

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
July 23, 2016

2 Samuel 11:1–12:31. David’s adultery (11) and divine discipline (12).

2 Peter 1:1–8. The virtues needed to make our calling and election sure.

Psalm 139:1–24. David’s orientation to God.

COMMENTS:

2 Samuel 11:1–12:31. In **11:2-3** we see that on one evening, restless on his bed David arose, went to a rooftop of the palace, and from there happened to observe Bathsheba the wife of his neighbor Uriah. She was bathing out in the open. One may not fault David for perhaps seeking the cooler breezes of the late afternoon. Yet David’s submission to her charms is inexcusable, for the deliberate steps he followed to bring her to the palace required more than enough time for him to resist the initial, impulsive temptation. It was not like he was immediately overcome with lust before he had time to redirect his intellect when his passions were inflamed. This entire incident is an illustration of James 1:14–15, “*But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*” There are at least three principles we can learn from this temptation and fall: **(1) The problem of idleness.** Whatever the cause, good or bad, that kept David in Jerusalem, this much is true: Satan finds plenty to work with for those who are idle. Idleness isn’t just the absence of activity, for all of us need regular rest; *idleness is also activity to no purpose, life void of walking with God daily!* When David was finished with his afternoon nap, he should have immediately moved into some kingdom duty living in conscious fellowship with God. Many believers are bored today because of passivity with regard to their spiritual lives, and so they set themselves up for failure as they passively absorb pagan ideas from TV and the internet instead of actively living thriving lives growing in the Lord *by knowledge and by love*. Their bored lives only testify to the fact that they have become sensate beings, governed by their sense natures. **(2) The problem of entertaining sexual fantasies.** A man can’t be blamed if a beautiful woman comes into his line of vision, but if the man deliberately lingers for a second look in order to feed his lust, he’s asking for trouble: “*You heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery,*” said Jesus. “*But as for myself, I am saying to you, Every one who is looking at a woman in order to indulge his sexual passion for her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart*” (Matt. 5:27–28). When David paused and took that longer second look, his imagination went to work and started to conceive sin—he was already beginning to entertain the idea having sex with her in his mind. That would have been a good time to turn away decisively and leave the roof of his palace for a much safer place. When Joseph faced a similar temptation, he fled from the scene (Gen. 39:11–13). As Christ taught us, “*Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*” (Matt. 26:41. “*Lead us not into temptation*” was the prayer David should have prayed. By lingering and looking, David tempted himself and by yielding to the flesh, He tempted the Lord. **(3) The problem of not living out the Word of God.** When God forbids something and calls it sin, we shouldn’t try to get more information about it. This is irrational. David knew what the law said about adultery, so why did he send to inquire about the woman? Because in his heart, he had already taken possession of her, and now he was anxious to have sex with her. He learned that Bathsheba was a married woman, and that fact alone should have stopped him from going on with his evil plan. When he

found out she was the wife of one of his courageous soldiers who was even then on the battlefield (23:9), he should have gone to the tent of meeting, fallen on his face and cried out to God for mercy. He should have formed 2nd order will for strength to resist and then ask God to give him that strength in his first order will. Moreover, David knew the law and should have remembered it and applied it to his own heart. “*You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife*” (Ex. 20:17); “*You shall not commit adultery*” (Ex. 20:14). David also knew that the palace servants saw and heard everything that went on and reported it to others, so there wasn’t much chance he could escape detection. The fact that he was showing interest in his neighbor’s wife was probably already public knowledge. But even if nobody but the messenger knew it, the Lord God knew it and didn’t approve of what David was doing. God gave David time to come to his senses and seek forgiveness, but he only hardened his heart and continued to pretend that all was well. His activity is a powerful illustration of what I noted in our last Bible class that all sin is irrational and this demonstrates that our wills have far more influence over us than our intellects. The only way to change this is through natural and supernatural virtue permeating all of our natures, especially our sense appetites. Transformation is impossible apart from gaining new forms of virtue in our souls by the grace of God.

2 Peter 1:1–8. This was one of our opening passages in our last Bible class. Look carefully at the nature of spirituality (“partakers of divine nature”) and all of the *mandated* virtues. Note also the importance of these virtues in relation to verse 10. Regardless if one takes this ‘calling and election’ (1:10) as a reference to salvation or ruling with Christ in the next life, the passage clearly teaches that it is by spiritual virtue that we make our calling and election sure. In other words, our present condition or quality in life is going to affect our future quality of life. The passage clearly teaches that it is by growing in the aforementioned virtues that one makes his calling and election certain. Again, whether this calling and election is related to eternal punishment in Hell or eternal calling of special privileges in the eternal kingdom, the issue remains that the quality of our lives here determines our eternal life in one way or another. While I believe in eternal security and think that the calling and election refers to special rewards in the eternal kingdom and not Hell, the question remains: ‘Are you making your calling and election certain by partaking of the Triune God and growing in the virtues listed in this reading?’ *Quo Vadis?*

Psalms 139:1–24. God’s omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence are the subjects of David’s meditations in this beautiful psalm. In this psalm David asked God to examine him thoroughly to affirm his innocence. *What a difference such an attitude would have made in David’s life when he “took” Bathsheba.* This psalm can be divided in six sections: (1) the omniscience of God (**139:1-6**), (2) the omnipresence of the Lord (**139:7-12**), (3) the omnipotence of God (**139:13-18**), and (4) the loyalty of David (**139:19-24**). Note the care of God for human beings while they are in the womb in **139:13-16** (so much the worse of the “breath of life” teaching).

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don