

FATHER'S DAY 2017 (KING DAVID'S FAILINGS)

TEXT: I SAMUEL 18:10-16

INTRODUCTION:

1. David was Israel's greatest king. In their book, *A History of Israel*, Davis & Whitcomb, say that King David's "unparalleled success should not be attributed to mere human wisdom, prudence, and military genius. The real key to David's rise to power was the fact that God's hand was upon him."
2. Second Samuel 5:10 says, "And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him," and verse 12 says, "And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake."
3. In II Samuel 23:1, David is referred to as "the sweet psalmist of Israel."
4. First Samuel 13:14 refers to David as a man after God's own heart.
5. However, though David was a man after God's own heart, and a great king, he was not a great father. And since today is Father's Day, I want to deal this morning with this very important subject.
6. A man may be a Christian, and he may be very successful in his career, and still be a failure as a father.

I. FATHERS MUST SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

1. Children learn by example. Children will follow what they see in their father's life more than what they hear from their father's mouth.
2. I heard a story about a father and a son walking home one day in a snow storm. The father turned around and noticed that his son was stretching his legs and leaping. He asked him what he was doing.
3. The son said, "I am walking in your steps, Dad!" The dad immediately bowed his head and prayed, "Oh Lord, help me to walk straight because my son is walking in my steps!"
4. David's sons tried walking in his steps, but their steps led to ruin.
5. Children learn by example. Exodus 20:17 says, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," but David coveted the wife of Uriah the Hittite.
6. Exodus 20:14 says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but David committed adultery with the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

7. Exodus 20:13 says, “Thou shalt not kill,” but David told his general Joab to put Uriah in the forefront of the hottest part of the battle, and then to draw back from him so “that he may be smitten, and die” (I Samuel 11:15).
8. David thought no one would know about this wicked scheme except for him and Joab, but II Samuel 11:27 says, “But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.” The LORD knew, and probably others as well.
9. Later on, Nathan the prophet confronted David, and said, “Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon” (II Sam. 12:7).
10. The immediate consequences of David’s sin with Bathsheba were seen in the death of their child (II Sam. 12:18).
11. But that was just the beginning of trouble for King David.
12. David set a bad example, and his sons went much further than their father.
13. David had many wives. David had so many wives, that we don’t even know all of their names. David’s first wife was Michal, the daughter of King Saul.
14. David’s second wife was Abigail. She was originally the wife of Nabal, a foolish man who insulted David and his soldiers.
15. David’s most well-known wife was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.
16. Some of David’s other wives were Ahinoam, Maacah, Haggith, Abital, and Eglah (II Sam. 3:2-5; I Chron. 3:1-3).
17. According to II Samuel 5:13, David married more wives and concubines in Jerusalem, but the Bible does not tell us their names or how many there were.
18. David set a bad example by taking so many wives, but his sons went even further than their father. First Kings 11:3 says that King Solomon “had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.”
19. David was not a good example to his children, and his children followed his bad example. The Bible teaches that oftentimes the sins of the father are repeated in the children.
20. Consider the second commandment. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments” (Ex. 20:4-6).

21. The implication is that children follow the example of their parents. Therefore, God “visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children” means that the children often repeat their fathers’ sins, and are judged accordingly.
22. Illustration: many of my childhood friends followed their fathers’ example of hanging around bars and getting drunk. In fact, they took it further and did illegal drugs. Some overdosed on drugs.
23. We see the pattern of children following the bad example of their parents in the life of King David. David used trickery to kill Uriah the Hittite, and then later on, his son Amnon used trickery to rape his half-sister Tamar (II Samuel 13).

II. FATHERS MUST DISCIPLINE THEIR CHILDREN

1. David was a great soldier and a great king, but he made some terrible mistakes as a father. David failed to discipline his sons.
2. When Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar, David was angry but he didn’t do anything about it. Second Samuel 13:21 says, “But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.”
3. David didn’t punish Amnon. And David failed to see Absalom’s seething hatred of Amnon. Absalom was enraged and furious over the rape of his sister. David should have noticed this.
4. Second Samuel 1:23-29 says that after two years, Absalom ordered his servants to kill Amnon. This means that two years passed by and King David did not punish Amnon. Perhaps if he did discipline him, Absalom would not have been so angry and vengeful.
5. In fact, if David had not been such a negligent father, maybe Amnon wouldn’t have turned out the way he did.
6. Second Samuel 13:3 says, “But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man.”
7. This friend (a cousin) Jonadab advised Amnon to make believe he was sick in order to lure Tamar into his bedroom.
8. A good and wise father keeps men like Jonadab away from his children! Parents, be careful who you let near your children! First Corinthians 15:33 says, “Be not deceived: evil communications (companionship) corrupt good manners.”

9. After having Amnon killed, “Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years” (II Samuel 13:38). Absalom went to live with his mother’s relatives in Geshur.
10. During this three-year period, the Bible says that “the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom” (II Sam. 13:39), but David never actually did anything to reconcile with Absalom.
11. Joab, David’s general (who was also his nephew), was ultimately responsible for bringing Absalom back to Jerusalem. Joab “sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman” who tricked David into reconciling with Absalom.
12. King David realized she was sent by Joab, and said to her, “Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?” (II Sam. 14:19), but David did not appear to be bothered by Joab’s trickery because he longed to see his son Absalom.
13. However, even after all of this, Absalom was not permitted to enter David’s presence, and he had to live in his own house.
14. This arrangement continued for two years. Second Samuel 14:24 says, “And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king’s face” (cf. vs. 28).
15. Finally, once again by way of Joab’s intercession, the two men get back together, and there was a small measure of reconciliation. Unfortunately, this peace was rather tenuous and did not last very long.
16. Possibly resenting his father’s hesitancy to bring him back into his home, Absalom began to stealthily undermine David’s rule. He set himself up as judge in Jerusalem and gave out promises of what he would do if he were king. After four years of this, he asked to go to Hebron, where he had secretly arranged to have himself proclaimed king.
17. The *Scofield Bible* refers here to David’s half-hearted forgiveness and says, “It would seem that had David at this time taken Absalom into intimacy, the rebellion might have been averted.”
18. Some of the saddest words in the Bible are recorded II Samuel 18 and 19.
19. The death of Absalom is recorded II Samuel 18. King David wept and said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!” (II Sam. 18:33).
20. And then, we read in II Samuel 19:4, “But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!”
21. David’s grief was almost unbearable because he knew Absalom died in a state of rebellion against both his father and against God (18:33; 19:4).

22. Furthermore, David knew that he was partially to blame because of his own sin (cf. 12:10, 11).
23. Davis and Whitcomb in their *History of Israel*, write, “The concluding words of Chapter 18 should be a sober reminder to all believers that sin has far-reaching and tragic consequences. Surely David did not anticipate uttering the words recorded in verse 33 when he engaged in adulterous acts with Bathsheba. The pitiful cries of David are a solemn warning that there is a price attached to sin and disobedience.”
24. J. Vernon McGee said that II Samuel 18:33 is “the most touching expression of grief in the Bible or in any other literature.”
25. Dr. McGee also wrote, “It is at this point one feels like saying, ‘Lord, you have whipped David enough for his sin. Let up on your son David.’”
26. Another example of King David’s failure to discipline his children is seen in the rebellion of another one of his sons, Adonijah.
27. First Kings 1:5 says, “Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.”
28. But the next verse says, “And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?” (I Kings 1:6).
29. David indulged his son Adonijah, and the results were disastrous. Quick thinking on the part of Nathan the prophet saved David from another bloody civil war.
30. Solomon was anointed king over Israel, Adonijah’s followers deserted him, and a terrified Adonijah went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.
31. Later on, the impenitent and arrogant Adonijah had the audacity to go to Bathsheba and say to her, “Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife” (I Kings 2:17).
32. King Solomon was furious when his mother told him this, and he had Adonijah put to death.

III. FATHERS MUST TEACH THEIR CHILDREN

1. King David did teach many important things to his children. The problem is that he didn’t always practice what he preached.
2. When fathers do not practice what they preach, their children see them as hypocrites.

3. Years ago, a teenage girl said to one of my daughters, “Your father seems to like my father, but he doesn’t know that my father drinks beer and smokes cigarettes and curses.”
4. No, I certainly did not know that! Children are turned off by hypocrisy. That young lady is out in the world today.
5. I would like to finish this message on a positive note. Despite his faults, David did teach his sons the Word of God.
6. King Solomon’s Proverbs indicate that his father David taught him important lessons as a young child (Proverbs 4:1-4).
7. Children’s hearts are tender when they are young. Character building in the early years is far easier than later on when bad habits are fixed and ingrained.
8. S. Truett Cathy, the founder of the restaurant chain Chick-fil-A, said, “It’s better to build boys than mend men.”
9. Before he died, David said to his son King Solomon, “I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man” (I Kings 2:2).
10. “Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man.” We need fathers who will teach their sons to be men.
11. Not sissies.
12. Not punks.
13. Not criminals.
14. When David told his son Solomon, “be strong,” he was saying that true strength comes from obeying God (I Kings 2:1-4).
15. In Ephesians 6:4, the apostle Paul tells fathers, “Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture (discipline, training) and admonition of the Lord.”

CONCLUSION:

1. In Shakespeare’s play, a weary King Henry IV says, “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown” (*History of Henry IV, Part II*).
2. Tired, sick, guilty, and beset by rebellion and war, King Henry IV was overwhelmed with problems, and did not sleep well.
3. This sounds a lot like King David. He had trouble with King Saul, and trouble from all of the neighboring countries – the Philistines, and the Moabites, and the Edomites, and the Amalekites, and the Ammonites, et al.
4. David had serious trouble with his son Amnon, and his son Absalom, and his son Adonijah.

5. David also had trouble with his general Joab, and his brothers Abishai and Asahel. After Joab and Abishai slew Abner, a distraught King David said, “And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me” (II Sam. 3:39).
6. David also had trouble with Shimei, and with the foolish Nabal, and with Doeg the Edomite, and with many other trouble-makers.
7. And because of all his cares and worries, David neglected his children.
8. This Father’s Day, let us make a commitment to make our families a priority.