

“How to Handle Failure”
The Story — Part 12
2 Samuel 11—12; 18-19 & 1 Chronicles 22, 29

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us...
1 Corinthians 10:11-13

1. Sins committed and covered up (2 Samuel 11).

In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war—David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this—the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. Then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

2 Samuel 11:1-5

The integrity of David and Uriah contrasted:

So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite...." When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him. But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house. When David was told, "Uriah did not go home," he asked him, "Haven't you just come from a distance? Why didn't you go home?" Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open fields... I will not do such a thing!"

2 Samuel 11:6-11

Sin always gives birth to more sin!

In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, "Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."

2 Samuel 11:14-15

... But the thing David had done displeased the Lord.

2 Samuel 11:27

Application: God loves David too much to let things appear normal.

2. Sins exposed (2 Samuel 12).

The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup

and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. "Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him." David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die... Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man!..." 2 Samuel 12:1-7

Application: David, unlike his predecessor Saul, does not make excuses.

3. Sins confessed (Psalm 51:1-12).

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Psalm 51:1-12

Application: God forgives, restores and blesses when we confess our sin.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. 1 John 1:9-10

4. Sins' consequences (2 Samuel 12-24).

Personal consequences:

The baby dies.

David's daughter is raped by her brother.

Absalom kills his brother Amnon.

Absalom leads a rebellion against David.

Kingdom consequences:

David flees in exile—Absalom takes the throne.

Joab kills Absalom.

Adonijah provokes the next rebellion.

5. The rest of the story (1 Chronicles 29:10-13).

David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, "Praise be to you,

O Lord, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. 1 Chronicles 29:10-12

Application: When we sin, and we will, we must admit our sin honestly to God, live with the consequences with dignity, and experience the forgiving and restoring grace of God.

Traits to model or avoid:

Avoid making excuses like Saul.

Show integrity like Uriah.

Have courage like Nathan.

Confess like David.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

"How to Handle Failure" is twelfth in a series titled, "The Story," July 20, 2014. All verses are from the New International version unless noted. Other scriptures used in this message are Psalms 23; 32; and 51.