

Uncivil Talk About Uncivil Civics 2 Samuel 3:28-39

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 8-26-2012

Introduction – Some might be tempted to criticize David’s words here. The Sandusky verdict illustrates how wrong-headed such criticism is. It is true that David had no power to remove Joab (v. 39a; 1 Kings 2:5,28-35), but then, neither could he be civil about uncivil civics without becoming evil himself. He had to walk a fine line in dealing with this situation, but then, he did what he could. He went to the public as an appeal to one of the checks and balances to power.

This past Tuesday I was reading some attacks and defenses of Thomas Sowell’s book, *Dismantling America*. And amazingly there were people who were actually defending bureaucracy as an essential feature of the modern state. I just shook my head that anyone would do that. Others wanted to reign in government, but felt helpless in doing so. One person was dogmatic that things had gone too far, and that there was absolutely nothing that we can do to solve the problem. That was not a very helpful comment. Now, I could kind of identify with his frustrations, but not with his paralysis. Here’s what another person said:

In response to Constantine. We the people will likely be unable to right this capsized ship because of a parasite host imbalance...most of our nation's bureaucracy has become camouflaged parasites and they are killing the few remaining hosts (we the people). The current system is inverted so that we the people are bailing out the bureaucracy with more and more of our labors and money as they squander it at a faster pace than we can provide. This is like an epidemic pestilence found on both sides of the political gangway. I am pro Kingdom of God although I am sometimes accused of being a-political because I think both sides of the gangway (or gangbang) deceptively tickle the ears with different forms of (conservative and liberal) bait so they can continue to feed upon us unto death.

And again, I can appreciate his frustrations, and I liked his parasite analogy. It was great. The problem was that he couldn’t think of any medicine that could deal with parasites. I can think of a number of medicines that could help. We may not be able to completely get rid of the political parasites, but we can do things that could help. But what amazed me in comment after comment about Sowell’s great book were the number of

© Copyright 2012 by Phillip G. Kayser. Permission is granted to all readers to download, print, and distribute on paper or electronically any Sermons, provided that each reprint bear this copyright notice, current address, and telephone number, and provided that all such reproductions are distributed to the public without charge. They may not be sold or issued in book form, CD-ROM form, or microfiche without prior permission.

Phillip G. Kayser • Dominion Covenant Church • 307.N 41st Ave. Omaha, NE 68131 • 402.934.3300

statements that destroyed any reason for initiative and faith. The overall sense that I got as I read those comments was that these people felt paralyzed and helpless.

Well, in this chapter David was certainly frustrated at the incredible power that Joab wielded behind the scenes. Two sermons ago we looked at the power politics that seemed so impossible to change – but it did change. One sermon ago we looked at the secret conspiracies and lies that seemed so impossible to overcome. But those conspiracies eventually backfired. With God, nothing is impossible, right? And so it led David to action. In verses 17-21 we saw that David tried to get rid of Joab and replace him with Abner. The problem was that Joab promptly murdered Abner. Joab had seized so much power, that in verse 39 David told his closest associates, **“I am weak today, though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruah, are too harsh for me.”** But even though David did not have the power to completely implement God’s law and to execute Joab for treason, murder, and unconstitutional power grabs, David was not passive like so many people are today. He took it to the people and won their hearts to an extent that it hindered Joab from having further progress. He took it to the people.

When David was misrepresented as having killed Abner, he took it to the people and explained his position. When he was not able to arrest Joab (and we are not told why – likely his soldiers and guards came around and protected him), David took it to the people and exposed the heinousness of Joab’s actions. Ronald Reagan was just as effective in taking things to the people. And we are going to be seeing in this passage that you people are not as powerless as you might think.

But before we go through the verses and demonstrate that, I want to comment on a group of people who criticize David for being unkind and mean-spirited in verses 28-30. They believe that Christians should never use harsh words, and certainly should never pronounce curses on treasonous scoundrels. But that is completely out of touch with so many passages in both the Old and the New Testament. Even Paul pronounced curses on Alexander the Coppersmith. One of the biggest problems that we face today is not the enemy out there; it is cowardly Christians who have no spine. One of the biggest problems that must be solved before we can turn the world upside down like the early church did, is the wimpiness of the church. As one modern wag put it, the church has become a bunch of mild mannered people teaching other mild mannered people how to become more mild mannered. They object to airing the dirty laundry of a Joab. They think that this is not fair politics. But when a politician is guilty of promoting murder

like Joab (and abortion in all forms is murder), and he is guilty of unconstitutional treason like Joab, it is wickedness for Christians to not do all in their power to expose and oppose such people.

And I don't think there is any better illustration of how wrong-headed Christian politeness in politics is than the Sandusky case. Because of the children I'm not going to get into the specifics, but almost everyone recognizes that the silence and lack of action and the cover-ups of Sandusky's crimes were heinous. And in the same way, silence over gross evils in our politicians implicates voters. Failure to take what actions are possible involves us in the guilt of a Sandusky. So I do not criticize David for these words at all; nor for his encouraging of Solomon to later execute Joab. David did what he could within his power, and in doing that, cleared his hands of bloodguilt.

I. Distance yourself from the evils of a “Joab” (vv. 28-30) - Learn from Penn State that silence can implicate you in guilt

A. Take it to the public; David vigorously exposed Joab's guilt (v. 28).

And that is exactly what he says in verse 28. **“Afterward, when David heard it, he said, ‘My kingdom and I are guiltless before the LORD forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner.’”** Though David was not a witness of the murder himself, as soon as he found out what had happened, he made it public and vigorously exposed Joab's guilt. If the officials at Penn State had done the same, they would not have been guilty of aiding and abetting the crime. But they all had the attitude that for the good of the school we need to be quiet about it. I'm sure some of them didn't like what was going on, and they salved their conscience (like Paterno did) by saying that they had reported it to one superior, and that was all that was required. Actually, some hadn't even done that. They just figured that it wasn't their business. But all of them were at least guilty of failing to publically expose the criminal conduct of that man.

I think most people recognize that. But they fail to apply it to other areas of life. They fail to apply it to politics. They recognize that politics is a filthy, dirty business. But they think, “I'm not involved in politics, so I have no guilt.” I'm not so sure that is true. When voters defend their Republican candidate and cover over his evils but are willing to smear the Democratic candidate for the same evils, they are acting like Penn State. If we willingly

defend a conspirator, an accessory in the vile crime of abortion, or defend a thief, and a scoundrel, we are acting like Penn State. And it doesn't matter if the scoundrel that you are endorsing is much better than the other scoundrel, we need to realize that our support of a scoundrel implicates us in some degree in his actions. Your votes have moral implications. Your silence has moral implications. If you speak harshly against the evils of an Obama in chapter 4, but you cover over the evils of a Romney in chapter 3, you are not guiltless.

Some people feel that their hands are tied with respect to our modern Joab, and we are stuck. They think that we have to live with him, just like David was stuck with Joab, whether he wanted to be or not. Though I'm not sure that is a valid analogy, I will go along with it for the sake of the argument. Let's assume that's true, and that you have no choice but to work with Romney like David had no choice but to work with Joab. You still need to *expose* Romney's evils just as clearly as you expose Obama's evils or there is no parallel with David whatsoever.

There is this tendency in politics to be blind to evils in our own party and to have a magnifying glass for evils in the other. I was glad to see that the Republican committee this past week proposed a solid prolife platform with no exceptions. I was disheartened to see Romney disagreeing with no exceptions. If you are going to vote for Romney, I would urge you to at least not cover over his horrible pro-abortion record. It is extremely well documented at prolifeprofiles.com.¹ How many babies died and were paid for by RomneyCare under Romney's governorship? Even after his so-called "conversion" to a prolife position, he appointed a radically pro-abortion judge, Matthew Nestor. One year after his supposed pro-life conversion, he did a prolife thing – he vetoed the expansion of the morning after pill, so I will give him credit for that. But three months later he signed a bill to subsidize the morning after pill. Two whole years after his supposed conversion, Romney expanded access to abortion and gave new rights to Planned Parenthood. Section 3, chapter 6A of RomneyCare bill mandated that one of the commissioners be appointed by Planned Parenthood. That's written right into his bill. Even as recently as last week his campaign has issued statements that he believes that there are exceptions to murder when it is necessary just as Joab believed that killing Abner was necessary for the good of the nation. Some Christians are painting Romney as if he is a Constitutionalist. That is nonsense. Some people paint Romney as a free

¹ <http://prolifeprofiles.com/mitt-romney-abortion>

market advocate and Obama as a socialist. That is nonsense. They are both Fascist style socialists. They are both scoundrels, and if you must vote for Romney (and I think this passage could potentially be used to express your own frustration at being forced into such a bad situation), at least have the courage to say that he is a scoundrel. David did what he could to keep him out of office in verses 17-21, and when his hands were tied in doing that, he told the public that Joab was unfit for office. Can there be differences of opinion on voting? Yes. But let's not do a Penn State cover up.

B. Take it to the public; David pointed out what God thought of Joab (v. 29)

Point B: take it to the public by telling the public what God thinks of all Joabs. The New American Commentary points out that David's curse in verse 29 is basically a summary of what God's law pronounced against people like Joab who violate the covenant. He's applying Scripture. David said,

2Samuel 3:29 Let it [that is, the blood guilt] **rest on the head of Joab and on all his father's house** [why does he include his father's house? Because verse 30 makes it clear that Joab didn't do this alone. Abishai helped him murder Abner, and verse 31 implies that there were other "people who were with him." So even though they didn't strike with the knife, they were implicated. David goes on...]; **and let there never fail to be in the house of Joab one who has a discharge or is a leper, who leans on a staff or falls by the sword, or who lacks bread."**

Keep in mind that this would have been somewhat shocking language even for that time. And it would have been shocking because people had gotten used to the politics of Saul and of Abner. What Joab did was pretty routine. It was normal politics. But David refused to excuse Joab's sin simply because his actions were typical of politicians of the time. He didn't measure Joab's actions by what was possible, or what was currently expedient, or what the nations around them thought of the actions. He measured Joab's sin by what God's word said about it. And he didn't mince his words.

And I will admit that the descriptions taken from God's Word are rather tough. Joab thought what he did was in the interests of the nation, but David called it murder. Saying that Joab and Abishai were guilty of Abner's blood was clearly calling them murderers. The neighboring nations would not have called it murder. It was political necessity. But we cannot allow the culture to define our language. When we speak about abortion, we must not use the language of the abortionists. They are not pro-choice; they are pro-murder. The child in the womb is not simply a fetus, she is a person; a child.

We must get our language from Scripture. God calls redistribution of wealth theft. 1 Kings 21 treats eminent domain as an abomination. RomneyCare was involved in both theft and the murder of abortion. And don't let people tell you that Romney had no choice in that. Read the specific footnoted actions of Romney at prolifeprofiles.com.

But back to our text - what David was doing was airing Joab's dirty laundry with rather strong harsh language. He was using the kind of harsh language that Jesus used against government officials in Matthew chapter 23. He was exposing the notoriously dirty laundry of a government official just like Jesus did in Matthew 23. He was exposing it to the world and saying that Joab's actions were an abomination in the sight of God. If David were here, he would no doubt speak out against not just Obama, but most of the people in both houses in DC as being Joabs who should be replaced. And if replacement were not possible, that wouldn't stop David from calling them out on their sins and asking God to curse them. Politicians who have perjured themselves on their oath to defend and uphold the constitution should be treated as perjurers. And for that matter, why would you vote for a person who would perjure themselves? Is our support of corrupt politicians any different from their support of each other? Those who steal money from taxpayers to fund pornographic art and other abominations should be called scoundrels. There is no reason to soften the rhetoric to make it more acceptable than God makes it. Whatever you think of Doug Giles (and he does sometimes go way overboard), he is absolutely correct when he says,

From a communication standpoint, the prophets, patriarchs, warriors and wild men of scripture were more like sandpaper than a wet wipe. Many of our Biblical heroes, especially the emcees of the various main events, were holy satirists – mental and spiritual heavyweights with a verbal whip that they didn't mind using...

One of the chief signs of the Church's abysmal condition is its refusal to call a spade a spade (in love, of course) both inside and outside the Church...

If, *if*, we truly desire revival, reform and a national renaissance, then get ready for the spiritual wrecking cranes, i.e., the prophets, to come in. When the prophets poked the pompous, when they mocked the haughty and religiously arrogant, when they wreaked havoc on stale religious and political symbolism: they were clearing the ground for fresh, godly growth. I know it may seem ugly at times, but it can ... effect change. That is, if we understand it, cheer it on and yield to it – especially when it's aimed at us.

Now I will admit that he sometimes has too much fun doing it. But when evils of the magnitude of Joab's murder and Penn State's cover-up are not excoriated, there is something wrong.

C. Take it to the public; David was extremely angry at Joab (vv. 28-29ff)

And that brings up point C. The third way that David distanced himself from Joab's evils was to get angry at Joab and Abishai. If there is one thing that verses 28-39 quite clearly show, it is anger. He was furious. And I believe it was righteous anger. How can we not get angry over abortion? And there is not a lick of difference between abortion and Joab's murder of Abner, other than the fact that the children are even more innocent, and it is even more heinous. But they are both murder. How can we not get angry when Congress hands the President unconstitutional powers of detention and takes away Habeas Corpus? How can we not get angry when we are still funding the National Endowment of the Arts? How can we not get angry at the Iron Triangle of bribery and graft that has been going on for a long, long time in DC? I liken the failure of politicians to get angry over the outrageous and unconstitutional things that are going on – I liken it to the officials at Penn State not getting angry and outraged at Sandusky's behavior the moment it became known. Disagreement is not enough. Ephesians 4 commands us, "**Be angry, and do not sin.**" Where is the moral outrage of our nation over the Marxist takeover of our country? Where is the moral outrage in the church over millions of abortions? David glorified God by publically expressing his anger over Joab's actions. But what do Christians do when they see the Congressman recently get angry at Congress and started shouting and telling them that he was sick and tired of their corruption. Christians are pointing their fingers in the wrong direction.

D. Take it to the public; David made it very clear that Joab was guilty of violating Biblical law (v. 30)

The fourth way that David distanced himself from Joab's guilt was by making it clear who the perps were in this outrage against God's law. Verse 30 says,

2Samuel 3:30 So [This is the implication of the previous verses. "So"] **Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.**

And as David goes on to talk in verse 31, he forces everyone else that might have been implicated to demonstrate that they are not gloating over this death, and to do so by mourning. He was making a public challenge.

Why did Joab not attack David over this humiliation? Why didn't he just kill David? There were probably three things that hindered him. First, there were still plenty in the army who loved David, and wouldn't go for that. Second, the elders of verse 17 favored David. Third, David had been so bold in going before the public, that the public would have stood up for David. So David is playing one power base against another power base. It is called interposition. We usually think of interposition as being a lower government official, but the general public can be an effective tool of interposition. Via email and Internet, much good has been done by the quick responses of homeschoolers writing hundreds of thousands of emails against intrusions into their freedoms. They have been so overwhelming in their presence that tyrants have backed off. And despite propaganda from the media, the Internet has proved to be a wonderful way of galvanizing public support and opposing tyrannical officials. So like David, we can still take it to the public. And we need to be a kind of public that will make a difference when a David in office takes it to us. We must not leave Davids out hanging high and dry when they take things to the public. We need to support them and come around them. We need to support a Todd Akin rather than getting in on the piling on. We need to support other Davids. And that might even mean financial support. We certainly have the Internet tools with which to support them.

II. Mourn over the sins of a “Joab” (vv. 31-37) – Learn from Penn State that lack of anger and grief exposes bad character

A. Take it to the public; David humiliates Joab by forcing a show of mourning (v. 31)

Let's quickly go through verses 31-37. These really continue the theme of resistance to Joab, but they also show that David is not a conniving politician who manipulates just to get his way. He not only had genuine anger, he had genuine mourning and sorrow over what had happened. Verse 31 first of all shows David demanding that everyone be outraged over this and mourn over this. If no one had followed David's lead, it could have been embarrassing. But because everyone followed David's lead, Joab was humiliated into silence. Verse 31:

Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, ‘Tear your clothes, gird yourselves with sackcloth, and mourn for Abner.’

I'm sure that Joab was ticked off at David's rebuke, but what could he do in this public meeting? Not much. He had to put on a show that he was indeed mourning.

B. Take it to the public; David mourns himself (vv. 31-32)

But regardless of the insincerity of Joab, *David* mourned. Verse 31 continues,

And King David followed the coffin. So they buried Abner in Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept."

If we model genuine sorrow over the events of the day, others may pick up that sorrow and weep as well. But certainly *God* blesses those who sorrow over the evils of a nation. In fact, Ezekiel 9:4 says,

and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."

Everyone in that nation was judged by God except for those who sighed and cried over the abominations. That mourning shows a distancing of ourselves from those evils. If we want to avoid judgment ourselves we need to do everything we can to distance ourselves from the evils of our nation. Mourning is one way of doing so. And the clear implication of Ezekiel 9 is that we are guilty as citizens if we do not sigh and grieve over our nation's evils. This is one of the duties of the church – to point out the many sins of our nation as Ezekiel and the prophets did so that God's own people can sigh and cry out to Him over those sins. Some people say, "Don't preach on politics; don't preach on the sins of the nation." But we must if we are to raise up a generation of sighers and criers. Without mourning, we are much like the officials of Penn State who ignored what was going on until it was too late. Failure to be grieved shows bad character. So David takes it to the public, and that makes the public itself responsible if they too do not mourn. And brothers and sisters, the evils of our nation have been clearly presented before your faces from many sources. So let us be a generation of mourners.

C. Take it to the public; David makes a permanent record (vv. 33-34)

Verses 33-34 show yet another way in which David completely bypassed Joab and went directly to the people by way of a referendum of opinion.

2Samuel 3:33 And the king sang a lament over Abner and said: “Should Abner die as a fool dies?”

In other words, he didn't die in battle; he had been tricked.

2Samuel 3:34 Your hands were not bound nor your feet put into fetters; as a man falls before wicked men, so you fell.” Then all the people wept over him again.

Wow! If you were Joab you ought to feel pretty bad by now. Maybe David was hoping he would step down from office, but that was not to be. Some sugarcoated Christians might feel that David is going a bit too far. But if David went too far, then so did Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Amos, who not only brought scathing denunciations of Israel's officials into print, but also of the nations all around them. It appears that this song was an inspired song intended to keep alive the memory of Joab's wrongs. It was a form of Facebooking where others would share what you wrote, or in this case, what David sang. It was intended to keep the memory alive.

And just as David used song and print, we should use song and print to distribute the message of corruption far and wide. Songs became memorized in those days and were sung all over the nation. This was a good move on David's part, because it kept the memory of Joab's wrong alive, and kept Joab from arrogating even more power to himself. And in the same way, we ought to make use of video, song, and print to expose the evils of our modern Joabs.

D. Take it to the public; make sure your actions back up your words (vv. 35-36)

Of course, to complain without backing it up with action is hypocrisy. And David showed that this was not simply a soundbite that he hoped the media would pick up on. Verses 35-36

2Samuel 3:35 And when all the people came to persuade David to eat food while it was still day, David took an oath, saying, “God do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread or anything else till the sun goes down!”

2Samuel 3:36 Now all the people took note of it, and it pleased them, since whatever the king did pleased all the people.

His words, his rebukes, and his actions were in accord with the law of God, and because of his steadfast character, the people liked him. It is rare to find people with such consistent character that they can be liked by the general populace *for their character*. Ronald Reagan was one who was even liked and admired by his enemies. Ron Paul has gained that kind of admiration as well. Even those who don't agree with him are amazed at his

character. Despite the media's attempt to either vilify him or to hide him under a bushel, there is a growing movement that loves Ron Paul. David had character. The people knew that the death of Abner truly bothered him.

E. David was effective in his use of a referendum of public opinion (vv. 36-37)

And as we have read, this use of a kind of referendum of public opinion saved the day for David. Verses 36-37

2Samuel 3:36 Now all the people took note of it, and it pleased them, since whatever the king did pleased all the people.

2Samuel 3:37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the king's intent to kill Abner the son of Ner.

The clear implication is that if David had not taken this to the public and had only dealt with it privately, there would have been many who would have concluded the exact opposite – that *David* had set a trap for Abner and *David* had ordered Joab to kill him. It was critical that David make it clear to the public what the issues really were.

But how can we take it to the public if the Federal Communications Commission begins to control the Internet the way that they want to? It is the last bastion of free market news and commentary. It is our ultimate end-run around Joabs. And Joabs (who control various branches of government) don't like people having access to truth that they can't slant. I don't think the modern Joabs like this kind of exposure anymore than the original Joab did. They want to control all the media just like China does. It irritates them that there are so many conservative news sites on the web that do an end-run around their officially sanctioned outlets.

And I would urge you to do everything in your power to oppose the Federal attempts to control the Internet. Evangelicals who oppose pornography have unwittingly been playing right into the hands of the FCC when they want the government to regulate the Internet. That's not the Biblical answer to pornography. The Biblical answer would be to prosecute the rapists, adulterers, pedophiles, and others who actually produce that smut. That would restrict porn much more effectively than the unbiblical overreach of the FCC. But the government doesn't want to punish the actual criminals. They want to control your life. If they really cared, they could shut down porn producers pretty quickly because they know where a majority of this stuff is being produced. That's where the true crimes are

happening. The FCC is playing a shell game. They are getting your attention away from the true criminals and getting you frustrated with the Internet.

But, praise the Lord, they have had their setbacks. The FCC has had their hands slapped by the courts, but they keep pushing, and pushing to regulate Internet providers. Christians must see what the real issues are and oppose the real issues. It is lawlessness that is the problem in America, not lack of bureaucratic regulation. We need more Biblical laws and less bureaucratic regulation.

III. Take protective action against the evils of a “Joab” (vv. 38-39) – Learn from Penn State that failure to take corrective action against Sandusky implicated him in Sandusky’s sin

The last thing that this passage points towards is the need to take protective action against the evils of a Joab. David had put Joab in his place, but if David didn’t watch it, he could easily have been controlled just like Ishbosheth had been controlled by Abner. Joab happens to be a relative and somewhat loyal, but as we will see in upcoming chapters, he can’t be completely trusted. David had already tried the most effective corrective action – getting rid of his Sandusky and having him punished. But that proved to be impossible because it was preempted by Joab. But David did what he could.

A. Surround yourself with trusted men (v. 38a)

First of all, he surrounded himself with trusted men who could protect him. Verse 38 begins: “**Then the king said to his servants...**” Joab and Joab’s men are apparently not hearing this at this point. These are David’s trusted men who are separate from the army itself. This may be the Cherethites and Pelethites. But networks of trusted people are very important to develop when you are trying to stop the advances of a Joab. There are a number of such networks that you can be a part of. I am part of a couple networks that highlight solid local and national candidates in every state that we can send money to, pray for, and help get into office. There are networks for imprecatory prayer, and networks of watchdog organizations. We need to get well connected.

B. Make sure your trusted men see the real issue (v. 38b)

Second, David made sure that his trusted men saw the real issue. It wasn’t for lack of cause that Joab was not being executed. It was because of

lack of power. Verse 38 goes on to say, “**Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?**” David was saying, “Look, this was not a trivial issue.” In addition to the murder that I’ve just accused Joab of, killing such a great prince could have sabotaged the whole mission of reunification. Joab had completely endangered the unification process because of his selfish revenge. Joab’s impulsiveness was extremely dangerous.

C. Make clear why you can’t have a perfect government (v. 39a)

Third, David makes clear that his government was not an ideal government. He said, “**And I am weak today, though anointed king.**” This was a challenge to his men to be on guard, but it was also an admission of his own frustrations at governing. We do need to have mercy on good candidates who get elected into office and can’t change much – assuming of course that they have been trying. The solution is not to have a blanket “vote everyone out” position or to impose “term limits.” Those are shortsighted solutions to a deeper problem of power politics and conspiracies that we looked at in the last two sermons in this book. Let’s keep adding Davids to various positions of federal, state, and local office, but let’s not be disillusioned if we discover that they can’t change things overnight. The Joabs will likely still exist for a long time.

D. Distance your policies from those of the “sons of Zeruiah” (v. 39b)

Point D: David once again distanced himself from the policies of the “**sons of Zeruiah.**” We’ve talked about this family problem in the past, so I won’t repeat it here. But this phrase will keep coming up as an expression that Joab and Abishai were trouble, and should not be in office. That was David’s consistent position for the rest of his reign. In chapter 16:10 David said, “**What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah?**” In chapter 19:22 he said, “**What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should be adversaries to me today.**” The only time that David wavered on this position that they were unqualified for office was during David’s compromise with Bathsheba, and Joab finally had something he could blackmail David with. It was a sad time.

E. Never lose hope that justice will eventually happen (v. 39c)

Point E: David’s last action was to not allow his frustration to kill his faith. Even though it looks like justice is impossible right now, David said, “**The LORD shall repay the evil-doer according to his wickedness.**” And

God did. It had to wait till the time of Solomon, but David had faith that it would eventually happen. David was hoping to consolidate enough power to deal with it before then, but it was not to be. And in the meantime things sometimes got dicey between David and Joab. But David had faith that God would advance His justice in the earth.

Conclusion

So in conclusion let me say that if you are one of those people who has thrown your hands up in despair and has said, “I am too weak; I can’t do anything. I’m not even going to try.” I would urge you to reconsider. There is a lot you can do. You can help the Davids in politics by being part of the public that helps spread his message. And there are lower magistrates like those mentioned in verse 17. You can hold their feet to the fire and encourage them to resist Federal tyranny. You can blog the truth. Can you imagine the difference it would make if every hard core Biblicist started blogging the truth? You can spread the message of other people’s blogs on your Facebook account. In my books that would elevate the status of Facebook from something marginal to something potentially useful - discussing culture-changing issues. You could lend out books, videos, and tracts. You could have bumper stickers. This whole passage illustrates that public opinion is not as weak as you might think. Public opinion kept Joab in check.

And lastly, I would call you to have faith that God can once again turn our nation upside down. We actually have much more reason than David did to believe in the advancement of justice in the earth. After all, did God not promise that of the increase of Christ’s government and of peace there would be no end? Yes He did – Isaiah 9:7. And that same passage said that His mighty zeal would order and establish Christ’s kingdom with judgment and justice from that time forward and forever. *His* zeal would accomplish it. That ought to give us more hope than even David had. Does not Isaiah 42 promise that Jesus will bring forth justice for truth and that he would never fail or be discouraged with such resistance? He did. He promised that the coastlands would wait for His law. Did He not promise the success of the Gospel when He said, “**I will build My church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it**”? He did. And ultimately, it is the Gospel and the Law that will be the foundation for change in America. Conservatism has become a counterfeit idol in America, and it does not glorify God. As one blogger said this past week, “Moderation will not save America.” We must turn back to God. But until America does so, take your cues from David, and do not give up. Amen.

Uncivil Talk About Uncivil Civics 2 Samuel 3:28-39

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 8-26-2012

Introduction – Some might be tempted to criticize David’s words here. The Sandusky verdict illustrates how wrong-headed such criticism is. It is true that David had no power to remove Joab (v. 39a; 1 Kings 2:5,28-35), but then, neither could he be civil about uncivil civics without becoming evil himself. He had to walk a fine line in dealing with this situation, but then, he did what he could. He went to the public as an appeal to one of the checks and balances to power.



- I. **Distance yourself from the evils of a “Joab”** (vv. 28-30) - Learn from Penn State that silence can implicate you in guilt
 - A. Take it to the public; David vigorously exposed Joab’s guilt (v. 28).
 - B. Take it to the public; David pointed out what God thought of Joab (v. 29)
 - C. Take it to the public; David was extremely angry at Joab (vv. 28-29ff)
 - D. Take it to the public; David made it very clear that Joab was guilty of violating Biblical law (v. 30)
- II. **Mourn over the sins of a “Joab”** (vv. 31-37) – Learn from Penn State that lack of anger and grief exposes bad character
 - A. Take it to the public; David humiliates Joab by forcing a show of mourning (v. 31)
 - B. Take it to the public; David mourns himself (vv. 31-32)
 - C. Take it to the public; David makes a permanent record (vv. 33-34)
 - D. Take it to the public; make sure your actions back up your words (vv. 35-36)
 - E. David was effective in his use of a referendum of public opinion (vv. 36-37)
- III. **Take protective action against the evils of a “Joab”** (vv. 38-39) – Learn from Penn State that failure to take corrective action against Sandusky implicated him in Sandusky’s sin
 - A. Surround yourself with trusted men (v. 38a)
 - B. Make sure your trusted men see the real issue (v. 38b)
 - C. Make clear why you can’t have a perfect government (v. 39a)
 - D. Distance your policies from those of the “sons of Zeruiah” (v. 39b)
 - E. Never lose hope that justice will eventually happen (v. 39c)

Conclusion

