

Theme: Unlike Jesus and His Gospel, David's indecisive actions provided neither full justice or restoration, and thus provided the seeds for future troubles in his kingdom.

## I. Intro - Indecisiveness Against Hitler

- A. March 7, 1936 - Nazi's send troops into Rhineland
- B. Had been demilitarized zone - Versailles Treaty
- C. Indecisive leaders did not respond - Hitler's power grew
- D. The same pattern continued until WWII began
- E. We see similar indecisiveness in King David at this point
- F. What happens after the Tamar incident? Why doesn't David react? What can we learn from this?

## II. Trouble in the House of David

- A. The Tamar incident in David's household
  - Her **brother** Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your **brother**, been with you? Be quiet now, my **sister**; he is your **brother**. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her **brother** Absalom's house, a desolate woman. 2 Samuel 13:20
  - 1. "Brother" and "Sister" - 20x in 2 Samuel 13
  - 2. This is trouble growing up in David's own household
  - 3. How will David respond to this trouble?
- B. David's indecision, and Absalom's hatred
  - When King David heard all this, he was furious.
  - <sup>22</sup>Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar. 2 Samuel 13:21-22

- 1. David is rightly furious with Amnon, but he apparently does nothing to deal with his son's behavior.
- 2. The seeds of David's indecision regarding Amnon
  - a. David knew Amnon had done evil - but so had David
  - b. David appears to have been worried about his dynasty, and Amnon was his heir
  - c. David's love for his son eclipsed his willingness to deal with Amnon's evil behavior
    - 1. LXX - but he would not hurt Amnon because he was his eldest son and he loved him".
    - 2. This distorted parental love ended up being the undoing of Amnon
    - 3. Scripture is replete with examples of parents who do not discipline their children and thus harden them in destructive patterns of sin
  - d. David was rightly furious and wanted to act, but he could not reconcile love and justice and so was indecisive.
- 3. Absalom's reaction to David's indecisiveness
  - a. Absalom is rightly not happy with David's inability to deal with Amnon's sin
  - b. However, rather than confronting David, Absalom secretly seethes, growing in anger and hatred towards Amnon.
  - c. It also appears that Absalom was growing disrespectful towards his father, which will usher in his later rebellion.
- C. Absalom's plot to murder Amnon
  - 1. Absalom waits for two years, plotting his revenge

2. Absalom throws a party at sheep-shearing time and invites David and all his sons to come.
3. David does not come but allows Amnon to go - another sign of David's blindness in these chapters
4. During the party, Amnon is struck dead (like Nabal had been before, thus fulfilling Tamar's warning to not act foolishly NBL)
5. David hears that all of his sons have died and believes the report until Jonadab corrects him. This is another sign of David's inability to perceive the intentions of his sons.  
But Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, said, "My lord should not think that they killed all the princes; only Amnon is dead. **This has been Absalom's expressed intention ever since the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar.**" 2 Samuel 13:32
6. Absalom then flees to escape being put to death for murdering his brother.

#### D. David's indecisiveness (Part 2)

After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. <sup>39</sup> And **the spirit of the king longed to go to Absalom**, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death. <sup>1</sup> Joab son of Zeruah knew that **the king's heart longed for Absalom.** 2 Samuel 13:38–14:1

1. Absalom lives in exile for 3 years.
2. David longs to go to Absalom, but is indecisive again! He does not approve of Absalom's actions, but he still loves him. So he does nothing one way or the other.
3. The seeds of David's indecision regarding Absalom
  - a. David knew Absalom had done evil - but so had David

- b. David appears to have been worried about his dynasty, and Absalom was his heir
- c. David's love for his son eclipsed his willingness to deal with Absalom's evil behavior
  1. This distorted parental love ended up being the undoing of Absalom
  2. Scripture is replete with examples of parents who do not discipline their children and thus harden them in destructive patterns of sin
- d. David was rightly upset and knew he should act, but he could not reconcile love and justice and so was indecisive.

### III. The Indecisive King

- A. David longs for Absalom but is indecisive, so Joab acts  
Joab son of Zeruah knew that the king's heart longed for Absalom. <sup>2</sup> So Joab sent someone to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought from there... 2 Samuel 14:1–2
  1. David longed for Absalom but did nothing
  2. Joab watches this for 3 years, and finally decides he must act to see if resolution can come
  3. Wise woman of Tekoa tells David a parable - very much like Nathan had done, and with similar results.
  4. The parable involves one son who has killed another, but whom the mother loves and does not want to be put to death.
    - a. David's reactions leads him to the same oath "As surely as the Lord lives" (2 Samuel 12:5; 14:11)
    - b. David's decision indicts himself (again!)

The woman said, "Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? **When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son?**"<sup>14</sup> Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. **But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.** 2 Samuel 14:13–14

1. Once again David can objectively see how to act but has not acted that way himself
2. The wise woman also pronounces the Gospel - God finds a way to restore life and bring the banished sinner home!
- c. However, her words of David's knowledge & wisdom are clearly wrong at this point

"my lord the king is like an angel of God in discerning good and evil..."<sup>20</sup> My lord has wisdom like that of an angel of God — he knows everything that happens in the land." 2 Samuel 14:17, 20

  1. Twice she speaks of David's knowledge and wisdom
  2. She says he knows everything that happens - but in these chapters, he is missing everything going on around him
  3. She says he has wisdom to know good and evil - but he is indecisive and can't decide what is the right path
  4. Sadly, David has become frozen in indecision, lacking the knowledge and wisdom needed to lead well.

#### B. David restores Absalom - partially

The king said to Joab, "Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom."...<sup>24</sup> But the king said, "He must go to his own house; he must not see my face." So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king. 2 Samuel 14:21, 24

1. David grants Joab's request to bring Absalom home.
2. But David remains frozen in indecision, for he does not truly restore Absalom since he will not even see him.
3. This only leads to increasing levels of frustration and hardening in sin for Absalom.
  - a. Absalom tries to get Joab to intervene again, but Joab will not respond.
  - b. Absalom has Joab's field set on fire - and then demands Joab speak to David
  - c. Absalom's words reveal his frustration and refusal to acknowledge his sin

Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent word to you and said, 'Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, 'Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!'" Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death." 2 Samuel 14:32
  - d. Half-restoration does not satisfy either justice or love.
4. David finally allows Absalom to come to see him

#### C. The indecisive king

1. David is stuck in indecision through these chapters
  - a. He is angry with Amnon but does nothing for 2 years
  - b. He is angry with Absalom but does nothing for 3 years
  - c. He partially restores Absalom but does not see him for 2 more years
2. David seems almost blind in these chapters

- a. He does not see Amnon's sin coming
  - b. He does not see Absalom's revenge coming
  - c. He does not see the parable as applying to him
  - d. He won't see Absalom's growing rebellion coming
3. Notice that David is not actually even named in all of chapter 14 - he is just "the king"
- a. The decisive young David is nowhere to be seen
  - b. David the man of action has become the indecisive king - and is sowing seeds of major problems for the kingdom.

#### IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do I see how indecisive half-measures hurt relationships?
- 1. David's indecisive half-measures in these chapters are creating and furthering relational problems within his family
  - 2. When we are not sure how to respond, we are tempted to keep people at arm's length, but this only creates frustration, which is rich soil for sin to grow.
  - 3. The worst possible response is proclaiming someone forgiven, but then not restoring the relationship. Such measures are not reflective of the Gospel and destroy the relationship.
  - 4. Is there anyone I have done this to in a relationship?
    - a. Spouse - half-forgiven for past sins rather than working through issues so the two can become one?
    - b. Children - relational penalties when they disappoint

us or act in a sinful manner?

- c. Friends - relationally withdraw rather than working through issues to restore the friendship?

#### B. The Gospel of justice and love

But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him. 2 Samuel 14:14

- 1. The woman was right: God has devised a way!
- 2. We struggle to reconcile justice and mercy, holiness and love, but God has done this perfectly in the Gospel.
- 3. Christ's redeeming work is the decisive action of both justice and mercy, holiness and love.
- 4. In Christ's redeeming work, the justice of God against sin is fully met, and the mercy of God towards fallen sinners is fully experienced.
- 5. Because Christ has fully expressed the justice and love of God, we are not only partially restored to our Father but are received as wholly accepted children.
- 6. Do not let Satan convince you that God has only half-way accepted you. Our Father has acted decisively, once and for all to bring us to Himself in Christ.

#### C. The Table of Justice and Love

- 1. Here we see both the justice and love of God
- 2. Christ has fully borne the just wrath of God so that we might fully receive the merciful love of God.
- 3. Come to the Table as God's accepted, beloved children

## The Indecisive King

2 Samuel 13-14 (2 Samuel 13:20–22, 37–39; 14:1)

September 30, 2018

Communion

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Teaching keywords: biblical characters; biblical characters; sin; judgment; correction; marriage and family; law and gospel

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, <sup>17</sup> encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

Her brother Absalom said to her, “Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet now, my sister; he is your brother. Don’t take this thing to heart.” And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom’s house, a desolate woman. <sup>21</sup> When King David heard all this, he was furious. <sup>22</sup> Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

<sup>37</sup> Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. But King David mourned for his son every day. <sup>38</sup> After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. <sup>39</sup> And the spirit of the king longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon’s death. <sup>1</sup>Joab son of Zeruah knew that the king’s heart longed for Absalom. 2 Samuel 13:20–22, 37–39; 14:1