2 Samuel 12:1-15 (WCF 11:5) "David Experiences God's Fatherly Displeasure"

For the Children: The main reason your parents discipline you is because they love you. They want you to grow up in God's ways, so when you do wrong, they show that they are displeased with you because the Lord is displeased. It does not mean that they suddenly hate you and want nothing to do with you. When you show that you are sorry, things return to normal. Similarly, our heavenly Father disciplines us because He loves us. He wants us to grow up in His ways. He knows that sin harms us and others. He lets us know that He is displeased and that our sin has made us draw away from Him. When we repent of our sin, we are enabled to draw close again. We know that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. Hopefully, we decide that we do not want to return to those sins again. **Questions:** How did the Lord bring David to repent of his sins? Is excuse-making a good way to show that we are truly sorry for our sins? Why does the Lord sometimes bring ongoing consequences of our sins, even after we have repented?

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Introduction:

First Point: Fatherly Displeasure

1) Evidence of Divine Displeasure: The Lord sends Nathan to admonish David. The prophet does so by means of a parable – a rich man who takes a pet lamb from a poor man, kills it and serves it up to a guest. David is incensed – the rich man deserves to die and should make four-fold restitution. Nathan points out that David is represented by that rich man: he had many wives and concubines, yet he took Uriah's only wife. David had fed his own greedy lusts, instead of relying on the Lord's blessing (vss.7-9). He had also broken the 7th and 6th commandments. He deserved to die.

2) The God Who Does Not Wink at Sin: David was a man after God's own heart. Yet even such men sin – sometimes grievously. But God is just and holy. He does not "wink" at the sins of His beloved children. For He knows that sin harms us, our church and the Lord's reputation.

3) The Experience of God's Displeasure: Psalms 32 and 51 record David's experience of God's Fatherly displeasure. There were physical effects like sleeplessness; loss of joy; depression and despair. The sinner may also lose his sense of assurance, feel distant from the Lord and give himself over to other sins. This miserable state needs to be dealt with as soon as possible!

Second Point: A Son's Repentance

1) Immediate Repentance: As soon as David is confronted, he repents – without making any excuses (v. 13). It is even better if we repent before being admonished.

2) Assurance of Forgiveness: God assures David that his sins have been taken away (v. 13). See WCF 11:5 – those justified can never finally fall from grace, since Christ's work is the ground of their justification. However, the removal of the "Fatherly Displeasure" comes by means of repentance. See also Ps.32:5. The Lord works this way to uphold His own justice and holiness; but also to restore the ones He loves and progress our sanctification. This is why we call it "*Fatherly* displeasure" – in contrast to God's anger with the wicked. Such Fatherly displeasure is not evidence of God's hatred toward us, but the loving discipline of a Father.

Third Point: Ongoing Consequences

1) Poetic Justice: For the sake of His justice being seen to be done," the Lord often brings ongoing consequences from our sin, even though we are forgiven and restored. David has had a man killed and taken his wife. Therefore the sword will not depart from his house and one close to him would take his wives (vss.9-13). In addition, his son with Bathsheba would die. Thus, the Lord would prevent His enemies claiming that the Lord had "double standards" (v.14).

2) A Reminder for the Good of His People: Ongoing consequences also help remind us not to go back to our sins. Like Paul's "thorn in the flesh," they remind us to rely on God's grace. These are positive reasons, springing from God's love for His children. Again, we should not conclude from ongoing consequences that the Lord has abandoned us.

Conclusion: