

## TANGLED: Seven Sins that Holds Us Back

Deadly Pride: 2 Samuel 11:1-5

Intro to Series: These are the seven deadly sins: pride, greed, lust, envy, sloth, gluttony, and anger. They are an ancient list dating back to the early church fathers. Pope Gregory actually listed these seven sins in A.D. 590, and they were popularized and memorialized in Dante's "The Divine Comedy," an epic poem which preserved both the names and the order of Gregory's ancient list of sins. The core seven sins within Purgatory correspond to a moral scheme of love perverted, subdivided into three groups corresponding to excessive love ([Lust](#), [Gluttony](#), [Greed](#)), deficient love ([Sloth](#)), and malicious love ([Wrath](#), [Envy](#), [Pride](#)).

They are attitudes of the heart and mind that gain prominence in our lives in part because we are not vigilant and in part because they are the illegitimate fruit of our longings and desires.

They entangle us, ensnare us, and trip us up. They are deadly to our dreams and to our purest goals and desires.

They are ever present, never far away, from any human being. They are common traps for us all.

These sins overlap. They describe movements of the heart and mind. Often one sin also includes another.

This story may be the most famous account of infidelity in human history. Surely it ranks up there in the top ten. That we are actually seeing this detailed account of his shameful, sorry, and sick behavior is amazing. David is the darling of Israel's history. Here we learn the seamy side of his character.

***1 In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.***

***2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, 3 and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." 4 Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. 5 The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."***

Intro: This is the account of David's downfall. It is where he got tangled up more than any other place in his life. He was middle-aged when it happened, already with multiple wives in his harem. His kingdom was nearing its greatest scope and glory.

You might suppose that David had become mature and seasoned in character, that he would no longer be susceptible to such temptation. But every person in every era of life is susceptible to these entanglements. They are universally alluring to humans.

These entanglements are enormously powerful and terribly destructive. The death they bring is not limited either to the individual who succumbs or to his own generation. Their evil consequences jump to future generations. These stumbling blocks trip up individuals, families, and even dynasties.

We can never let down our guard.

\*\*\*I wanted to use the frank and honest account of an affair that debilitated a family. I asked a daughter if I could tell the truth about her deceased father. She told me no, that she would prefer to have it told, that it would dishonor her father for people to know.

David does not act honorably in this chapter in his life. Quite the opposite. Yet here we have the account of these actions. Why would God permit us to know this about the sweet psalmist of Israel, the man after God's own heart?

This shocking and honest account is here for our instruction. Just as the suffering of others can help them give us comfort, so the sin of others can help us with our holiness.

This story is not recorded in the Bible so that you can point to David and say, "David had his Bathsheba, and I've got my mistress, too." Literally, I have had men say this to me. They use David's sin as an excuse for their own. That is the opposite effect.

Even knowing how many people would do this, the Holy Spirit yet inspired the authors of Holy Scripture to include this sickening story. Its use for prompting holiness, then, must surely exceed its use for excusing sin.

\*\*\*Dr. James Dobson observed once that good men fall into sexual sin, not so much because of lust, but because of EGO NEEDS. That is, PRIDE GOES BEFORE THEIR FALL.

PRIDE is David's downfall. This is how it works:

### **I. You FORGET Where You Came From: "David remained in Jerusalem" (v1)**

A. David was a shepherd boy who was elevated to the throne by the grace of God alone.

### **II. You PLAY with FIRE: "David sent someone to find out about her" (v3).**

A. I don't know where David's heart is when he sends for information. He may be simply admiring her beauty and satisfying his curiosity. He may be assessing her vulnerability and availability. He may have already committed adultery with her in his heart, and he is now scheming how to bring that illicit desire to completion.

B. We often play with fire in regard to sin. We had small advances, incremental movements toward what we know is forbidden.

1. Adam and Eve ended up under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, staring at its forbidden fruit, not because they were hungry, but because they were proud.

C. We misjudge the strength of our ability to resist temptation. We misjudge the power of temptation.

### **III. You REJECT the Moral Code: "Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her" (v4).**

A. David knows the law. He can quote it by heart. He is breaking the SEVENTH COMMAND of the TEN: "no adultery."

B. David knows that the law PROTECTS. It does not just PROHIBIT. It is there to protect the community as well as the individual. All of the destruction that follows in this account of David's sin is exactly what the law was in place to prevent.

1. David rejects his own commitments. He sees himself as the master of his life and will. He will do what he pleases, as he pleases.

\*\*\*Sometimes I get the feeling that people are mistakenly supposing that is the preacher who declares, "No adultery." All I do as a pastor and preacher is pass on the law of God, the wisdom of ages, the moral code that has governed human behavior for centuries. And much of what I pass on to you is so practical and obvious that even secularists and atheists confess it to be true.

C. You don't have to make it up as you go. Yes, you are a free moral agent. No, you are not free to sin without suffering the consequences. It's as simple as that. You see what happened to David when he had sex with the wife of a friend. If you do the same, similar consequences will follow.

C. If David could REWIND one chapter in his life, I am convinced it would be this chapter. But he cannot do it. He made his choices, and now he must live with them. And the cost is very high not only for him but for everyone he loves.

D. When you feel and argue within that the law does not apply to you for whatever reasons, you are experiencing the effects of PRIDE, not reason or intellect.

### **IV. You OVERESTIMATE Your Control: "I am pregnant" (v5).**

A. This is one of the key ingredients of pride. David supposes that, as king, he can hide anything. His servants are loyal to him. He can do this thing, and no one will ever know. The phrase "no one will ever know" ought to be carved on the face of ever impropriety.

B. David overestimates his power. He is powerful enough to bring Bathsheba to his bed. But he is not powerful enough to control what follows.

C. You may be powerful enough to seduce that woman in the office or that man at school. Your pride will tell you that you are, that you are desirable enough to make this alliance happen. But you are not powerful enough to control what follows from that act.

CONCLUSION: