



# “better THAN PERFECT”

## David and Bathsheba

Text: 2 Samuel 11:1-4

Founding Pastor Ken Werlein

1. Read 2 Samuel 11:1-4.
  - a. Why is it significant that David stayed in Jerusalem?
  - b. Why do you think the story of David and Bathsheba begins with this detail?
  - c. What might this have to teach us about how to fight sin in our own lives?
  - d. Is the chance witness of Bathsheba in and of itself a sin?
  - e. Why should David's actions have stopped at the moment of inquiry?
  - f. What is the best way to prevent sin in the first place?
  - g. What is one of the earliest warning signs that sin is attempting to gain a foot hold in our life?
  - h. Why is personal sin not just destructive to our personal relationship with God? What else does it destroy?
2. Pastor Ken makes the point that the Bible never tells us to fight temptation, but to flee from temptation (1 Corinthians 6:18). What's the difference between fighting temptation and fleeing temptation?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. In this passage, Paul claims that we can't avoid temptation entirely, but God always provides a way to escape from temptation.
  - a. What paths of escape were offered to David before he committed adultery? (2 Samuel 11).
  - b. What kept him from fleeing temptation?
  - c. What are temptations that you have encountered in the past? Hindsight being 20/20, can you identify the paths of escape that God provided?
  - d. What temptations are you currently facing? Can you see the path to flee from temptation? What are some of your primary struggles with fleeing temptation?
4. Read 2 Timothy 2:22. In this passage, Paul makes the point that the best way to flee temptation is to pursue something else.

- a. What is Paul calling us to pursue?
  - b. What does it look like, practically, to “pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart”?
  - c. How does this keep us from temptation?
5. Read 2 Samuel 12:1-15. What was David’s response when Nathan called him out for his sins?
- a. What was God’s response to David’s confession?
  - b. How does David model the steps of repentance?
  - c. What is your response when confronted about your sin?
  - d. Do you blame someone else for provoking it? Do you accept responsibility and make restitution or apologize if necessary?

Challenge: David’ community played a role in accountability and speaking into David’s life. How can you provide this same sort of accountability in your group? Do you have someone that you allow to speak into your life?

Prayer: David’s prayer of confession and repentance is found in Psalm 51. Read the passage together. During prayer time, divide into groups of same gender, and spend time confessing, repenting, and praying together over the struggles with temptation in your group.

# STUDY DEEPER

## **F.L.E.E. – A Strategy for Pursuing Sexual Purity**

We're supposed to flee from things that can kill us.

Active volcanoes, oncoming traffic, and snakes come to mind. So should sexual immorality. To Christians in a sexually confused culture, Paul issued this clear order: "Flee from sexual immorality" (1 Corinthians 6:18). That is, flee from the dangerous enjoyment of sexual pleasure outside of God's wise design for its enjoyment in marriage.

So how are you doing at fleeing? Maybe you are fleeing into sexual immorality. Or maybe you're just thinking about it . . . all the time. You're already there, of course. Maybe you're running, but in circles. Images are glued to the walls of your brain. Or maybe this whole subject just adds to the feeling of shame.

Thankfully, God is committed to our sexual purity. Scripture says, "You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20). Christ died to purify our consciences and our very lives. What grace! When we see him we will be like him, but until then we flee sexual immorality.

What's your plan for the next encounter with temptation? Or for the next conversation with a friend, child, or spouse who needs your counsel?

### **Here's a strategy: F.L.E.E.**

It's biblical, it's hard to forget, and it fits on a napkin.

### **First, fill yourself with Christ.**

The seductress of Proverbs 9:17 says, "Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." That's the voice of the ancient serpent promising satisfaction to a hungry man passing by a pretty girl's house, "but he does not know that the dead are there" (9:18).

This is why the first step in our flight is to fill ourselves with Jesus Christ, who says, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). Sexual pleasure can never do what only God can. But Christ, on the other hand, is satisfaction.

How, then, do we fill ourselves with Christ?

Believe he really is the bread of life: "whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life" (John 6:47-48).

Fill yourself with his Word: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 8:4).

Fill your life with his people: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another” (Colossians 3:16).

You get air out of a glass by filling it with something else, and you can shake that taste for stolen water by going to the One who offers “water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14).

### **Second, lock out the lies.**

Why do we run to instead of from sexual sin? Lies, I tell you!

If a koala so much as looks at me, I'm going to run. They're cute, but they have large claws, sharp teeth, and I've heard they can destroy you. Sexual immorality is similar. Sure, it looks just good. But watch this guy:

She seizes him and kisses him, and with bold face she says to him . . . “I have perfumed my bed. . . . Come, let us take our fill of love till morning.” . . . With much seductive speech she persuades him. All at once he follows her, as an ox goes to the slaughter. (Proverbs 7:13-23)

Our flight from sexual immorality requires that we lock out the lies that give it power. Or, as Solomon said, “keep your way far from her” (5:8).

So what would that look like for you?

When and where are you hearing seductive speech? How can you get away? Whatever the cost—your smartphone, home internet, a relationship—if it helps you see God, it's a net gain. After all, “it is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire” (Matthew 18:9).

Seduction's voice calls “to those who pass by” (Proverbs 9:15). Flee now! Better yet, don't pass by.

### **Third, exchange lies for truth.**

Unless we retreat from the world, we're going to encounter seductive lies. Actually, we lie to ourselves. We are born exchanging the truth about God for a lie, along with everything else, including sex (Romans 1:25-26). For Christians, God reverses the exchange. While our old self was corrupt through deceitful desires, the new self is created after the likeness of God (Ephesians 4:22-24).

What, then, should you do when tempted? Unsheathe your sword and go on the offensive, rejecting lies and rehearsing truth:

- God is not stingy, but good (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).
- Sinful pleasures are not filling, but fleeting (Hebrews 11:24-26).
- People are not objects, but image bearers (Genesis 1:27).
- This is not private, but reaches heaven and eternity (Psalm 51:4).
- God does not approve of sin because he loves to forgive, but forgives to free us from sin (Romans 6:1-2).

- Sexual sin isn't harmless, but defrauding (1 Thessalonians 4:3-6).
- It will not be easy to turn back, as you are already hardening your heart (Hebrews 3:13).
- This is not inevitable, since God provides a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- Your past does not define you, Christ's blood does (1 Corinthians 6:11).
- Are you embracing lies, or exchanging them for the truth? Are you glorifying the body, or are you glorifying God with your body? When seductive speech calls out, remember, "all her slain are a mighty throng" (Proverbs 7:26).

### **Finally, expose yourself to the light.**

If you fall to sexual sin you will be tempted to hide in the dark and pretend it didn't happen. But remember: we are still sinners. So we confess sin.

Confession brings sin to the light and light to our eyes to see what we could never see in the dark: the holiness of God, the sinfulness of sin, and the glory of God's grace. John weaves these themes together beautifully:

God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:5-7)

Coming to Christ means coming out of hiding to be exposed by the light and covered with Christ's blood. As Christians, the best thing to do, of course, is just stay in the light. But the best thing to do when we wander into the shadows is to run back. Confession is where that starts.

So, are you hiding? Confess your sins to God. He forgives! But don't stop there. "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another" (James 5:16). That's what Christian friends are for.

It is good news that we are not condemned in Christ, and it is good news that we are no longer slaves to sin. My friends, flee from sexual immorality.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/f-l-e-e-a-strategy-for-pursuing-sexual-purity>