

The Life of David: Bathsheba, Pornography's Mind- Addicting Power & The Miracle of Complete Forgiveness

Psalm 32

Tonight we have gathered to celebrate the greatest possession we have as fallen and sinful humans. The God of the Universe so loved us that He sent His Son to set us free, wash us and remove the eternally destructive sins we were born with by nature and have practiced by choice. John writes about this incredible gift in the opening verses of Revelation:

Revelation 1:5 (NKJV) "and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed [freed, loosed] us from our sins in His own blood"

Tonight we are loved, loosed from our sins, and washed. That is the Gospel truth, but sometimes we don't act like we are. As we open to Psalm 32:1-2, think with me:

In the back of your mind, have you ever wondered whether it's even possible to be completely forgiven and cleansed of *all* your sins?¹ What about truly bad ones that have been hidden from nearly everyone who knows you?

Complete forgiveness may seem impossible if you are the type others would never dream of as having any kind of struggle with sin. After all, former drug addicts have a pass, right? They were bad, got saved, and are now set. It's the same for repentant alcoholics, sexual sinners, criminals, and so forth.

But what about a faithful church-goer, or someone reared in a godly Christian home, or just someone who has never been into anything that others would think is really bad?

What if a person like that falls headlong into sin—the kind where others are tempted to question: *Was that person ever really saved?* Think about David is you wonder about:

¹ 060701AM DSS-23; 060701PM DSS-24; 060716AM DSS-25

When the Godly Land in the Ditch

Can someone who has known so much of God's Word, and falls like that: be absolutely sure of God's complete forgiveness? **That is exactly where David was before he wrote Psalm 32!**

David's testimony about the sheer joy of complete forgiveness is captured in Psalm 32:1-2. Follow along as we hear his joyful condition of complete forgiveness:

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Pray

Tonight, no matter how far we go as believers, no matter how many steps away from the Lord we take: it is just one step back.

The one step back, that is the pathway back to God, is: the choice to **repent** (a change of mind that leads to a change of behavior), and be **released** from the power and stain of that sin, and enjoy:

The Miracle of Complete Forgiveness

But how far can we go away from God? Far away. The path of sin is horrible. Always remember how far David fell!

Before his sin with Bathsheba, David had been a living testimony to the grace of God.

Even as a young shepherd boy he began telling the world he wanted to live a pure life for the Lord. Look at the disciplines he committed to in Psalm 132:

- Put God ahead of personal comforts (v.3).
- Maintain a holy habit of devotions (v.4).
- Make time for the Lord a priority (v.5).
- Genuinely long for God (vv. 6-7).
- Stay pure (v.9).

When David became king of Israel, he then laid out his plan for integrity. This became his personal operating system, which was probably the background for his commitments in Psalm 101:

- Live a non-hypocritical life of integrity (vv. 1-2).

- Adhere to a strong personal pact of purity (v. 3a).
- Never allow a buildup of sin (v. 3b).
- Limit exposure to sin (vv. 4-5).
- Hold only to proper heroes (vv. 6-7).
- Clean out whatever displeases the Lord (v. 8).

As wonderful as all those personal, private, and public commitments may have been, by 2 Samuel 11 David had drifted away and gotten out of touch with the Lord. I believe that pornographic peek at Bathsheba (looking with desire for pleasure at a naked woman not his wife) may not have been the first and only peek.

The Puritan commentators often say that the “wagons always follow the ruts”; and that deeds of immorality are often preceded by repeated, secret thoughts along the lines of sexual impurity. So whether it was David’s first pornographic peek or one of many, he fell.

What David did from his rooftop is what many do in modern times from the privacy of their living rooms, offices, and cars: David looked at an unclothed woman to satisfy his lust-filled desires.

David fell headlong into sin. David’s fixation on the naked form of a woman he was not married to, is closely mirrored in the epidemic of the pornified media we all have to live around each day.

How did David get into such a place spiritually, so that he fell so fast and so far? Like a terrorist, the powerful addiction that pornography can produce is overpowering to anyone, believer or unbeliever, if they aren’t vigilantly denying ungodliness on a daily basis.

Pornography Works by Hijacking the Brain

Hijackers have always worked by slipping in innocently and then overpowering an unsuspecting airplane crew. That is what is happening all over this world online, as Satan uses the easily accessible media to addict multitudes.

We are fast becoming the pornographic society². Over the course of the last decade, explicitly sexual images have crept into advertising, marketing, and virtually every niche of American life. This ambient pornography is now almost everywhere, from the local shopping mall to prime-time television.

To no one's surprise, the vast majority of those who consume pornography are males. That is not a new development, as ancient forms of pornography attest.

² Quoted from Albert Mohler, “Hijacking the Brain — How Pornography Works”; Al Mohler interviewed Dr. Struthers on the January 11, 2010 edition of [The Albert Mohler Program](#). Listen [here](#). [article used has 584 words]

What is new is all about access. Today's men and boys are not looking at line pictures drawn on cave walls. They have almost instant access to countless forms of pornography in a myriad of forms.

William M. Struthers of Wheaton College, a psychologist with a background in neuroscience and a teaching concentration in the biological bases of human behavior, explains, "Men seem to be wired in such a way that pornography hijacks the proper functioning of their brains and has a long-lasting effect on their thoughts and lives."

"The simplest explanation for why men view pornography (or solicit prostitutes) is that they are driven to seek out sexual intimacy," he explains. The urge for sexual intimacy is God-given and essential to the male, he acknowledges, but it is easily misdirected. Men are tempted to seek "a shortcut to sexual pleasure via pornography" and now find this shortcut easily accessed.

In a fallen world, pornography becomes an addictive poison. Struthers explains:

Viewing pornography is not an emotionally or physiologically neutral experience. It is fundamentally different from looking at black and white photos of the Lincoln Memorial or taking in a color map of the provinces of Canada.

Men are reflexively drawn to the content of pornographic material. As such, pornography has wide-reaching effects to energize a man toward intimacy. It is not a neutral stimulus. It draws us in. Porn is a whispered promise. It promises more, better, and endless [pleasures].

Pornography "acts as a polydrug," Struthers explains. Boredom and curiosity lead many boys and men into experiences that become more like drug addiction than is often admitted.

Why men rather than women? As Struthers explains, the male and female brains are wired differently. Over time, exposure to pornography takes a man or boy deeper along "a one-way neurological superhighway where a man's mental life is over-sexualized and narrowed. This superhighway has countless on-ramps but very few off-ramps.

Pornography is "visually magnetic" to the male brain. These experiences with pornography and pleasure hormones create new patterns in the brain's wiring, and repeated experiences formalize the rewiring.

When Enough is Never Enough

Struthers explains: "If I take the same dose of a drug over and over and my body begins to tolerate it, I will need to take a higher dose of the drug in order for it to

have the same effect that it did with a lower dose the first time."

While men are stimulated by the ambient sexual images around them, explicit pornography increases the effect. Struthers explains this with compelling force:

Something about pornography pulls and pushes at the male soul. An image begins to pick up steam the longer we look upon it. It gains momentum and can reach a point where it feels like a tractor-trailer rolling downhill with no brakes.

Struthers does not leave his argument to neuroscience, nor does he use the category of addiction to mitigate the sinfulness of viewing pornography.

Sinners naturally look for fig leaves to hide sin, and biological causation is often cited as a means of avoiding moral responsibility.

The addict is responsible for his addiction.

We are here tonight in Psalm 32 because:

David Took That Road Back to God

When the initial consequences of guilt and shame multiplied, David finally came to the end of himself. He repented and sought God's cleansing from the power and stain of sin (Rev. 1:5).

David had deeply reflected on his sin: he had one of his most loyal friends murdered, took that friend's wife as his own, and angered her family (which included two of his most trusted bodyguards and one of his most senior advisors).

And now God had revealed to the whole world why his baby died, why his loyal friend was killed, and what he'd been up to while everybody was out of town.

David longed for God's forgiveness, but in the back of his mind he wondered: *In light of my horrendous sin, is complete forgiveness even possible?*

And that brings us back to Psalm 32—a place to flee to if you find yourself wondering: *Can I ever be completely forgiven of this sin?*

THE GREATEST MIRACLE— COMPLETE FORGIVENESS

The Gospels recorded thirty-seven specific miracles Jesus performed during His earthly ministry. If you analyze them, they were wonderful, yet all but one was temporary. For

example:

- The paralyzed to whom Jesus restored usage of limbs eventually lost their mobility years later when they died.
- Peter's mother-in-law was set free from a fever but ultimately died of other causes (which may have involved a fever).
- The food Jesus miraculously created to feed thousands was consumed and used up, and then hunger returned the next day.
- The eyes restored to blind Bartimaeus later wore out and dimmed by the time he died.
- The hearing the deaf received was subject to the natural downward slide of the human body and most likely faded even before death.

The greatest of Christ's amazing miracles, however, was the one that never faded, never aged, never ended. It was unfaded by time, untouched by health, unaffected by circumstances.

That miracle, the most wondrous of them all, is the one Jesus Christ is still performing in our midst today. It is the miracle I have personally experienced, and it is the same miracle you most likely have experienced too. What is it? The greatest of all Christ's miracles is *complete forgiveness!*

Up until the moments just before Psalm 32, a distraught David was uncertain about total forgiveness. Hence Psalm 32 became his song of testimony—a joyful heart praising God for complete forgiveness.

Let Jesus Touch You

Psalm 32 was a song sung and recorded by God's Spirit for good people who do bad things and become crushed beneath a load of guilt and shame—as Bill Gaither wrote many years ago. Remember those simple words?

*Shackled by a heavy burden,
'Neath a load of guilt and shame.
Then the Hand of Jesus touched me,
And now I am no longer the same.*

Refrain
*He touched me,
Oh, He touched me,
And oh the joy that floods my soul.
Something happened and now I know,
He touched me and made me whole.*

The miracle of complete forgiveness is a light in a dark place—a hope in a weary land—a promise from the God who cannot lie! For God has said to us, through His own Son in John 8:11:

“Neither do I condemn you! I am willing to completely cleanse and forgive in the Name of Jesus because of His payment made for your sins!”

God’s forgiveness is always based on sin’s penalty being paid. Only an acceptable payment can satisfy the Lord’s holy justice. God required a substitute—a perfect sacrifice to die in the sinner’s place. The chosen substitute, and the only one who qualified, was Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Salvation during both the Old and New Testament times was always based on Christ's sacrifice. When any sinner comes to God, convicted by the Holy Spirit that he cannot save himself from the deserved penalty of God’s wrath, God’s promise of forgiveness is granted when he believes.

Remember the Truth About Forgiveness

But the modern tragedy is that many Christians are depressed about their sins and failures. They operate under the false notion that God still holds some or all of their sins against them. These misguided believers *forget* what the Scriptures say.

- They forget that God looked down the corridors of time even before He made the earth and placed the sins of the world on the head of His Son, the Lamb of God ... *slain from the foundation of the world* (Revelation 13:8). At Calvary Jesus took the sins of all who would believe an eternal distance away.
- They forget Christ's promise to never condemn them. When Jesus comes into our lives as Savior and Lord, He says to us: *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has [set you] free from the law of sin and of death* (Romans 8:1-2).

But, communion is a time when we hear Jesus say: Do THIS in Remembrance of Me!

Tonight, celebrate Christ's power to set us free.

Renew your desire to abstain from **every** “lust that wars against your soul”.

And through the bread and cup thank Him who loves us and looses us from our sins!