

16 When Faithful Waiting Leads to Victory – And Victory Leads to Failure

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Maybe you finally got the promise.

The job. The relationship. The breakthrough. The thing you'd been waiting years for.

And then you destroyed it.

Maybe it was one moment of weakness.

Maybe it was a slow drift you didn't even notice.

Maybe you told yourself it wasn't that bad – until it was.

And now you're standing in the wreckage wondering if there's any way back.

If that's you, I want to tell you about a man who waited faithfully for fifteen years, finally got everything he'd been promised, and then proceeded to blow it.

And God called him "a man after my own heart."

His name was David, a young shepherd boy whom God chose to anoint through Samuel – yes, the same Samuel we talked about last week after Hannah waited so long through her barrenness and God finally rewarded her waiting with a son she dedicated to God.

David's Faithful Wait

David was likely about fifteen years old when the prophet Samuel anointed him king of Israel. (Scripture is not clear on exactly what age David was when anointed.)

God's promise was clear. David would rule.

But the current king – Saul – was still alive. And increasingly jealous. And homicidally enraged.

So David ran.

For years, he lived as a fugitive. Hiding in caves. Running from an army. Watching over his shoulder.

And twice – **twice** – David had the perfect opportunity to kill Saul and take the throne.

Once in a cave. Once in Saul's camp while he slept.

Both times, David's men urged him: "This is it! Take the throne!"

Both times, David refused.

He would not touch "the Lord's anointed." He would wait for God's timing.

Years of faithful waiting.

Years of doing everything right.

Years of agonizing restraint while his life was in constant danger.

And finally – at age thirty – David became king (2 Samuel 5:4).

The promise fulfilled.

David's Devastating Fall

Years passed. David reigned well. Conquered enemies. Established peace. Built a kingdom.

And then one evening, he walked on his roof.

2 Samuel 11:2 says: "From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful."

I heard a Bible teacher once say, "**The first look is free, but the next will cost you.**"

It certainly cost David.

Job understood this. Job 31:1 says: "**I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.**"

Job made a covenant.

David did not... he took the second look. And the third. And the fourth.

Her name was Bathsheba.

She was married to Uriah – one of David's most loyal warriors.

David sent for her. Slept with her. She conceived.

And David panicked.

He tried to cover it up. Called Uriah home from battle, thinking he'd sleep with his wife and assume the child was his.

But Uriah was too loyal. He refused to go home while his fellow soldiers were still in the field.

So David escalated.

He sent Uriah back to the front lines with a letter to the commander: "Put Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, then draw back from him, that he may be struck down and die." (2 Samuel 11:15)

Uriah carried his own death sentence back to battle where he died.

I've wondered if he somehow knew, or did he go to his death completely oblivious to the betrayal?

David married Bathsheba.

And thought he'd gotten away with it.

2 Samuel 11:27 says: "But the thing David had done displeased the Lord."

You think!

When One Moment Destroys Years of Work

Think about what David had built.

Fifteen years of faithful waiting.

Years of refusing to take shortcuts.

Years of trusting God's timing even when it meant hiding in caves and running for his life.

He'd finally gotten the promise. The throne. The kingdom. The peace.

And in one evening – **one moment of weakness** – he threw it all away.

Or at least that's what it felt like.

Maybe you know that terror.

You worked for **years** to build something.

The marriage. The career. The ministry. The reputation.

You did everything right. Sacrificed. Waited. Earned it.

And then one decision – one moment you wish you could take back – brought it all crashing down.

The affair that ended the marriage.

The lie that cost you the job.

The outburst that destroyed the relationship.

The secret that finally came to light.

And now you're standing in the rubble thinking: "**I destroyed it. It's over. There's no coming back from this.**"

Here's what you need to know:

That's what *you* think.

That's not what God thinks.

David thought it was over too. He tried to hide it. Tried to cover it up. Tried to pretend it hadn't happened.

Because if people knew – if it came to light – everything he'd built would be gone.

But God wasn't waiting for David to fix it.

God was waiting for David to confess it.

There's a difference.

Nathan's Confrontation

God sent the prophet Nathan to David.

Nathan told a parable: A rich man with many flocks stole a poor man's only lamb – a lamb the poor man loved like a daughter – and slaughtered it for a guest.

David erupted in rage.

"As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die!" (2 Samuel 12:5)

And Nathan looked at him and said:

"You are the man." (2 Samuel 12:7)

You took Bathsheba. You murdered Uriah. You did this evil in the sight of the Lord.

And there will be consequences.

The sword will never depart from your house. Your son will die. Your own family will rise against you.

Everything David tried to hide came crashing into the light.

David's Repentance

Here's what David didn't do:

He didn't make excuses.

He didn't blame Bathsheba.

He didn't minimize it.

He didn't say, "Well, at least I'm not as bad as Saul."

2 Samuel 12:13 records David's immediate response:

"I have sinned against the Lord."

Not "I made a mistake."

Not "Things got out of hand."

"I have sinned."

Psalm 51 – written after Nathan's confrontation – captures David's heart:

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight." (Psalm 51:1-4, NIV)

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me." (Psalm 51:10-12, NIV)

David didn't hide.

He didn't run.

He didn't build higher walls.

He came back.

"A Man After God's Own Heart"

God calls David "a man after my own heart" (Acts 13:22).

How?

How can an adulterer and murderer be called this?

How can someone who failed so spectacularly be considered a stalwart of faith?

Because he kept coming back.

Because when confronted, he didn't deflect – he confessed.

Because when he sinned, he didn't hide – he repented.

Because his heart – however broken, however flawed – kept turning back toward God.

David wasn't perfect.

But he was honest.

And God honored that.

Your Sin Isn't Too Big

Maybe you're reading this and thinking, "You don't know what I've done."

Maybe your sin feels unforgivable.

Maybe you've convinced yourself God could never take you back.

Let me tell you what Scripture says:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NIV)

Read that again.

All unrighteousness.

Not some. Not most. **ALL.**

I used to listen to a pastor and teacher named David Moore, and he would say, "**All means all and that's all all means.**"

I've never forgotten it.

Because far too often, we put conditions on that word.

"God can forgive all... except what I did."

"God can cleanse all... except this."

No.

All means all.

Adultery? Forgiven – if you confess.

Murder? Forgiven – if you repent.

Betrayal? Deception? Cover-up? **All forgiven – if you come back.**

Some ask about the "unforgivable sin" Jesus mentions in Matthew 12:31-32. That's a conversation for another time, but here's what you need to know: if you're worried you've committed it, you haven't. Those who commit it don't care that they have.

Your sin – whatever it is – is not too big for God's grace.

Have You Done Drastic Things to Cover Up?

David didn't just commit adultery.

He **murdered** to hide it.

The cover-up was worse than the crime.

And maybe that's where you are right now.

Maybe the original sin wasn't that bad.

But then you lied to hide it.

And then you manipulated to protect the lie.

And then you hurt people to keep them quiet.

And now the cover-up has become its own disaster.

David tried that. It didn't work.

It never does.

Psalm 32:3-5 says:

"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.' And you forgave the guilt of my sin."

The way back is confession, not concealment.

The Castle After the Fall

When we sin – especially when we sin big – we retreat inside the castle.

The Dungeon locks us in shame.

We tell ourselves we're too dirty. Too broken. Too far gone.

We deserve to be locked away where no one can see what we've become.

David could have lived there. In the dungeon of his own shame.

But he didn't.

The Storerooms hide our sin.

We stuff it away. Pretend it didn't happen. Lock the door and throw away the key.

We convince ourselves: if no one knows, it doesn't count.

The details look different – what you looked at, who you let into your heart, what you allowed to grow in secret.

But the hiding is the same.

David tried that. Until Nathan showed up and turned on the lights.

Here's the truth: God already knows.

He sees the Storerooms. He sees the Dungeon. He sees every sin you're hiding.

And He's knocking on the door.

Not to condemn you.

To set you free.

But you have to open it.

You have to confess.

You have to stop hiding and come back.

I Know Those Walls

I've lived in those rooms.

I know what it's like to work for something and then destroy it with one moment.

Before Dawn I was in a relationship with someone I cared about, she got close... too close and I got scared, I said the wrong thing. One conversation. One moment of not thinking clearly before I spoke. And it was over. I inflicted pain on a person I loved.

With Dawn, I did it twice. Said the wrong thing. Let my fear speak louder than my love. Almost destroyed the best thing that ever happened to me.

One moment can undo years of building.

One word can burn down what took forever to create.

I know that terror.

And I know the dungeon that comes after – the shame of knowing **you're** the one who destroyed it.

But I also know this: **God's grace is bigger than your failure.**

Dawn and I have been married for 26 years now. Not because I got it right. But because God's grace covered what I got wrong.

And I'm still discovering new rooms. New sins. New ways I fail.

I'm fifty-six now.

And I'm still coming back.

Still confessing.

Still repenting.

Because that's what "a man after God's own heart" looks like.

Not perfection.

Persistence in coming back.

Don't Stay in the Wreckage

So if you're standing in the aftermath of your own Bathsheba moment – if you got the promise and then destroyed it – **don't stay there.**

Don't lock yourself in the Dungeon.

Don't hide in the Storerooms.

Come out.

Confess.

Repent.

God is not waiting to reject you.

He's waiting to restore you.

Just like He restored David.

The consequences were real – David's son died, Absalom rebelled, the sword never left his house.

But God didn't reject him.

God forgave him.

God used him.

God called him "a man after my own heart."

Not because David was perfect.

Because David kept coming back.

The Way Back

Here's what coming back looks like:

1. Stop hiding. Confess to God.

Not excuses. Not "I'm sorry I got caught."

Real confession: "I have sinned. Against You. This is what I did. I was wrong."

2. Confess to people you've hurt.

David's sin hurt Bathsheba. Killed Uriah. Devastated his family.

If your sin hurt others, you owe them confession too.

Not to make yourself feel better.

To take responsibility.

3. Accept the consequences.

God forgave David.

But the baby still died. Absalom still rebelled. The consequences were real.

Forgiveness doesn't erase consequences.

But it does restore relationship.

4. Get help.

Find a counselor. A pastor. A trusted friend.

Don't try to clean this up alone.

5. Keep coming back.

You'll fail again. You'll sin again.

Come back again.

That's the pattern.

Not perfection.

Persistent returning.

He Is Faithful

David wrote Psalm 51 after the worst failure of his life.

And it ends with this:

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." (Psalm 51:17)

You don't need to be perfect.

You don't need to clean yourself up first.

You just need to come back **broken**.

Contrite.

Honest.

And God – who forgave David the adulterer and murderer – will forgive you too.

Because all means all.

And that's all all means.

If you're struggling:

- Christian Faith-Based Resources: <https://mentalhealthhotline.org/christian-faith-resources/> or call 1-866-903-3787 (24/7)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 (call or text)

You matter. Your life matters. And your sin is not too big for God's grace. Come back. Please stay.

William James Meyer is the author of "Do You Live in a Castle? Breaking Free from the Walls That Hold You Hostage." He writes from a Christian perspective as someone who's still learning what it means to keep coming back – over and over – to the God who never stops welcoming him home.

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