

Sermon Series: “Biblical Family Portraits”–Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN – 2/28/2010

Title: “Out of Balance Parenting”

Text: 2 Samuel 13 & 14 (*selected verses*)

Intro: *Illus.: Responsibility*

Theme: Parenting is a tough job, especially for parents who deal with their own fallenness; yet, through the grace of God, even our parenting decisions and actions have been redeemed to bring about a wider, beneficial purpose.

Parenting can be filled with headaches and heartaches but also can reap eternal joys

- Differing parenting styles among believers must be anchored to God’s eternal principles
 1. Make it about the Lord– not about you or your child – *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4*
 2. Don’t be afraid to be the parent – God has authorized you – *Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death. Proverbs 19:18*
 3. Sow into your child’s life with an aim to reap righteousness
 - a. *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; 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. Galatians 6:7-9*
- A case study of parenting in David’s family life
 1. ***Parenting is always contextual to the past*** – mind how you deal with it, heal from it, and move forward
 - a. David’s fall into adultery and murder sowed sin’s whirlwind of consequence into his family’s life (*the sword will never depart for your life – 2 Samuel 12: 10*) (**Hosea 8:7**) – **Is there some wind sowing?**
 - b. David’s multiple wives brought competition, jealousy, and different/contradictory value sets – **what about us?**
 - c. **(2 Samuel 13: 1–2, 12-15, 19-21, and 28-29)**
 2. ***Parenting cannot afford the luxury of absenteeism*** but must be fully engaged throughout our lives
 - a. David got “mad” (*he was furious – 21*), crashed in grief (*mourned for his son every day- 31, 37*), wanted to make everything go away and just get better (*the spirit of the king longed to go to Absalom for he was consoled concerning Amnon’s death – 38*), but did nothing for about it (*Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king’s face – 2 Samuel 14: 24*)
 - b. *Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Deuteronomy 11:19*
 3. Primarily, ***we are tasked to teach our kids are about conviction, confession, forgiveness, and transformation***
 - a. It will be a spiritual life skill which they must master for the rest of their lives and relationships
 - b. **Illus.: Three envelopes**
 - c. Ammon saw no need to repent (*he hated her more than he loved her–13:15*)
 - d. Absalom had never been taught what to do with an offense and the creeping cancer of a grudge (*If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.” Genesis 4:7*)
 - e. David never learned to say “***I forgive you,***” but continued the avalanche of the wrong by saying, “***That’s o.k.***”
 - f. The principle of reconciliation and restoration is fundamental to parenting (2 Samuel 14: 14)

Principles for parenting lived under the grace of Jesus Christ

- Individual accountability before God does not exclude mutual responsibility for each other
 1. *The person who sins will die. A son will not be punished for his father's sins, and a father will not be punished for his son's sins. The righteousness of the righteous person will be his own, and the wickedness of the wicked person will be his own. Ezekiel 18: 20*
 2. We do not have to live under the guilt of past sin but God calls us to be his voice to each other “***while it is day***”
- Our job in parenting is helping our families understand God’ grace in the context of our broken lives
 1. **We don’t deal in cheap grace but we must always deliver unconditional, free grace**
 2. Grace deferred will kill both spirit and body but grace generously given will motivate toward change
 - a. *Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life. Proverbs 13:12*
- A Christian home is one in which we help each other to return to the foot of the cross at the close of each day
 1. *His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. Ephesians 2:15-16*
 2. *In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Ephesians 4:26-27*

Responsibility

James Alexander Thom, on the fear of responsibility: Have you ever had to paint some roof trim, high up? You get halfway up that 36-foot extension ladder and you start wondering about the ladder, its footing and your body weight. You stop and hug the ladder, looking neither up nor down. Your left leg begins a ridiculous but uncontrollable shuddering. At length you conquer that particular rung and inch your way to the next, then the next. Finally you're at the top, clinging for your life. How can you take one hand off the ladder to use the paintbrush? But you do. Tight as a fiddle you begin. The sky is clear. The sun is nice. The thirsty wood soaks up the paint. You whistle and think positive thoughts and do a good job and forget about the height. You've learned an important lesson of life from this. No matter what higher responsibility you take on, it's scary, very scary, until you start working. *Nuggets*

Three Envelopes

A CEO has taken on a new job, and the outgoing CEO says to him, "Sometimes you'll make wrong choices. You will. You'll mess up. When that happens, I have prepared three envelopes for you. I left them in the top drawer of the desk. The first time it happens, open #1. The second time you mess up, open #2. The third time, open #3." For the first few months, everything goes fine. Then the CEO makes his first mistake, goes to the drawer, opens up envelope #1, and the message reads, "Blame me." So he does: "This is the old CEO's fault. He made these mistakes. I inherited these problems." Everybody says, "Okay." It works out pretty well. Things go fine for a while, and then he makes his second mistake. So, he goes to the drawer and opens up envelope #2. This time he reads, "Blame the board." And he does: "It's the board's fault. The board has been a mess. I inherited them. They're the problem." Everybody says, "Okay, that makes sense." Things go fine for a while, and then he makes his third mistake. So, he goes to the drawer and opens up envelope #3. The message reads: "Prepare three envelopes." **John Ortberg, in the sermon "Guide," PreachingToday**

Hosea 8:7

For they sow the wind And they reap the whirlwind.

2 Samuel 13:1-14:33

¹In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.

²Amnon became frustrated to the point of illness on account of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.

³Now Amnon had a friend named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." ⁵"Go to bed and pretend to be ill," Jonadab said. "When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.'" ⁶So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand."

⁷David sent word to Tamar at the palace: "Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him." ⁸So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it. ⁹Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat. "Send everyone out of here," Amnon said. So everyone left him. ¹⁰Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister."

¹²"Don't, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me. Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. ¹³What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you." ¹⁴But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her. ¹⁵Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"

¹⁶"No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me."

But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷He called his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of here and bolt the door after her." ¹⁸So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing a richly ornamented robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. **¹⁹Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornamented robe she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.**

²⁰Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.

²¹When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²²Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

²³Two years later, when Absalom's sheepshearers were at Baal Hazor near the border of Ephraim, he invited all the king's sons to come there. ²⁴Absalom went to the king and said, "Your servant has had shearers come. Will the king and his officials please join me?" ²⁵"No, my son," the king replied. "All of us should not go; we would only be a burden to you." Although Absalom urged him, he still refused to go, but gave him his blessing. ²⁶Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon come

with us." The king asked him, "Why should he go with you?" ²⁷But Absalom urged him, so he sent with him Amnon and the rest of the king's sons. ²⁸**Absalom ordered his men, "Listen! When Amnon is in high spirits from drinking wine and I say to you, 'Strike Amnon down,' then kill him. Don't be afraid. Have not I given you this order? Be strong and brave."** ²⁹**So Absalom's men did to Amnon what Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up, mounted their mules and fled.** ³⁰While they were on their way, the report came to David: "Absalom has struck down all the king's sons; not one of them is left." ³¹**The king stood up, tore his clothes and lay down on the ground; and all his servants stood by with their clothes torn.** ³²But Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, said, "My lord should not think that they killed all the princes; only Amnon is dead. This has been Absalom's expressed intention ever since the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar. ³³My lord the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king's sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead."

³⁴**Meanwhile, Absalom had fled.**

Now the man standing watch looked up and saw many people on the road west of him, coming down the side of the hill. The watchman went and told the king, "I see men in the direction of Horonaim, on the side of the hill." ³⁵Jonadab said to the king, "See, the king's sons are here; it has happened just as your servant said." ³⁶As he finished speaking, the king's sons came in, wailing loudly. The king, too, and all his servants wept very bitterly. ³⁷Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. **But King David mourned for his son every day.** ³⁸**After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years.** ³⁹**And the spirit of the king longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death.**

2 Samuel 14

^{14:1}Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart longed for Absalom. ²So Joab sent someone to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought from there. He said to her, "Pretend you are in mourning. Dress in mourning clothes, and don't use any cosmetic lotions. Act like a woman who has spent many days grieving for the dead. ³Then go to the king and speak these words to him." And Joab put the words in her mouth.

⁴When the woman from Tekoa went to the king, she fell with her face to the ground to pay him honor, and she said, "Help me, O king!" ⁵The king asked her, "What is troubling you?" She said, "I am indeed a widow; my husband is dead. ⁶I your servant had two sons. They got into a fight with each other in the field, and no one was there to separate them. One struck the other and killed him. ⁷Now the whole clan has risen up against your servant; they say, 'Hand over the one who struck his brother down, so that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed; then we will get rid of the heir as well.' They would put out the only burning coal I have left, leaving my husband neither name nor descendant on the face of the earth." ⁸The king said to the woman, "Go home, and I will issue an order in your behalf." ⁹But the woman from Tekoa said to him, "My lord the king, let the blame rest on me and on my father's family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt." ¹⁰The king replied, "If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he will not bother you again." ¹¹She said, "Then let the king invoke the LORD his God to prevent the avenger of blood from adding to the destruction, so that my son will not be destroyed." "As surely as the LORD lives," he said, "not one hair of your son's head will fall to the ground." ¹²Then the woman said, "Let your servant speak a word to my lord the king." "Speak," he replied.

¹³The woman said, "Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son? ¹⁴**Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.** ¹⁵"And now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid. Your servant thought, 'I will speak to the king; perhaps he will do what his servant asks. ¹⁶Perhaps the king will agree to deliver his servant from the hand of the man who is trying to cut off both me and my son from the inheritance God gave us.' ¹⁷"And now your servant says, 'May the word of my lord the king bring me rest, for my lord the king is like an angel of God in discerning good and evil. May the LORD your God be with you.' " ¹⁸Then the king said to the woman, "Do not keep from me the answer to what I am going to ask you." "Let my lord the king speak," the woman said. ¹⁹The king asked, "Isn't the hand of Joab with you in all this?" The woman answered, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything my lord the king says. Yes, it was your servant Joab who instructed me to do this and who put all these words into the mouth of your servant. ²⁰Your servant Joab did this to change the present situation. My lord has wisdom like that of an angel of God--he knows everything that happens in the land."

²¹The king said to Joab, "Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom." ²²Joab fell with his face to the ground to pay him honor, and he blessed the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that he has found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his servant's request." ²³Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. ²⁴**But the king said, "He must go to his own house; he must not see my face." So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king.**

²⁵In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. ²⁶Whenever he cut the hair of his head--he used to cut his hair from time to time when it became too heavy for him--he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard. ²⁷Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. The daughter's name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman. ²⁸Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face. ²⁹Then Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. So he sent a second time, but he refused to come. ³⁰Then he said to his servants, "Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire. ³¹Then Joab did

go to Absalom's house and he said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?" ³²Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent word to you and said, 'Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!" 'Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death.'" ³³So Joab went to the king and told him this. Then the king summoned Absalom, and he came in and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom.