

# March 22, 2026 - 2 Samuel 12:1-31 - "It Ends on the Cross"

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Date: 22 March 2026

Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0:00] We will be reading from 2 Samuel, chapter 12, the whole chapter, verses 1-31. 2 Samuel, chapter 12.

Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him.

But he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him. Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die.

And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

Nathan said to David, You are the man. Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul, and I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah.

And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. Why have you despised the word of the Lord to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

[1:53] Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

Thus says the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house, and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor.

And he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this son, for you did it secretly. But I will do this thing before all Israel and before the Son. David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

And Nathan said to David, The Lord also has put away your sin. You shall not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child who was born to you shall die.

Then Nathan went to his house. And the Lord afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick. David therefore sought God on behalf of the child.

[2:56] And David fasted, and went in, and lay all night on the ground. And the elders of his house stood beside him to raise him from the ground. But he would not, nor did he eat food with them.

On the seventh day, the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us.

How then can we say to him, The child is dead? He may do himself some harm. But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David understood that the child was dead.

And David said to his servants, Is the child dead? They said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his clothes.

And he went into the house of the Lord in worship. He then went to his own house. And when he asked, they set food before him, and he ate. Then his servants said to him, What is this thing that you have done?

[3:55] You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive. But when the child died, you arose and ate food. He said, While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. For I said, Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live.

But now he was dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me. Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her. And she bore a son. And he called his name Solomon. The Lord loved him and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah because of the Lord. Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and took the royal city.

And Joab sent messengers to David and said, I have fought against Rabbah. Moreover, I have taken the city of waters. Now then gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it shall be called by my name.

So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah and fought against it and took it. And he took the crown of their king from his head. The weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone.

[5:08] And it was placed on David's head. And he brought out the spoil of the city, a very great amount. And he brought out the people who were in it, and he set them to labor with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them toil at the brick kilns.

And thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem. This is God's word. Thanks be to God.

What would happen if every sin in your life was exposed? I mean, this is publicly, undeniably, everything for others to see.

What if your sin was exposed? I mean, that's certainly a good way to lose friends, right? But think seriously.

Every sin known, not just known by God, but brought into light in a way that could not be ignored. It's like in those moments where we think that it's over.

[6:28] Time has passed. The secret is buried. The evidence is gone. The witnesses are silent. And you kind of, it's put behind you.

Life has moved on. But what if God had one more word about that sin?

As we come into 2 Samuel chapter 12, we are stepping into the aftermath of one of the darkest chapters of David's life.

In chapter 11 that we saw last week, the sermon that it should have ended on the roof, right? Well, David committed adultery with Bathsheba.

He orchestrated the death of her husband to cover up the scandal. Her husband Uriah died. And then he married Bathsheba in an attempt to still cover up the sin.

[7:36] And for nearly a year, it worked. Nobody knew, right? Or so we thought.

All throughout this year, there was no confession. There was no repentance. There was no visible consequence to David. Life just kind of moved forward.

And he became desensitized to the horrible, horrendous act. But the final line of chapter 11 left us with a haunting reality, right?

Last week we saw, but the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. God saw it. Sort of playing on the sermon title from last week, that it should have ended on the roof, I'm going to propose a sort of clause.

That it ends on the cross. And what I want us to do is unpack this in four different sections. And you're probably going to laugh at how I have these sections split up, because they are not proportionally split up, but they are emphatically split up.

[8:53] And so what I'd like to do is four sections, but I want us to see the main points crystal clear. It's simply proposed in an imperative.

Don't let your sin conquer you. Let God conquer it for you. Okay? I want us to see that unpacked today in these four sections, as they hold high that main point, and that it ends on the cross.

Let's pray as we get into the first section. Father, thank you for gathering us here today as sheep, as we had our scripture reading together.

Sheep who have gone astray. Everyone to their own way. Father, help us to see the reality of what it looks like of being a sheep.

But not only that, but a sheep that's running from the reality of their sin. Today's text hits us in the heart. It's hit me in the heart.

[10:01] And we know that it is good for us to be here in this place to receive your word. We pray that your word conquers us today.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. The first disproportionate point, and I have points today. The first disproportionate point is that sin hidden will be exposed. Simply to say, sin hidden will be exposed.

Thinking back to chapter 11, there was a lot of sending on account of David. David was sending a lot. He sent everyone almost in order to do his bidding to keep his sin under wraps.

And so with all the sending that David had done from last week, sending messengers, sending orders to people, sending Uriah to his death, today, we meet a new sender.

[11:15] Look in verse 1. And the Lord sent Nathan to David. Now picture the scene. It's been a year removed from the thing.

The thing that happened. David's sitting on his throne. Right? Kingdom. Stable. Scandal is buried. Everything seems to be working out.

Everything's intact. No harm. No foul. And then Nathan walks in. Now this is the prophet Nathan. The prophet to God's king.

Just as Samuel was to Saul. And Nathan comes walking in. And he doesn't have accusation. He opens up with a story. And from verse 1 to verse 4, we see Nathan telling the story of a rich man with many flocks and then a poor man who had to buy this single lamb.

This lamb was very beloved to this poor man. It was like a contrast. It's a story of a contrast between the rich man's abundance and sort of just this disposal, disposed nature of what he owned versus this poor man who, not to mention, he's poor.

[12:37] He had to buy a lamb and that lamb was like a family member to that poor man. And so the tension sets in the narrative that Nathan shares.

When a traveler came to the rich man, he refused to take from his own flock to provide food for the traveler. Instead, he stole the poor man's beloved lamb that this poor man had to go out of his own poor pocket to buy.

And not only that, it was a beloved lamb like a family member. Now, David gets ticked here in verse 5.

We see that David's anger was kindled that this rich man stole from this poor man, something that was beloved. It's ticked off. It was greatly kindled against the man, the rich man, and he said to Nathan, as the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, and he shall restore the lamb fourfold because he did this thing and because he had no pity.

I mean, this man deserves to die. Now, take a pause for a moment. That's a little extreme for theft.

[13:59] Not even God's law would institute that type of condition. David somehow was so sensitive to the sins of others, but so much time has passed that he somehow was desensitized to his own sin.

This is the oddity of this emphatic statement. In verse 7, David finds himself in quite a self-incriminating position.

You got the divine lawyers, you got lawyers here, right? Man, I love that statement. Can't defend that, right? Just incriminated himself because Nathan informs him, you are the man.

That rich man that you just pronounced that he needs to die because he did this thing, because he had no pity, that's you. David can see sin clearly as long as it belongs to other people.

The story is not about another man, another situation. It's about David and this buried situation that he thought he got away with. But the word of God has a way of turning things, turning that mirror, doesn't it, onto ourselves.

[15:36] God's word, God's word, just as it was through the mouth of the prophets, so it is for us in the Bible. It allows us to, yeah, at times evaluate others, and many times criticize others, and even condemn others.

We see a metric in scripture at times, but there's always that moment where God's word suddenly confronts us.

Say, you thought this was talking about them. It's talking about you. I'm dealing with you, not them. I'm dealing with them.

Don't worry, right? I'm dealing with you. And then you realize that this whole time that you were focused on other people and other situations, it was all the focus of your heart the entire time. I remember the lowest point of my wife and I's marriage being a situation where I couldn't see past the actions of my wife.

[16:53] I couldn't, I was so blinded to the reality of my responsibility and my actions and my neglect in different situations that all of a sudden I'm pointing the finger.

She's the problem. She needs to change, right? It's a cliché saying, but you know, when you're pointing one finger, you got a bunch pointing back to you.

I don't know who made that famous. God bless that person. That's a good one. But it wasn't until after all this pointing that I realized according to God's word, speaking into my own marriage and my own heart, I'm not doing enough pointing back to me, taking responsibility for my portion, my responsibility in the situation.

God's word confronted my heart when I'm so inclined to point the finger. I'm not the only one, church. I know y'all. In verse 7 and 8, Nathan continues.

Nathan continues to, continues and God recounts his grace towards David. He said, I anointed you, I delivered you, I gave you in verse 8.

[18:19] All these things and then another piercing question comes, well, the first piercing question, verse 9, look with me, and then comes the question, why have you despised the word of the Lord?

Why have you despised the word of Yahweh? Now, to despise the word of the Lord, to despise as the word goes, it's not merely to fail.

Why did you screw up? No, it's quite deeper in weight. It means to treat him as weightless, like it doesn't matter.

It's a willful rejection of God's word. Why have you despised, like put away the word of the Lord? As to live is the word doesn't matter God's holiness can somehow be ignored. And this despised language is very covenantal.

[19:27] It's contractual, formal language to despise a covenant. If you cheat on your wife, you're despising your marriage vows, your marriage covenant.

You feel the weight of that. God's love. And here's the truth. You can hide your sin from people, but you cannot hide it from God.

And right here we have something actually stunning to see, the relationship between despising and the things that we hide in our lives.

That hiding sin is on par with despising the word of the Lord. This is just heart shattering to think about.

But after recounting God's blessings in verse 10 to 12, God tells David, and this is the scary, scary cause.

[20:37] What he says in verse 10, you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.

In other words, the very thing that David buried in darkness that he was doing in the shadows, God is going to bring it to light.

Now, this is not to embarrass David. David. This is not to shame David. Right? Because not everyone will know.

It's not like God went on his ex, is what it's called now, and he just made this tweet. Is it still called a tweet or an ex? Tweet? Whatever. It's not like he's going to shame and publicly embarrass him or anything like that, but what David will see and what David will experience is that things are going to still take place in his kingdom, but things are going to be a little more complicated as the sword comes against family members.

There's familial strife that will unfold. These are the natural consequences, and every time David has to face another situation of drama, it's going to be another reminder of the light of God doing his thing in David's house as a response of his sin.

[22:09] We ought to realize that sin thrives in secrecy, church. This is what David thought he'd be able to get away with, that if there was enough time, there was enough strategic maneuvering of covering the

compounded sin up in his life that, yeah, we'll be good.

Don't fall for that lie, because sin thrives in secrecy. It thrives in secrecy, but it also dies in the light. You disarm sin in the light. When it comes to the light, sin is disarmed.

And it seems as if the longer it's hidden, the louder that exposure will be, the worse the wakes that will come following it, right? Church, this is not just David's story.

I hope you've realized that. This is our story too. Where are we hiding sin? What have we buried in our lives, thinking that we're clever?

[23:34] What are we justifying? What are we minimizing in our lives? sin? You see, the problem is that we tend to move on, but God never overlooked it, and He never overlooks our sin.

Sin hidden will be exposed. This is a call to come clean, and for David, the exposure doesn't end. Look at the second section here. disproportionate section. Second point is sin exposed must be confessed.

Sin exposed must be confessed. After months of silence, after the scheming and covering, David finally speaks up in verse 13.

I'm going to hone in on these words. Buckle up. He speaks. David said to Nathan, just five Hebrew words here, I have sinned against the Lord.

[24:49] Five words. There's no excuses here. There's no blame shifting, just pure confession.

And further, listen to the weight of it. think about what he's saying so simply. saying, I, I have sinned against the Lord, not Bathsheba, not the pressure of leadership, not because I had an opportunity. No, I have sinned. I have sinned. I haven't just slipped up. I haven't just made a mistake. And that sin was against the Lord, not just merely against other people.

Yeah, Uriah was collateral in that, but it wasn't just against Uriah. It wasn't just against Bathsheba and his entire family, or his entire calling to be king, anointed over Israel.

He despised the Lord. This was against the Lord. In Psalm 51, and we'll have time at the end of the sermon to reflect on this more.

[25:59] In Psalm 51, we received some deeper insight into this moment. David writes in Psalm 51 is a moment that's captured more detailed of this moment of his lowest point in all his history.

Psalm 51 says, against you and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. In other words, David understands something that we often miss.

Sin is not defined primarily by who sees it. Right? Sin is defined by who it is against.

David thought he pulled a quick one. But that doesn't define sin. Sin is defined by who it's against.

And I could go on and on about our modern culture, can't we?

That we live in. sin, the culture pushes back on this. Everything we look upon in our culture outside of the church and often inside the church, it's like grooming us and it's discipling us in the way of the world that's constantly telling us, well, sin isn't sin unless it hurts somebody else or what you do in private is just your business, you know, butt out.

[27:26] And as long as no one's harmed, you know, everything is fine, just deal with it, right? That's what the world says. And on top of that, the modern culture hasn't just minimized sin, but it's redefined sin entirely.

It's redefined, it's moved the goalposts. Rather than sin being rebellion against God, that's the definition of sin, it has become a personal preference, it's become a psychological struggle, it's become a social construct, or at worst, it's a mistake that just needs to be managed.

Instead of confessing sin, the world renames it. Instead of repenting from sin, the world reframes it.

And this isn't just the world, this is even in the church. Even in the church, there's people, instead of saying, I have sinned against the Lord, it's kind of been rebranded to say, I'm working through something.

There's no severity in that. Friends, you cannot confess what you refuse to call sin, and you can't be forgiven for what you're unwilling to acknowledge.

[28:52] what a humbling reminder for us today. For those who have adopted the language and accepted the discipleship of the world, instead of using the language of God, instead of dismissing the language of God, it's time

to recover true confession.

Not excuses, just simply five Hebrew words. I have sinned against the Lord. I have sinned against the Lord.

Whether that might be a sin in your own marriage, you're not making excuses, you're not pointing fingers, you say simply, I have sinned against the Lord.

It's the beginning of true confession. Whether it's in the sexual aspects of your life with pornography that no one else sees. Right? The little girlfriends or boyfriends that your husband and wife don't know about.

No. I have sinned against the Lord who knows all things. Whether it's a mental affair you have in your mind or maybe the coveting that happens when we look at other families or other situations that we fail to acknowledge as sin.

[30:14] True confession begins where excuses end, church. until we get there, real repentance, real restoration can't begin.

I have sinned against the Lord. Sin exposed must be confessed.

And what happens next reveals something astonishing about God. in the third point is sin confessed can be forgiven.

We see this in the second half of 13. Nathan responds immediately. He says, the Lord also has put away your sin.

It's like that also is really powerful in Hebrew. along with that, the sin, the despising, the murder, the adultery, everything that goes along with that, the Lord, the Lord also has put away your sin.

[31:29] You shall not die. I mean, let that settle in for a minute. That rich man in the story, he didn't deserve death.

But David, he did. Even by his own self-incriminating words to Nathan. And yet, God says, you shall not die.

You see, this is real grace. This is real grace. giving the exact opposite of what somebody deserves is grace.

Real grace. Although David compounded sin over sin over sin over sin, the Lord is still faithful to his covenant promise that he gave and established with David.

at a very moment where he knew this would happen. And he knew everything would happen. He knows everything that's going to happen this afternoon in all of our lives.

[32:46] Doesn't this raise quite a conundrum though? How can God do that and still be just? How is that just? How can God just put away David's sin?

Well, I love how Pastor Rick gave some insight to Romans 3. I think it provides a helpful context into this glorious grace that we're seeing in David's life.

And Paul tells us in Romans 3 that God put Christ forward as a propitiation for our sin. Forward as a propitiation.

That's a Christianese, theological, biblical word, for satisfy, to satisfy sin. Put Jesus forward so that he, God, might be just and justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus Christ.

And so this moment that we see unfold for David points us forward to the gospel of Jesus Christ Christ. Because the forgiveness that David receives and Abraham all before, forgiveness they receive is ultimately grounded in the cross that Jesus Christ will bear.

[34:09] In other words, the just nature of God, he dealt with David's sin upon the cross. God didn't just put it away, right?

He put it forward to satisfy the demands of the law, of propitiation.

And so we see here that God doesn't lower his standards, as it's often kind of in pop culture as God being the therapeutic granddaddy up in the clouds, just, ah, I know, you're sinners down there, we'll make it someday, right?

No, God is holy, holy, holy, right, Carmen? Amen. He doesn't just lower his standards to forgive us, he satisfies them upon the cross, where Jesus died willingly to pay David's death, and all of our debt, completely, mine included.

And that guy out there on the bike. I love how Thomas Watson says, God's mercy is not a pillow for sin.

[35:29] That's what the world makes that out to be. God's mercy is not a pillow for sin, but God's mercy is a refuge from it, from our sin.

If you're not in Christ today, no matter how deep the sin or how long it has been hidden, God truly forgives.

We know God doesn't ignore sin. It's theologically certain in this passage. He doesn't ignore sin, but he dealt with it through Jesus Christ, didn't he?

Are you ready to deal with it between you and God, to trust in Jesus Christ? I mean, some of us can kind of like detach us from this.

yeah, I know, Brent, I'm not David. I'm not a king. I didn't kill anyone, right? Just didn't tell the whole truth of the IRS, right?

[36:35] I just made one click on the internet, right? Well, you might say those things that sort of like minimize the reality of that, but you sinned against God.

That's the common denominator. The God who knows and sees everything. And just like David, your sin is not hidden from him. You may bury your sin, you may forget about it.

We're really good at forgetting about our sin, aren't we? Time is on our side, we forget about it. We explain it away. And we convince ourselves at times that it's not serious, but God sees it, and you should wake up to that reality today.

God sees your sin. If you do not deal with your sin today, the words that David heard, you will not hear. God told David, well, Nathan told David through the prophet Nathan, God, said, you shall not die, right?

you will not hear those words if you do not deal with your sin today. Time is not promised to continue tomorrow or when you get your life back in order.

[37:56] Deal with it here today, right now, and have faith in Jesus Christ, the one who was put forward so your sin can be put away. sin confessed can be forgiven.

But forgiveness doesn't mean that all of a sudden life is just going to work out perfectly, right?

There's consequences that unfold. There's aftermath, right?

And that's what we see in this disproportionate point. Sin forgiven still bears consequences. Nathan continues, nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child who is born to you shall die.

Nathan dropped the mic and he went to his house. This is difficult because a child dies because of David's sin.

That's really tough to wrap our heads around, right? And the weight of this moment should not be minimized. I've heard arguments from pro-choice opponents outside that, you know, the church is more pro-life than God is.

[39:22] Look at what happened here. They might cite a verse like this. He put a child to death. However, we have to realize something, church, that we're reminded here that life belongs to God.

It's not ours to dictate life or death, right? Humanity has no authority to take life unjustly, but God, as the giver of life, the author of life, has the authority to take it away justly.

And so the sanctity of life is therefore rooted in this truth. Life belongs to God, not us. And that's where the argument that sounds good actually has no theological thrust.

It's just using the Bible. False teachers love to do it. Use the Bible to just promote your own agenda. And that's what they do. God gives. God takes away.

He has numbered our days, each one of you, your days are numbered as God wills it. It is not up to us to define.

[40:37] He's the author. Because in God, in His nature, is life. God is light and life. John loves that phrase. And the church that stands for life in a womb is standing for what God is willing to take place in this life that humanity is unjustly taking away, being the author of life.

And so, yes, forgiveness removes guilt from God, but it doesn't erase the consequences in this life. God, in His sovereignty, decides to bring this child into glory, where this life is merely just a vapor as a consequence, direct consequence of His sin.

Despite the heavy consequences, this ruins David, doesn't it? He's ruined, but he's also transformed. You might think he's back, right?

David seeks God so fervently while the child was still alive after being born. fasting, he was praying in verse 16 to 17, but then after the child dies in verse 18 and 19, David worships.

He submits to God's will and God's ways. He accepts the responsibility for his actions. He's literally brought so low, and he submits to God's will to his servants.

[42:20] The servants knew it in verse 21 and 23. This is not the same man from chapter 11 at all.

Chapter 11, that guy, that was a hard-hearted man. This guy, according to God's speaking in his life through his word, this is a man who is completely humbled.

while David's life had significantly gotten more complicated, God's grace had only gotten more glorious.

Things were complicated. There was a fallout. He would be reminded of this in the rest of his life and this failure. But God still remained faithful to his covenant through David's life.

God is a promise keeper. David isn't rejected like Saul. Passage says in 24 to 26, Bathsheba, she's comforted.

[43:26] They bear a son, Solomon. He's adored by God. We'll see more about Solomon soon. And then all of Solomon's flaws to come.

Just the rollercoaster of humanity, right? But the steadfastness of God is still present. The Lord loves David. And look at this.

In verse 26, what a great reminder. As they go out to battle, you might wonder, what's this going to look like? Well, business as usual.

Complicated, but business as usual. In verse 29, David gathered all the people together and went to Braba and fought against it and took it.

And he took the crown of their king from his head. The weight of it, the talent of gold, pretty heavy, and in it was precious stone and it was placed on David's head and he brought out the spoil of the city a very great amount.

[44:31] God is still not done using David. He's unworthy, but God is still not done using David. Sin is not the end of God using him.

And if we come clean before the Lord in honest confession, that same can be true for us today. If I'm certain about anything in this passage, David is going to be for the rest of his life reminded of his unworthiness.

He won't be able to escape it. And that's not a bad thing. It's not a bad thing. David continued to see God provide in spite of that horrendous chapter 11.

I am certain here David never forgot how unworthy he was. You see, God's purposes are not destroyed by sin. God's grace does not erase the past, but it does redeem the future.

And even if things get a little complicated, even if they're not as you expected, even if the road is a little bit rocky up ahead, God is still faithful to his promises.

[45:46] Church, don't take God's grace for granted. Remember our unworthiness. Remember our unworthiness. Remember Augustine who wrote, God does not choose us because we are worthy, but by choosing us, he makes us worthy.

worthy. Right? God does not choose us because we are worthy. But by choosing us, he makes us worthy. This is such a great reality when we realize that sin forgiven still bears consequences.

Because sin is messy, right? Sin is messy, it's consequences, it radiates in our lives. We still, even the sin can carry over. If it was a really bad sin, yeah, you're probably still going to have court fees, you're still going to have costs and damages and things like that.

You're still going to have the trials and the lawyers and all this stuff that comes, right? But in Christ alone, the internal consequences are gone.

And that is the good news of Jesus Christ. And that is our hope. Not that we are worthy of grace, but because God is rich in grace.

[47:04] Church, don't take God's grace for granted. We don't deserve it. None of us deserve it. We don't earn it. We are not worthy of it.

And yet, the God who exposed David's sin did not cast away the broken man who confessed it. He kept his promise. He is still the God who receives the contrite without excuses.

He's still the God who removes sin to make us blameless, forgives the guilty, redeems what sin has ruined.

Remember the point today, church. Don't let your sin conquer you. Let God conquer it for you. Let's pray.