



Series: 2 Samuel

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Speaker: Pastor Josh Jones, Community Life Pastor

Text: 2 Samuel 13

Good Morning Mercy Church! If this is your first time with us, I want to welcome you. My name is Josh Jones, I get to serve here as the Community Life Pastor. I know churches are notorious for coming up with titles that do little to describe what a person actually does. In my role I help provide oversight to our Groups and Equip Ministries, I also help lead our efforts in Member Care and Student Ministry. So, if you have questions about anything that falls in those spaces, I can help you or connect you to someone who can help you. I love my job at Mercy, but my favorite job is being a husband and a Dad. I know I'm not alone in this, so Happy Father's Day to all the Dads out there.

I want you to hear that your role is invaluable to your family. God has placed a significant responsibility before you as Husbands and Fathers to lead your family and point them to Christ. Your voice can build up or tear down depending on how you use it. Your model is an example to your children of what it looks like to follow Jesus. You are their example for how a husband should treat their wife. In First Corinthians 11:1, Paul writes "Follow me as I follow Christ". Whether you realize it or not, your children are taking cues from you on what it means to follow Christ.

As we get ready to jump into our message for this week, I want to share a little PSA. The content of our sermon is pretty heavy as we see the effects of sexual sin continue to ravage David's household. If you have elementary aged children in here with you and you would like to check them into one of our kids rooms, you are welcome to get up and do that when I pray here in just a moment, or at any time during the service for that matter. Children are always welcome in our service, but we are going to be talking about some heavy content this morning. If you have older children with you and would prefer them not to hear some of the things we will be talking about, they are welcome to hang out with some of our student ministry volunteers in a room we call "HQ" located just on the other side of the hallway.



Let's Pray

Over the past several weeks and months we have been working our way through first and second Samuel. We've been watching David's journey to becoming King of Israel. And in almost every way, he has been an exemplary model for us of what it looks like to live courageously dependent upon God. Last week, however, it took a turn. We saw David abuse his power as king. He became an example to us of what happens when we allow our hearts to drift away from God to pursue our own selfish desires. He models the opposite of what God intended when he placed man on earth to care for his creation.

When God first made humans, their job was to care for and help all of creation flourish, but, ever since the moment sin entered the world, we see this continual unraveling of what God intended when he placed Adam and Eve in the garden. We saw it last week in the way David treated Bathsheba and Uriah. David was given authority and power to help the people of God flourish. But his abuse of power **took** from Bathsheba and Uriah instead of **giving to them**. And this is what happens when power is abused. Power when abused is used for selfish gain, and it takes from people. Power when it is used correctly submitted to the will of God is used to give life and promotes the flourishing of people and the world.

It's this contrast between taking and giving that we will see continue to play out over the course of this next chapter. In this chapter, we will see four men whose hearts drift in allegiance away from God and towards themselves and the pursuit of their own interests. Rather than trusting God, they turn inward and look to themselves to be the masters of their fate. And what we know from Scripture, what we know from history, is that we always, eventually, reap what we sow. We harvest what we plant. This shouldn't surprise us, but it always seems to.

Whenever we allow our hearts to drift in allegiance away from God, we begin to operate as though our preferences rule the day, that we alone are the final authority on what is good and right. And then, as we saw so clearly last week, the rippling effects of that mindset begin to not only hurt our own lives, but it begins to hurt the lives of others.

This week our passage again covers some heavy content and it goes into a lot of detail. It will be sort of like watching a show on Netflix that turns out to be way weirder than you imagined, so much so that you have to just turn it off. You will find yourself at times wanting to back away, wanting to close the book.

When we read passages like we are about to read, we find ourselves asking "Why does God record this stuff?" and "Why all the details?", "wouldn't it be better to just skip it?"



But if it's true that ***All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness***¹, then God has good for us in this passage, and we need him to show it to us.

My hope is that as we watch the destruction that unfolds in this chapter we will be moved to take seriously the counsel of Psalm 1, and be people who surround ourselves with Godly counsel, that we would delight in the Word of God, and that we would meditate on it day and night. Jesus reiterated this truth in John 15 when he says,

I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me. -- John 15:5 (CSB)

When we abide in Christ, we will live fruit bearing lives that give to the flourishing of others. But when we don't, we live lives that take from others.

Alright, let's jump into 2 Samuel 13.

¹1 Timothy 3:16

AMNON RAPES TAMAR

2 Samuel 13:1-39

1 Some time passed. David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister named Tamar, and David's son Amnon was infatuated with her.

Ok, it says some time has passed, the author is just setting up a new scene that follows the incident of David and Bathsheba. Israel has recently defeated the Ammonites, and the author is turning our gaze back to the household of David.

We are introduced to some other characters. It's helpful to know who these people are.

Absalom is David's son from his wife Maacah - Maacah is David's 4th wife and Absalom is second in line to the throne.

Tamar is Absalom's sister and shares the same mom with Absalom.

Amnon is David's Son, born to his second wife Ahinoam. He is currently next in line to the throne. Amnon is the 1/2 brother of Absalom and Tamar

The chapter goes to show us how the rippling effects of David's sin against Bathsheba and Uriah are going to begin to seep their way into the lives of his children. Verse two reads,



2 Amnon was frustrated to the point of making himself sick over his sister Tamar because she was a virgin, but it seemed impossible to do anything to her. 3 Amnon had a friend named Jonadab, a son of David's brother Shimeah.

So here is another character, **Jonadab**. He is not just a friend, he's a cousin, and as we keep reading we are going to find out that Jonadab is not much of a friend at all. Verse three continues...

Jonadab was a very shrewd man, 4 and he asked Amnon, "Why are you, the king's son, so miserable every morning? Won't you tell me?"

Amnon replied, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."

5 Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend you're sick. When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare a meal in my presence so I can watch and eat from her hand.'"

So Jonadab, Amnon's cousin is described to be shrewd. He's described to have a sort of wisdom. But his wisdom is not a

godly wisdom, he is wise in the way of Evil as described in James chapter 3. James writes

14 But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your heart, don't boast and deny the truth. 15 Such wisdom does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and every evil practice. -- James 3:14-16 (CSB)

Circle selfish ambition there. This wisdom from Jonadab is earthly wisdom, it's not wisdom that comes from God. It's wisdom rooted in selfish ambition. Jonadab is going to use his wisdom and craftiness to hatch a plan for his own selfish gain. And Amnon listens. He hears Jonadab's counsel and that it's good for his selfish gain. Can you see how quickly this is about to blow up?

When we come across passages like this one, we can respond in a couple of ways.

1. We can be a passive bystander and watch it unfold only to move onto the next chapter and verse.
OR
2. We can listen close, hear what God is speaking to us through these events and to learn from them.



Verse 6:

6 So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, “Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my presence so I can eat from her hand.”

7 David sent word to Tamar at the palace: “Please go to your brother Amnon’s house and prepare a meal for him.”

8 Then Tamar went to his house while Amnon was lying down. She took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his presence, and baked them. 9 She brought the pan and set it down in front of him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, “Everyone leave me!” And everyone left him. 10 “Bring the meal to the bedroom,” Amnon told Tamar, “so I can eat from your hand.” Tamar took the cakes she had made and went to her brother Amnon’s bedroom. 11 When she brought them to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, “Come sleep with me, my sister!”

This is a pretty elaborate explanation. This was intentional plotting and planning on Amnon’s part to willfully choose sin. It’s a graphic picture of what happens when selfish pleasure and not the worship of God rules our lives. There is a war for worship happening in Amnon’s heart right now and Amnon is giving his worship to his pleasure.

We can see it play out before our eyes, and it makes our stomachs churn.

12 “**Don’t, my brother!**” she cried. “**Don’t disgrace me**, for such a thing should never be done in Israel. **Don’t commit this outrage!** 13 Where could I ever go with my humiliation? And you — you would be like one of the outrageous **fools** in Israel! Please, speak to the king, for he won’t keep me from you.”

With everything that is in her, Tamar pleads with Amnon to stop. This act would not only humiliate Tamar but it would make Amnon a fool - Our English translates this as fool, but she is calling him and his action Wicked folly, foolishness. This word is used to describe outrageous offenses.

14 **But he refused to listen to her, and because he was stronger than she was, he disgraced her by raping her.**

He robs her of her dignity, and silences her voice, and to make a terrible situation even more terrible, his lust turns to hatred and he demands she leave after he’s had his way with her. This is how sin works, it promises us things it can never deliver on. It promises us life, but leaves us with death. This is the lie of every temptation. The lie is that it’s good for you, and not harmful to others. And it will lure you in until it takes your life



and the lives of those around you. We can't worship pleasure and God. We must choose one or the other, and if you choose selfish pleasure it will surely lead to destruction.

15 So Amnon hated Tamar with such intensity that the hatred he hated her with was greater than the love he had loved her with. "Get out of here!" he said.

16 "No," she cried, "sending me away is much worse than the great wrong you've already done to me!"

Again, Amnon refuses to listen to her. He calls his servants and says: Vs. 17 - "Get this away from me, he reduces her to an object, refusing to call her by name.

throw her out, and bolt the door behind her!"

Amnon abused her physically, he abused her verbally, he failed to treat her as the image-bearer of God that she is.

Next we read that Tamar runs out of the room and down the hall crying out, hoping someone would care to hear her. She tears her robe and covers her head with Ashes. She finally runs into her brother Absalom who asks her

(20)...**Has your brother Amnon been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister. He is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart.**" And

then it says that ... **Tamar lived as a desolate woman in the house of her brother Absalom.**

"Don't take this thing to heart?!" How do you not take this to heart? Again it feels as though her voice is being silenced. Her brother takes her in, but is so consumed with his own rage and plotting that he tells his sister to **be quiet** and **to move past it**. He essentially tells her to **stuff it**.

Church, if you have suffered rape, or been sexually abused in any way, God does not ask you to stuff it and get over it. God wants to both hear you, and heal the wound that has been inflicted upon you. And we as your church, we want to help you. Come to us. Don't sit in this alone.

What Amnon did to Tamar is **wicked** in every sense of the word. Amnon, as her brother should have been someone Tamar could trust. He should have been someone looking out for her wellbeing, looking out for her flourishing. Instead he became ruled by his passions and lusts. *He became consumed by his own **fantasy*** that told him that if he could only have Tamar, then he would be happy. The problem with fantasy is that it's never real.

When I say fantasy I'm not talking about hopes and dreams. We all have hopes and dreams, sometimes they are realized and



sometimes they aren't. If they aren't then we adjust and move on. Fantasy however tends to be more gripping, and it's never real. But what is real, is the impact of our actions when we try to embrace our fantasy. Amnon's actions have consequences.

Verse 20 shares some of the consequences Tamar endured. It describes her as living out her days in her brother's house as a **"Desolate"** woman. This is a word used **to describe those who are destroyed by their enemies.**² This poor girl is an undeserving casualty in Amnon's selfish pursuit of pleasure.

If you are a victim of sexual abuse, I want you to hear a couple things.

1. You are not to blame. Regardless of the circumstances leading up to the incident. No one should be treated this way. And Satan would love nothing more than for you to surrender your voice to the thoughts of "Well... if I hadn't done x,y,or z then I wouldn't have been in that circumstance." "It must be my fault, or I must share in the fault." NO! It is not your fault.
2. God will fight for your justice. God sees you, He cares for you, He hears you. He will be your defender, and

² Kellemen, Robert W.. Sexual Abuse: Beauty for Ashes (The Gospel for Real Life) (p. 24). P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition.

your protector. In Ezekiel 34 God is describing himself as a good shepherd and he says **"I will seek the lost, bring back the strays, bandage the injured, and strengthen the weak...I will shepherd them with justice". -- Ezekiel 34:16 (CSB)** This is how God fights for you. He sees all of his sheep, and He will bandage the wounds others have inflicted upon you. He will strengthen you. He will bring about justice in its time.

3. We want to come alongside you to care for you as God cares for you. After the service, our Pastoral and ministerial staff will be available, we would love to pray for you and with you. And if getting connected to a counselor who can help you navigate through the hurt and suffering is the next step for you, we want to help you do that. We have some great partnerships. You can speak with us directly or you can email us at Membercare@mercycharlotte.com.

One of the things we know about Jesus is that in His humanity He suffered everything we've suffered. So, to those who have suffered abuse, He can sit with you because He too was abused. To the betrayed, He can sit with you because he too was betrayed by one of His disciples. To those who feel silenced and unheard, Jesus' words fell on so many deaf ears.



There are multiple places in scripture where there is not a pretty conclusion. It leaves you feeling as though evil wins. Psalm 88 is one of those places. The writer of Psalm 88 finishes by saying “darkness is my only friend.” What we should conclude from scriptures like this is not that God is absent, but actually the opposite is true. God includes things like this in the scriptures to show us that he is actually very present and understands right where you are, and because He understands and knows right where you are, He is your Greatest Help.

Alright, we still have another half of this chapter to go, and **there are two other characters that we need to look at. David, and Absalom. Let's pick back up in verse 21.**

ABSALOM MURDERS AMNON

21 When King David heard about all these things, he was furious.

That's it, that's all it says. He was furious. David was angered by the actions of Amnon. I'm sure he was grieved by Tamar's suffering, but he did nothing to comfort Tamar. He did nothing to discipline Amnon. He became furious, but remained passive in his anger.

Maybe he felt inadequate, or unworthy to step into this conflict because of his own public failings in this area. Because of that,

he failed to trust God and step into the responsibility God had given him. He failed to lead and care for his own family. When we fail to step into the responsibility God has given us, someone or something will step in and take over. And it will not be better than us stepping into it in faith.

Tamar needed her Dad to see her. She needed Her Dad to call out Amnon's actions as wicked and to execute the Justice he had the authority and power to administer. But rather than step in to use his power and influence to give life to Tamar, he stepped away from Tamar in passivity.

So who stepped in where David didn't? Absalom

The text says that for two years, Absalom stewed with hatred for what happened to his sister, and he eventually comes up with a plan to take his vengeance out on Amnon. He's a shepherd, and all his brothers have sheep, and everybody that has sheep knows that every once in a while you have to cut their hair. You've got to shear your sheep. So Absalom decides to invite all his brothers down to a sheep shearing party and its all a set up.

Through a little back and forth dialogue, Absalom convinces David to send all his sons down for this sheep-shearing party.



Once they all come down, Absalom has it arranged that his servants are to wait until Amnon is drunk and then isolate him and kill him.

Everything plays out just as Absalom planned, and word gets back to David that all his sons have been killed. As David begins to mourn the death of his sons, Jonadab shows up. He says, “no no no, let me clarify King”.

“32...My lord must not think they have killed all the young men, the king’s sons, because only Amnon is dead. In fact, **Absalom has planned this** ever since the day Amnon disgraced his sister Tamar. 33 So now, my lord the king, don’t take seriously the report that says all the king’s sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead.”

It leaves you scratching your head, thinking Jonadab, you sneaky snake. How did you know this? And if you knew this, you just kept it to yourself? The depth of the corruption, and scheming. First his counsel to Amnon to set all of this in motion, and now he seems aware and maybe even involved in Absalom’s plan? Over and over we see that when people’s hearts drift away from God, they make decisions out of their own self interest rather than the interest of God and others.

If Absalom was worried about justice for Tamar, there were

other ways he would have gone about holding his brother accountable.

Amnon was guilty under Old Testament law. It was illegal and known to be immoral to marry your father’s daughter, not to mention forcing himself upon her. Justice should not have been hard for Absalom to carry out if that was his main concern.

Absalom’s concern however turns out to be selfish. His main concern, I think, was to become next in line to the throne. We will see this play out over the next couple chapters.

Listen, as we consider the actions of these men, we see that there is a battle going on for their hearts. There is a battle that exists for our hearts too. Who or what will we give our worship to? Will we give it rightly to our God and use our lives to serve him and be a blessing to others? Or will we give our worship to something else, to serve our own passions and desires? When our hearts drift away from God, When we begin to serve created things rather than the creator. We end up using our positions of influence to **take** from others rather than to **give** to the flourishing of others.

Amnon took from Tamar when he became consumed with Lust and Raped her. When we are consumed by lust whether that’s sexual desire or desire for material possession, comfort,



pleasure, status, power. It's evidence that our hearts have drifted from God and we are now consumed with our own self interest and desires. James warns us of this in his letter. In Chapter 1 verse 14, he writes...

14 But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. 15 Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death. -- James 1:14-15 (CSB)

We must guard against being consumed by our lusts.

Jonadabe the sneaky snake, took from his family when he used earthly wisdom to secure his own position of power in the Kingdom. Playing David's house against itself. Rather than use the position he had to help David's kingdom flourish, he contributed to its near destruction. "Wisdom that is not from God will always lead to destruction, and not to human flourishing."

Solomon writes in **Proverbs 1:31-33**, contrasting the difference between those who seek and follow earthly wisdom versus those who seek godly wisdom. Talking about those who seek earthly wisdom, he writes...

They will eat the fruit of their way and be glutted with their own schemes.

32 For the apostasy of the inexperienced will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.

33 But whoever listens to me will live securely and be undisturbed by the dread of danger." -- Proverbs 1:31-33 (CSB)

David Was furious and passive. He took from Tamar, and his children through his unwillingness to step in and lead, protect, and care which led to the near loss of his kingdom. His passivity didn't protect like he may have been tempted to believe, it left people vulnerable to hurt and death. Tamar did not feel protected by her Father the king, she didn't feel cared for, she didn't feel valued.

Because of David's passivity, Absalom took matters into his own hands and killed his brother Amnon. Passivity lures people in with the promise of peace, but it always leaves destruction in its wake.

Absalom - Took from Amnon, and Tamar, and David when he became consumed and ruled by unrestrained hatred and anger. He took justice into his own hands, and he used his hatred for his own selfish end. We will find out that it is about the throne for Absalom. He wants to be king of Israel.



These four men were each put in a position where they could have used their power and influence in a way that honored God and blessed those around them. They however out of selfishness and greed used their power and influence to take from people rather than to give to them. So we find ourselves at the end of this chapter and it's dark.

One of the things we learn about God as we read passages like this one, is that **God is honest about the world we live in.** He's not a sneaky salesman trying to sell us something that isn't real. He's incredibly honest, and the world we live in is devastatingly broken. We have to stop looking for the world to give us what can only come from God. You will never find your savior in the created things of this world. **But the good news of the gospel is that there is a savior who entered into our broken world.** He suffered at the hands of his creation in order to redeem them. It's this savior who comforts us in our brokenness. Meets us in our darkest moments, and gives us the life and light necessary to hold on.

The scriptures teach us that we live between two worlds, the already and the not yet. What I mean is that there is a sense in which God is making things new right now. If you are in Christ you are a new creation that is true, but while you are here on earth you will continue to battle sin. This is where we live, But, just as Christ came once to redeem us, He is coming back a

second time to wipe away sin for Good and to restore everything that sin has broken. Sin does not get the final word.

The only way I can think of for us to respond to a passage like this is to pray and to sing. First we are going to pray. Some of you may have identified closely with Amnon, Jonadab, David, or Absalom, and you've got some repenting to do. Let me tell you something, you can try to hide your sin, but it will eat you alive from the inside out until you repent and seek restoration. Now is the time. Some of you listened and identified with Tamar, and you need to rest in the truth that God sees you, God loves you, and He is ever present with you as you grieve and mourn the sin that has been done to you. In time he will bring about justice.

Then we're going to sing "More Like My Messiah". Listen to some of these lyrics

The old is gone, the new has come
I am forever changed
The Spirit of the Lord is changing my desires
My God is full of truth
With every word he speaks
He says, the dark will lose.

Sin does not get the final word. Let's pray.



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