell

ourselves otherwise. Maybe you have been struggling with something on the inside as well. Maybe there's something that you need to let go of, or maybe it's got a hold on you and you need to be released from its grip. Let David show us that pride keeps us from confessing that, and so humility is needed in order for God's spirit to do a work on the inside of us, where it's needed.

**The Good News is: we have a better King (Jesus) who didn't stay home, but who entered the battlefield all the way to the cross.** Where David held back, Jesus steps forward. Where David took from others, Jesus gives to others. Where David brought death, Jesus brings life. There is grace, mercy, and forgiveness in Jesus, when we confess and repent of our sin, and trust in him, the warrior king who battled all the way to death for you and me. But the grave didn't have the final say, as God the Father raised Him to new life on the

third day, giving us the hope of a resurrected life of our own through faith in him, and the hope of eternity in the presence of the King of kings, and Lord of lords. So, whatever you might be wrestling with on the inside, give it over to Jesus. Confess it, turn from it, let him work on your heart where the work needs to be done, and turn toward him instead, following the one true King all the way into eternity. Let's pray...Amen.