

**Sermon Series: The Strong Family—6/18/2000—Lord of Life Lutheran**

**Title:** “Enduring the unbearable”

**Text:** 2 Samuel 18 & 19 (selected verses)

**Introduction:** *ILLUS.: SET UP TO FAIL*

**Theme:** In “good Christian homes” when the unthinkable and unbearable happens, we can and must turn back to Jesus Christ to keep from being overwhelmed by our grief and to move on with the life God has given to us.

**Reasons why the storm clouds blow into our family life** (Read 2 Samuel 18: 1-9)

- Because we share a common inheritance of sin with our family members
  1. **ILLUS.: FIRST IMPRESSIONS**
  2. Absalom in rebellion, anger, and greed was living out the reality of sin that is in each of us
  3. “*The intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth.*” Genesis 8: 21
  4. That is why we need a common Savior from the storms of sin (*Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow...give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice.*” Ps51:7,8)
- Because often we reap the whirlwind of our past
  1. “*For they sow the wind and they reap the whirlwind.*” Hosea 8: 7
  2. **OUR WORLDLY ACTIONS**, although forgivable, put into motion natural consequences we must endure
    - a. Infidelity, dishonesty, or greed bring about disease, financial/legal woes, or family and spiritual meltdowns
    - b. **There is full forgiveness for what our past has held** (*Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.” 2Sam12:13*)
    - c. **There are attending circumstances because of the wickedness we have committed.** (*Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight...therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me...and given occasion to the enemies fo the Lord to blaspheme.2 Sam 12:9,10,14*)
  3. **OUR WORLDLY ATTITUDES** plant hidden seeds which bloom in later moments
    - a. **ILLUS.: IN THE BOOK**
    - b. Judgmental, materialistic, or careless attitudes play themselves out in our families future actions and choices
    - c. **The Lord of the Harvest has words of encouragement even in the spiritual weed patch of our home** (*The one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Gal 6: 8-9*)
- Because we are powerless to influence what is beyond our control
  1. “*The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.*” Ez18: 20
  2. David could not control his children’s depravity, Absalom’s rage and rebelliousness, or Joab’s impetuosity
    - “Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar.” 2 Samuel 13: 22
    - “Absalom stole the hearts of all the people of Israel...soon many others also joined Absalom, and the conspiracy gained momentum.” 2 Samuel 13: 6, 12
    - “During the battle Absalom came unexpectedly upon some of David’s men. He tried to escape on his mule, but as he rode beneath the thick branches of a great oak, his head got caught...”Enough of this nonsense,” Joab said. Then he took three daggers and plunged them into Absalom’s heart...and killed him.” (Read 2 Samuel 18: 9-15)
  3. In the midst of out-of-control circumstances with a child or spouse or parent, remember Jesus’ promise (*All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me...and lo, I am with you always to the end of the age. Mat28:19-20*)

**Coping versus codependent behavior in the midst of the storm**

- Acknowledgment rather than denial of the surrounding circumstances (Print 2 Samuel 18: 5, 24-27)
  1. Denial in the midst of the problem is a control issue that generates from sinful pride
    - ILLUS.: PARALYSIS**
    - Even in the crisis of a mutiny and war David still would not come to grips with the cancer in his home
    - Denying the problem only prolongs the time until we allow God to bring the fix and solve our dilemma
  2. Acknowledging the out of control consequences and the root-cause sin begins the healing process
    - Therefore, let all the godly confess their rebellion to you while there is time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. For you are my hiding place...You surround me with songs of victory. Psalm 32: 6, 7*
- Hope-based grief rather than hopeless anguish (Print 2 Samuel 18: 31—19: 6)
  1. **ILLUS.: HESITATION**
  2. “*But we do not want you to be uninformed...that you may not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.1 Thess 4: 13*
- Allowing yourself to be comforted so that you can comfort others (Print 2 Samuel 19: 7-8)
  1. “*Jesus comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others.*” 2 Corinthians 1: 4

## **SET UP TO FAIL**

Left on a sinking ship were the captain and three sailors. The captain spoke first. "Men, this business about a captain going down with his ship is nonsense. There's a three-man life raft on board and I'm going to be on it. To see who will come with me, I will ask you each one question. The one who can't answer will stay behind. Here's the first question: What unsinkable ship went down when it hit an iceberg?" The first sailor answered, "The Titanic, sir." "On to the next question: How many people perished?" The second sailor said, "One thousand five hundred and seventeen, sir." "Now for the third question," and the captain turned to sailor number three. "What were their names?" Steve Templeton in Woodmen of the World Magazine

## **FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

One summer night during a severe thunderstorm a mother was tucking her small son into bed. She was about to turn the light off when he asked in a trembling voice, "Mommy, will you stay with me all night?" Smiling, the mother gave him a warm, reassuring hug and said tenderly, "I can't dear. I have to sleep in Daddy's room." A long silence followed. At last it was broken by a shaky voice saying, "The big sissy!"

## **IN THE BOOK**

Two explorers were on a jungle safari when suddenly a ferocious lion jumped in front of them. "Keep calm" the first explorer whispered. "Remember what we read in that book on wild animals? If you stand perfectly still and look the lion in the eye, he will turn and run." "Sure," replied his companion. "You've read the book, and I've read the book. But has the lion read the book?" [Unknown](#)

## **PARALYSIS**

Between the great things that we cannot do and the small things we will not do, the danger is that we shall do nothing. Adolph Monod

## **HESITATION**

In the early years of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln became so angered at the inactivity of Union commander George McClellan that the president wrote his commanding general this one-sentence letter: "If you don't want to use the army, I should like to borrow it for a while. Respectfully, A. Lincoln."

## 2 Samuel 18:1-19:43

David called together the troops that were with him. He appointed commanders in charge of regiments and battalions. <sup>2</sup>David put a third of the troops under Joab's command, another third under Joab's brother Abishai (Zeruah's son), and the last third under Ittai from Gath.

"I am going into battle with you," the king said to the troops.

<sup>3</sup>"You're not going with us," the troops said. "If we flee, they won't care about us, and if half of us die, they won't care either. But you're worth 10,000 of us. It's better for you to be ready to send us help from the city."

<sup>4</sup>"I'll do what you think best," the king responded. So the king stood by the gate while all the troops marched out by battalions and regiments.

<sup>5</sup>The king ordered Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, "Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake." All the troops heard him give all the commanders this order regarding Absalom.

<sup>6</sup>So the troops went out to the country to fight Israel in the forest of Ephraim. <sup>7</sup>There David's men defeated Israel's army, and the massacre was sizable that day—20,000 men. <sup>8</sup>The fighting spread over the whole country. That day the woods devoured more people than the battle.

<sup>9</sup>Absalom happened to come face to face with some of David's men. He was riding on a mule, and the mule went under the tangled branches of a large tree. Absalom's head became caught in the tree. So he was left hanging in midair when the mule that was under him ran away. <sup>10</sup>A man who saw this told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in a tree."

<sup>11</sup>"What! You saw that!" Joab said to the man who told him. "Why didn't you strike him to the ground? Then I would have felt obligated to give you four ounces of silver and a belt."

<sup>12</sup>But the man told Joab, "Even if I felt the weight of 25 pounds of silver in my hand, I wouldn't raise my hand against the king's son. We heard the order the king gave you, Abishai, and Ittai: 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.' <sup>13</sup>If I had done something treacherous to him, would you have stood by me? Like everything else, it wouldn't stay hidden from the king."

<sup>14</sup>Then Joab said, "I shouldn't waste time with you like this." He took three sharp sticks and plunged them into Absalom's heart while he was still alive in the tree. <sup>15</sup>Then ten of Joab's armorbearers surrounded Absalom, attacked him, and killed him.

<sup>24</sup>David was sitting between the two gates while the watchman walked along the roof of the gate by the wall. As he looked, he saw a man running alone. <sup>25</sup>The watchman called and alerted the king. "If he's alone," the king said, "he has good news to tell." The runner continued to come closer. <sup>26</sup>When the watchman saw another man running, the watchman called, "There's another man running alone." The king said, "This one is also bringing good news." <sup>27</sup>The watchman said, "It seems to me that the first one runs like Ahimaaz, Zadok's son." "He's a good man," the king said. "He must be coming with good news."

<sup>31</sup>Then the Sudanese messenger came. "Good news for Your Majesty!" he said. "Today the LORD has freed you from all who turned against you." <sup>32</sup>"Is the young man Absalom alright?" the king asked. The Sudanese messenger answered, "May your enemies and all who turned against you be like that young man!" <sup>33</sup>The king was shaken by the news. He went to the room above the gate and cried. "My son Absalom!" he said as he went. "My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died in your place! Absalom, my son, my son!"

<sup>19:1</sup>Joab was told, "The king is crying and mourning for Absalom." <sup>2</sup>The victory of that day was turned into mourning because all the troops heard that the king was grieving for his son. <sup>3</sup>That day the troops sneaked into the city as if they had fled from battle and were ashamed of it. <sup>4</sup>The king covered his face and cried loudly, "My son Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!"

<sup>5</sup>Then Joab came into the house. "Today you have made all your men feel ashamed," he said. "They saved your life and the lives of your sons, daughters, wives, and concubines today. <sup>6</sup>You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. Today, you have made it clear that your commanders and servants mean nothing to you. I think you would be pleased if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead.

<sup>7</sup>Now, get up, go out, and encourage your men. I swear to you by the LORD that if you don't go out, no one will stay with you tonight, and that will be worse than all the trouble you've had in your entire life."

<sup>8</sup>The king sat in the gateway. When all the troops were told, "The king is sitting in the gateway," they came to the king.