

Sunday Sermon: February 16, 2020

Sermon Text: 1 Samuel 11:1-17

The Sermon Theme: Terrible Temptation, Terrific Savior

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.

² 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, ³ and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (She had purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she went back home. ⁵ The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

⁶ So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent him to David. ⁷ When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. ⁸ 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. ⁹ But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house.

¹⁰ 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?"

¹¹ 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. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

¹² Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³ At David's invitation, he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk. But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master's servants; he did not go home.

¹⁴ In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. ¹⁵ 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."

¹⁶ So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were. ¹⁷ When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.

²⁶ When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. ²⁷ After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.

When you picture the devil, how do you see him? Do you see him with horns and a pitchfork? Do you see him as a little cartoon figure that sits on your shoulder? Or do you see him as a dangerous enemy who is always battling, always fighting, being willing to do anything he can to lead you away from God.

Many times when we think of the devil as that cartoon character figure. That naughty nuisance that whispers in our ear and gets us to do naughty things.

The devil wants us to think of him about him this way because if we think about him that way we miss what the Bible actually says about the devil. We miss the that the Bible says the devil is a powerful enemy that prowls around like a roaring lion looking to devour us. He is the leader of hell, who wants to attack us to shake our faith in God and lead us into unbelief to the eternal fires of hell.

This morning we will look at the terrible temptations of the devil. We will see that there is no simple or small temptation. The temptation of the devil can take over our lives and destroy them. We will also see the answer to resisting temptation and overcoming it is found in our Terrific Savior.

The Bible lesson of David's sins with Bathsheba is a pretty well known lesson. King David sees the beautiful Bathsheba. Instead of fighting the temptation the devil puts in front of him. He pursues the temptation. He sends his servants to find out who this woman is. Once he has a name, he sends his servants to go get her and he sleeps with her.

Like any good soap opera the inevitable happens. She tells him that she is pregnant. Also like any good soap opera, David is not going to let a husband get in the way of admitting his sin. Instead of repenting, he continues to hide his sin and chases after that sin with more sin. He sends for Uriah, a veteran of the army, in the hopes that Uriah will have missed his beautiful wife so much that he will also sleep with her and cover over his sin. But there is a problem, Uriah is so dedicated to the Lord and the army is so great he does not even go home. He stays at the palace.

Again, David has an opportunity to repent, but he chases after his sin with even more sin. He forms a plan to have Uriah murdered on the battlefield.

There is one final sin. After David feels he has finally won by covering over his sin, he takes Bathsheeba into his house as his wife to show compassionate he is.

It's very easy to see David as the villain and point that out. What he did is despicable. If we saw this on any TV show or movie that we watched we would immediately hate David and we would want to see David exposed for what he is.

But that's not the point of the lesson today. The point of our lesson is to see the terrible temptations that led to terrible sins in David's life and how the devil can and does turn even simple temptations into some terrible sins.

What were David's temptations and sins? Adultery and murder are the obvious answers. However, I think the devil started his temptations before these. The first simple temptation that the devil used against David was pride that came from power.

David had been hand-picked by God to be the replacement for Saul. With those many Bible lessons of David we see humility and trust in God. Somewhere along the line, the power that David had, began to become a temptation that David fell into.

We can see David's pride in the way he pursued Bathsheeba. What was David thinking when he sent his servants out to find out who she was? I think we would be naive to think he wanted to have her over for popcorn and a movie. What might seem like a simple temptation of power and pride had led David to understand that, as king, he could make a command and any woman would be brought to him whether she was married or not. That temptation of pride led to more terrible sins.

Another temptation that seemed simple was the temptation of lust. Lust often seems to be a victimless crime. A woman passes by a man and he notices that she is more than attractive. A man catches a woman's eye and she thinks that he more than handsome. Many times when we have lust no outward sin occurs simply because we don't have the opportunity. But.... given the opportunity..... if the man or woman stops and notices you..... that temptation might turn into a terrible sin.

David didn't resist the sin of lust or the sin of pride and he had the opportunity that came from his position. Instead of resisting these temptations he gave into them. Then instead of repenting he continued to chase after those temptations to keep them part of his life by the others sins of lying and murder that he committed.

What is the Bathsheeba that is in our life? I'm not talking about a lovely woman, I am talking about what is the sin that lives in our life that we aren't resisting. What is the sin that we want to keep as part of our life that we are covering up and chasing after with more sin. even if no one else can see it.

In our Gospel for this morning, Jesus listed some temptations that we might think are little that we don't need to resist can lead to terrible sins.

Is anger, hatred, bearing grudges and getting revenge our Bathsheeba? Are these the temptations that will lead to other terrible sins. It is so easy to be tempted to think that being angry at someone and holding onto that anger is perfectly acceptable. It is so easy to chase after that sin with feelings of revenge and grudges. It is easy to chase after that sin with even more thoughts wishing that something bad would happen to someone. If we don't resist these temptations and sins we might find that we are the one who actually does something bad things to another.

Is lust our Bathsheeba? Do we chase after sexual sins? While we may not equate those sinful thoughts and feelings to adultery, Jesus does. Jesus shows us that the sin of lust is the same as committing adultery with someone in our heart. And, if we do not resist these temptations, they can and do lead to other terrible sins with terrible consequences as we see with David and Bathsheeba.

Is our own pride and our own selfishness our Bathsheeba? Jesus lists the temptation of divorce for un-Biblical reasons as an example of pride and selfishness that have gone unchecked. Whenever you put more than 1 person in a room there will be disagreements. Even people who love one another have times where this happens. The temptation that seems so simple is to be selfish and not give into the other person. The temptation is to be so filled with pride that we hold onto our own thoughts, feelings and attitudes and to stop caring about what something else thinks and feels. Pretty soon I don't want you around anymore and I want to do it my own way.

If we do not resist the temptation by following God's prescribed direction for a marriage, **Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church, Wives submit to your husbands as the church submits to Christ.** Both of these are the opposite of pride and selfishness. If we do not resist these sins we can be led into other terrible sins that can and does destroy families.

Whether we know it or not, we all have a Bathsheeba in our life, a sin or sins that we are chasing after, that we don't want to admit to. Our Bathsheebas may not lead to the physical acts of adultery or murder like David's did. but we have to realize that they are terrible temptations that we must resist, that we must fight against, or they might. The longer we live in these sins, the more the devil draws us in, the harder it is to repent and the more we will hurt ourselves and our loved ones if we are ever caught in these sins.

The point of the sermon this morning is not to point a finger at David and tell him that he was wrong, The point is to see there is no simple or small temptation from the devil. They are all dangerous and need to be resisted. Yet, too often we all act like David and hold onto those sin. The other point is to realize that the only way to resist the devil lies in our terrific Savior.

Resisting the devil begins at the cross. We resist the devil when we are at the cross and we see our Savior and what he has done for us. We resist the devil when we do not resist the devil with our own power, instead he rely on the victory that Jesus won for us. Resisting the devil starts with faith in our Savior Jesus.

Another step in resisting the devil is to do what we are doing right now: regular and consistent worship and study of God's Word.

There are some medicines that the doctor tells us to only take the recommended dosage. While we might think if a little is good, more will be better, the doctor makes sure we know too much will hurt us.

There is no warning like that with God's Word.. There is never too much of God's Word in our struggle against the devil. In fact, God gives us the reminder that we might not even be taking enough of the treatment of his Word. God tells us, "**If you think you are standing firm be careful that you do not fall.**" Instead "**continue to grow in the faith and knowledge of our Savior Jesus.**"

A final way to resist temptations is to do what Paul says. Paul says in our second lesson, avoid sexual immorality, lead a quiet life, and mind your own business. Each one of these is an encouragement to live a life that avoids those things that will tempt us, to stay away from those situations that might lead us to fall and to instead fill our lives with God-pleasing things that lead to him and his Word.

The devil is very powerful. He provides terrible temptations that lead to terrible sins. Yet, we have a terrific Savior. Through him, our sins are forgiven. Our Savior forgives us and promises to help us by giving the strength through him to resist the devil.