

Text: 2 Samuel 12:1-14

Date: August 19th, 2018

Focus: Jesus was condemned to die so that we might live.

Function: As Christians, we let the light of God's Word shine into our lives which condemns our sin and raises us up to new life.

In Jesus Name, Amen.

In February of the year 2000 I was at the pinnacle of my glory. I was "The Man." You see, each year our school held a basketball tournament. Schools from all over the area would come, and it was something all of the students looked forward to. Most year, well, just about every year, our teams were not very good. We very rarely had much to brag about. But, in February of 2000 we found ourselves in some sort of important game. I don't remember if it was for 3rd place or the consolation championship. It most definitely wasn't for 1st or 2nd, but it for us it was a big game. And I just so happened to have the biggest game of my life. I was "The Man."

From the very beginning of the game I couldn't miss. I was hitting all sorts of baskets. Lay-ups, runners, jump-shots, everything was going in. After a little while my coach even started calling plays for me, to get me to ball, because it was obvious I was on fire. I was in Jr. High heaven. I could hear people talking about me in the crowd. Parents were shouting my name. My coach was encouraging me. My teammates were doing whatever they could to keep my streak going. It was amazing.

And I remember after the game one of my favorite teachers, someone I respected and looked up to looked at me and said, "You're the man, Peter!" I was on top of the world.

"You're the man."

I would imagine that was something that King David could have heard pretty often throughout his life. For much of his career he was on top of the world. King of God's people. He was the anointed one, chosen by God Himself to lead the Israelites. He was "The Man." "You're the Man, David!" I can hear his friends saying after he slayed the giant and killed Goliath. "You're the Man!" I can hear his troops hollering after he returned from battle having defeated 10's of thousands of his enemies. "You're the man, David" I can hear his buddies saying in awe as they walk through his palace and take a look at his riches. "You really are the man, David" I can hear them whispering as they meet each of his 6 wives. David had everything anyone could dream of. Power and palaces. Women and Wine. He really was "The Man."

And today, Nathan the Prophet lets David know it. "You are the man" Nathan tells the King. But, this time, it's not a compliment. You see, David did have it all. But, he decided to throw it all away for a few moments of pleasure. David, if you know how the story goes decided to abuse his power to steal another man's wife – a woman named Bathsheba, and then have that man – a good and honest and upright man named Uriah - killed, and then David covered it all up.

And just when David thinks he's gotten away with all of it, just as he assumes it will be his and Bathsheba's little secret, Nathan the Prophet comes knocking on his door. And as we heard in 2 Samuel 12 today, Nathan tells David a story. A parable that highlights one man's utterly despicable pride and jealousy and murderous ego. And at the end of the story, Nathan let's David know, "You are that man." You are the adulterous man. The murderous man. The conniving, sneaking man.

You are the man, Nathan is saying, whose eyes should have been looking out over the troops under your command, but instead whose eyes were fixated on another man's wife. You are the man, Nathan says, whose mouth could have been giving orders in battle, but instead was giving orders to bring helpless Bathsheba into your bedroom. David, you are the man, whose hands ought to have been holding a sword out on the field of battle, but instead whose hands held Uriah's wife. David, you are the man whose ears should have listened to the words of the Lord, but who instead listened to his own heart's desires. David, Nathan is saying, you are the completely foolish man who had riches spilling out of his pockets, but stole another man's pennies. David, you are that utterly sinful man.

Now, our first reaction, well, maybe I should speak for myself, my first reaction, is to think, "Who does that?! Who throws away all of their riches like that? How could David so despise everything God gave him? What kind of fool think's that just because he has been richly blessed by God that he can do whatever he wants?"

But, the truth is, we all do. Even though our lives are full of God's goodness, we are always looking for something more. Maybe God has given you a home and a car and clothes, but you want the ones you don't have. Or maybe God has given you a spouse, but you let your eyes wander to someone else's. Or maybe God has given you a family that loves you, but then you go and gossip about someone else's. The truth is, what Nathan said to David, he could say to each and every one of us. "You are the man. You are the woman. You are the one who had so much and then threw it all away"

Before my wife and I moved here to Arlington Heights we had spent 2 years living in Elmhurst at my vicarage church's parsonage. It was an awesome little house, perfect for the first 2 years of our marriage. But, it had a dark little secret. You see, down in the basement was a little closed off room. A dark little room. And in that room, a room without windows or any sort of light, lived mold. Dark mold. Mold that covered the walls. We didn't exactly know what to do about it, and we very rarely went downstairs anyway, and so we just kept the door shut. Out of sight, out of mind. Very few things can grow in the dark, but molding rot is one of them.

And another is sin. Sin thrives in the darkness. Which is where King David hoped to keep his sin. He hoped that no one would ever know about what he had done. He thought that because of his power he could keep everything in the dark. Close the door and lock it away. Hidden. Out of sight. Out of mind.

But, sin grows best in darkness. Keeping it locked up will only cause it to thrive. The way to kill it is to bring it into the light. To shine rays of God's grace and forgiveness on it. And

so that's what God does to David today through Nathan. He brings David's sin into the light. Where it can be seen. Where it can be dealt with. Where it can be forgiven.

That's what needs to be done with all of our sin. It needs to be brought to the light. That's why we confess our sins in church, so that they aren't locked away in the darkness of our hearts, but so that they can see the light of God's grace and love. As long as those sins are hidden away in the dark places of our lives they will never touch the life-giving rays of God's light. That's why we shouldn't be afraid to talk about our struggles with temptation with our Christian friends. Because we need them to encourage us and remind us of the light. That's why we need to hold each other accountable and admit our mistakes. Because left in the dark, our sin will grow and fester and thrive. But when we get it out into the open, it is killed, cleansed, forgiven. Brothers and sisters, as hard as it is to be honest about our sin, we need to be honest about it. We need people like Nathan in our life. Nathan's words couldn't have been easy for David. It's never easy to have someone shine the light of God's Word into the darkness of our sin. But, we need it. We need the light of Jesus' love to wash away our sin.

I want to tell you one last story about another man. It's not me. Not David. It's the story of the worst sinner the world has ever known. It's a story about the worst adulterer, worst murderer, worst gossip and liar and thief the world has ever known. It's the story of Jesus. The one who knew no sin, and yet became sin for us. It's the story of Jesus who took upon His perfect body the sins of the world, who was rejected by the Father Himself. Jesus was the one the Father looked down upon as he hung on that cross and said, "You're the man, the man who will die in the place of everyone else. You are the man who will pay for these people. You are the man who will bear the sins of David and Peter and everyone else and be killed so that they might live." Jesus truly is The Man.

And it's because of Jesus that God looks at each of you here today and says, "You are the man. You are the woman. You are the child I cherish. You are the man I've forgiven or the woman I've cleansed. You are the one I adore. You are the man or woman to whom God Himself says, "I love you"

In Jesus Name, Amen.