

Title: The Evil of Sin
Scripture: 1 Samuel 27
Series: God, the True King!

1. Introduction:

- a. This chapter is a heartbreaking one. It is always terrible to see a man of God fail. And yet the scriptures are clear. Every man, even a godly man, is able to sin greatly.
 - i. **Romans 3:10** as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;
 - 1. And even though we have been made righteous through the life and work of Christ, that righteousness is not ours by human ability but imputed because of divine grace.
- b. In other words, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for every man, even the redeemed man.
 - i. For the unredeemed, the Gospel is the only hope of salvation.
 - 1. Gospel.
 - ii. For the redeemed, the Gospel is the constant washing away of the world’s filthiness (much like the feet of Peter were washed). The Gospel is the continual renewing of the inward man.
 - 1. Beloved, at no point, do we outlive or outgrow the Gospel of Jesus Christ!
 - 2. We must meditate, apply, and consume the Gospel daily. It is more needful to us than the very air we breathe.

- c. It is at this point that our chapter warns us. For as much as we might love, respect, and honor any particular saint for his godliness (like David), at best any man is a sinner saved by grace. The reality for any man is that he daily needs Christ.
 - d. The conclusion of this chapter is: we can only find the beauty of the perfection we seek in the perfect man and God, Jesus Christ.
 - i. Only in Christ will we be satisfied and kept from sinfulness.
2. Verses 1-4: The Sin of self-deliverance: Then David said in his heart, “Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.” (2) So David arose and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath. (3) And David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow. (4) And when it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought him.
- a. In this entire chapter, we never see one mention of God. There is no mention of prayer or consulting God. David is acting on his own and making decisions without God’s priest or Word. He is a self-directed man and, therefore, a man ready to commit grave sin. He wants to leave Israel and go to Philistia. In his

thinking, security could only be found in Gath of the Philistines.

b. Beloved, David's actions should not be surprising to us. He had left Israel once before, and in our previous chapter, we see that he was already contemplating the same action again.

i. We read in **1 Samuel 26:19B** ...they have driven me out this day that I should have no share in the heritage of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.'

c. So David yielded to the constant pressure of persecution. It is easy to do, especially when in despair, hunted, and attacked. David is concerned for his own life and the life of his men and their families. We read: **Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines.**

i. How tempting it is for the saints of God to substitute God for something far lesser and yet tangible. Contrary to God's proven faithfulness in delivering David and contrary to God's sure promises through Samuel, Jonathan, and Abigail, David is convinced that he cannot trust God. He is convinced that he must personally take action.

1. One of our commentaries captures the problem with David's thinking

a. **Commentary**: Yes, David was under severe pressure, yet at this point, he looks to Philistia rather than to God for security.

2. We see the subtle danger to our souls of leaning on something else and less than the everlasting arms of God.
 - a. Question: Is there any way we might avoid deceiving ourselves with a substitute?
- ii. Answer: By talking to ourselves about the truth of God. We must do the opposite of what David did here! We read, “**Then David said in his heart...**”
 1. Beloved, no good can ever come from speaking in our naturally sinful hearts. We read in **Jeremiah 17:9** The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?
- iii. David talked to himself, but his speech was faithless. This led David to sinful actions.
 1. What you say and keep saying will direct your way. Beloved, it is crucial to feed our souls biblical truth talk, especially about the sufficiency and adequacy of our God.
 2. What if David had spoken not out of his heart but through the lens of faith? We read in **Psalms 91:9-10** Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge— (10) no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.
 3. Scripture warns us against human understanding and wisdom in **Proverbs 3:5-7** Trust in the LORD with all your

heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. (6) In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. (7) Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

- d. Thinking selfishly, David turns to Gath for salvation and turns away from God. This time he and 600 soldiers are welcomed by the Philistines. They are seen as mercenaries who have betrayed their country.
- i. Beloved, it is never a wise choice to leave the place where God would have you be, even if the place designated by God is the place of suffering. We can never turn from God to find safety, rest, belonging, or acceptance in the world. However, we know that running to the world only makes our suffering worst.
 - ii. Sin will not always come with a great cost upfront. At first look, it seems like David has made the best possible choice. His goal has been accomplished. Suffering has ceased. We read **that when it was told to Saul that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought him.**
 1. **We are warned in Hebrews 11:25B** (against)...enjoy(ing) the fleeting pleasures of sin.
 2. David finds himself in Philistia. He feels safe. He feels relief. But his safety and sense of security are chaff in the wind. True security and freedom can only be found in Christ and not in the world.

- a. **Proverbs 14:12** There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.
 - iii. Therefore, as your minister, I must warn you. Although the consequences of sin are not always immediate, the penalty for sin will eventually be due, and it carries a heavy toll.
 - 1. **Romans 6:16** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?
 - 2. **Romans 6:23A** For the wages of sin is death...
3. Verses 5-7: 16 months of sin: Then David said to Achish, “If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?” (6) So that day Achish gave him Ziklag. Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. (7) And the number of the days that David lived in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.
- a. After coming to Gath, David asks for permission to live in one of the outlying towns—where he would not be so constantly under Achish’s surveillance.
 - b. At Ziklag, David would carry out raids against the enemies of Israel and carry off the bounty of those cities. All the while, David would lie to King Achish,

telling him that he was attacking Judah and making himself detestable to Israel.

- c. **Sixteen months of sin:** Sin will always take you farther than you wanted to go, keep you longer than you intended to stay, and make you pay a price steeper than you ever thought you would pay.
 - i. **John 8:34** Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

4. Verses 8-11: Sin leads to more severe sins: Now David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt. (9) And David would strike the land and would leave neither man nor woman alive, but would take away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the garments, and come back to Achish. (10) When Achish asked, “Where have you made a raid today?” David would say, “Against the Negeb of Judah,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Kenites.” (11) And David would leave neither man nor woman alive to bring news to Gath, thinking, “lest they should tell about us and say, ‘So David has done.’” Such was his custom all the while he lived in the country of the Philistines.

- a. Beloved, because our chapter does not mention God, do not think David’s actions were righteous!
 - i. Even though David was destroying the enemies of Israel (whom God had previously devoted to

destruction), his motives were not pure but entirely self-serving. David was seeking his own comfort.

- b. The path of sin always leads to even greater sinfulness. Beloved, look at the outcome of self-deliverance from persecution by turning to Gath (a picture of the world). We start with one sin. That one sin leads to another, lying to Achish. Then to another, raiding and killing. Sin then becomes habitually normal, and we lose our way.
 - i. God's repeated past protection of David should have been enough to convince David that God could keep him safe in Israel. God's repeated faithfulness of the saints should always be enough to convince us that He can keep.
- c. **Commentary**: David has been a hero to us. And now he has deeply disappointed us (as most of God's servants will do at some time).
 - i. The Bible will not allow us to engage in hero worship. No Bible character should be exalted too highly.
 - 1. At this point, we cannot be overly offended with David. David's failure teaches us something about ourselves. David is, after all, just like us.
 - a. The moment any of us take our eyes off Christ and think that we are better suited to deal with life's struggles, we will also sin greatly.
 - b. Or, as Paul states in **Romans 7:18** For I know that nothing good dwells in me,

that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

ii. Neither are we to be offended with God.

Commentary: We should not criticize the Potter because of the clay but rather marvel that God stoops to work with such clay as ourselves.

1. As long as we trust in some idea of human worthiness, we will never understand the Bible, never tremble before God, and never delight in His sufficiency.

5. Verse 12: Sin is duplicitous living: And Achish trusted David, thinking, “He has made himself an utter stench to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant.”

a. Beloved, this is where sin leads. It leads us to a place of terrible compromise. The king of Philistia expects David to march with his soldiers against the people of God. At this point, David can be considered neither Philistine nor Jew. If David marches with the Philistines, he will lose credibility in Israel. His decision to go to Gath has led him to a point where he is risking everything, including his kingship and the greater kinship of the Messiah.

i. We must realize that the will of God for us includes more than escaping danger or suffering, even from someone like Saul. The Bible teaches us that the danger from Saul was not as significant in the long run as being labeled a

traitor or giving an occasion to Israel to doubt God's future king.

1. **1 Corinthians 3:19-20** For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," (20) and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."

6. Benediction:

- a. **John 8:36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Public Reading of Scripture
John 8:31-38