

Day 40 – Mar. 24

Even forgiven sin has consequences. All too often we don't really understand this and it makes for what many have called "Sloppy Agape". The sentiment is, "well, Jesus has forgiven my sin so it's not such a big deal." Tell that to David.

After his out-of-character rape of Bathsheba (what else do you call it when a King, the most powerful man in the nation, takes a married woman and sleeps with her against her will?), David compounds his sin by killing her husband "with the sword of the Ammonites". And for the first time, we read that "the Lord was displeased with what David had done." Until now, David had been exemplary in his faith and life. I assume with such a relationship with God, David had to know that this wasn't the end of it.

Nathan the prophet comes with a little bedtime story for David, a story in true prophetic fashion. Our family was a fan of VeggieTales when the kids were young, and [the song Nathan sings](#) still plays in my head whenever I read this. The story leads David to accuse himself, and the famous turn at the end – "YOU are that man!" – has gone down in history. And in that moment, David repents of his sin. We read about it in Ps. 51, but also here. And so God forgives David, for when we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And we love the forgiveness part, but not so much the cleansing from unrighteousness. That part hurts.

God forgives David and he doesn't die for his sin, but even forgiven sin has consequences. And God through Nathan spells these out for David. The illegitimate son will die, and sure enough he does. David's household will rebel against him, and sure enough they do. His family will live by the sword (and we know what happens to those who live by the sword!) and sure enough they do.

When a midwinter speaker spoke of this passage a few decades ago, he talked about the final consequence of David's sin – his loss of all spiritual and moral authority in his own family. His children never listen to him when it comes to moral issues, and they generally turn out to be rebels against David and his will.

This is the great consequence of our sin as well. We no longer need fear death for our sin, though all sin leads to death. Jesus solved that for us on the cross when the death that sin leads to was paid by God Himself. But the other consequences of sin still remain. Illegitimate sex can lead to unwanted children. Financial misdealings can lead to prison time. And moral failures at home will remove our moral authority with our families. These consequences flow naturally from sin and are not stemmed by Christ's death for us. Jesus paid the price for our sin, but even forgiven sin has consequences.