

Life of David: Learning from a Shepherding King

Session 4: Absalom's Pride and David's Humility

Context:

Solomon has been born to David and Bathsheba. Absalom has murdered his half-brother Amnon because of his actions against Absalom's sister Tamar, and Absalom has fled the kingdom for fear of his life. David was heart-broken but also missed Absalom, so after a few years, he's invited back to the kingdom.

2 Samuel 15:1-12

1. Absalom is turning the hearts of the people toward him by listening to them when no one else will. What do you think is motivating him to do so? (hint: vs 4)
2. Do you think David knew about what Absalom was doing?
3. In Absalom's heart, he thought that he would be a better king than his father. How can we see this from the passage?
4. In verse 7, we see that Absalom had been doing this for years, and then in verse 12, we see that at the end of these years, "the conspiracy was strong". Do you think at the beginning he set out to stage a coup?
5. Absalom's subtle disloyalties in his heart were allowed to take root and grow, and ended up in an attempt to overthrow the kingdom. How can disloyalties manifest themselves in our lives?
6. In the Church, what are some ways that disloyalty can damage?
7. How can we stay loyal to our leaders? When we are given praise and honor, how is this a test of our loyalty?

2 Samuel 15:13-30

1. When David heard about Absalom's latest actions, he fled. Why did David react like this?
2. Some probably interpreted David's actions as cowardly. Though a coward may have taken the same exact actions, how is David acting in wisdom?
3. How do Ittai's actions reveal a loyalty to God first and then to David?
4. In vss 24-29, David sends Zadok and the priests back to Jerusalem. How is this similar to the way he dealt with Saul while he was on the run?
5. In vs 30, David is mourning. Why? What does this reveal about his heart?
6. When others take actions against us, even betrayal, how can we learn from David's response?
7. How do we stay loyal to God and to others even when they are disloyal to us?

Summary of 16, 17:

David wisely plants a man loyal to him in Absalom's camp. Absalom is insecure and Hushai is operating in the Lord's anointing to foil the plans of Absalom to kill David and establish himself. Hushai saves David and David has time to escape and organize his forces.

2 Samuel 18:1-18

1. David is asked not to go out with the men to attack Absalom though he is willing. His people are ready to give their lives for him. Why does David ask them to deal gently with Absalom?
2. In vss 9-18, we see Joab's disobedience to David. How is this similar to Absalom's actions? Has Joab ever done something like this before?
3. What do you think about Joab's actions?
4. We see the cost of disloyalty in vs 7. While tempted to look at this as a victory for righteousness, this is a tragedy. How is this a picture of what can happen spiritually in a church when disloyalty is allowed to grow?

Summary of 19:19-27:

Messengers are sent to David to inform him of Absalom's death, and David's "victory".

2 Samuel 18:28-33

1. Twice we see David dismissing their report and only asking about his son, Absalom. Why is this?
2. In vs 33, we read David's heartfelt lament. It's easy to dismiss this as emotional dribble, but we also can see sincerity here. What can we see about David's character through this?
3. How did David remain faithful to God through this whole encounter?
4. What would you say is the overarching theme of this account? (no right answer)
5. What are some ways we can identify disloyalty in our own hearts? How should we deal with it when we see it?