

“Sin” - Sermon for August 5, 2018, Psalm 51.

2 Samuel 11:26-27, 12:1-7a. John 6:27-29, 35

Sermon Text: 2 Samuel 12:13a

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."

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David was the man “after God’s own heart.” The story of David is our story—and a reminder that the Bible contains real-life human beings, not fictional mythic characters. David indeed models our human condition, under the guidance and authority of the Spirit of God, and sometimes, sadly, apart from God’s power and guidance. 2 Samuel begins with a demographic assessment that David is “in the wrong place at the wrong time” thinking the wrong thoughts and doing the wrong thing, surrendering to sin.

“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.” David should not have been in Jerusalem. He should have been with his troops in battle. Sin as a principle of life, begins, not with an act of bribery, embezzlement, murder or adultery, but rather when we are not living in accordance with God’s purpose for us. Sin as a principle takes control of anything that we think or do or say, when it is not confirmed through our walking in the Spirit. David turned from God’s favor because he was not where he was supposed to be, doing what he was supposed to be doing. It was not simply that he had time on his hands, but rather that he began to assume that his life and his time were his to control. What are our first steps toward getting sidetracked into sin? It could be not speaking up when we know we should. It could be something as innocuous as sitting in front of the computer when we should be spending time with our families. It could be our participation in inappropriate conversations and

jokes or sitting in judgment of others when we should be speaking compassionately on their behalf. Where is the most dangerous place for you? For David, it was being in Jerusalem when he should have been on the battlefield.

There is a remedy for sin set forth in the 51st Psalm:

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

David asked for forgiveness and mercy. And through that prayer, he was able to call out to God and prophetically pray this affirmation on our behalf:

9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

In his prayer, David set forth God's "terms of endearment" on our behalf. If we agree with God's decision concerning our how, when, what and where, then our adoption in Christ blots out our sins. Through Christ we have been given pure hearts. Through Christ, God's presence in us and for us is irrevocable and unconditional. In Christ, we who fall away from God's plan can be fully restored to God's pure joy. When we pray and meditate upon the Spirit's presence in us through Christ. We experience a new willingness to live above our human condition. It is a willingness and alignment with God that God himself will sustained. Amen.