

Avoiding Sin's Sudden Traps

by Mack Tomlinson

Mack Tomlinson's sermon emphasizes the importance of vigilance and accountability in avoiding the traps of sin, using David's story as a cautionary example.

Duration: 56:50

Scripture: 2 Samuel 12:10, 2 Samuel 12:14, Proverbs 28:13, Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:23, James 1:14-15

Topics: "Temptation And Sin", "Repentance And Forgiveness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of David and Bathsheba from the Bible. David, while casually observing the sunset, sees Bathsheba and is immediately tempted by her beauty. He gives in to this temptation and commits adultery with her. The preacher emphasizes that our society is also plagued by sexual immorality and greed. However, the sermon also highlights the importance of repentance and God's forgiveness, as David eventually repents and is restored by God. The preacher warns the audience to be aware of the dangers of temptation and to turn to God for forgiveness and restoration.

Transcript

Well, this place looks familiar. It seems like I've been here before. It is a joy to be back.

I want to greet each of you. And I do bring greetings. I saw a preacher last week over in Alabama.

He's kind of a weak, liberal preacher, but for some reason he wanted me to tell you all hello. His name is Paul Washer. And he sends his love and greetings to you and the High Point family.

Well, let us look in God's Word. In the Old Testament, my Bible is open to the book of 2 Samuel. 2 Samuel chapter 11.

This is not the message that I wanted to preach today. But you know, preachers, if they're real preachers, they're kind of like... What's the picture? They're kind of like a farmer that owns a wagon and has food to haul. And he drives up to the barn and the master loads the wagon on there with the food that's right for the day and he's just to deliver it.

So that's all I am. God has laid this message on my heart about the area of avoiding sin's traps. And so, I want to sound a warning today.

Because none of us are ever beyond facing falling into a trap of sin that can get us and snare us. And before we know it, we are in real trouble. 2 Samuel 11 is put in the Bible for this very reason.

About a man, you know his name, you've heard of him, David. He was not a weakling. He was not a novice.

He was one of the strongest, greatest men in all of history. And yet, he fell big time. And if he can, guess what that means about you and I? We're candidates too.

Let's read verses 1 through 5 and then we'll look to the end of the chapter as well. 2 Samuel 11 In the spring of the year, when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah.

But David remained at Jerusalem. And it happened late one afternoon when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house that he saw from the roof a woman bathing. And the woman was very beautiful.

And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.

Then she returned to her house. And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, I am pregnant. Verse 26 When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband.

And when the morning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. You may be seated.

Let's pray together. Father, You have given us Your Word. Lord, You know this morning I am weak.

And in myself, I have nothing to help these dear people, my brothers and sisters and these friends. Only You can speak to us with words of life. So Father, I ask You to have mercy on me and on us this morning.

Speak to us. Give us aid. Give us help.

And I pray this morning, Father, that You would honor Your truth in Your Son, and that lives would be helped and changed and preserved from sin's traps. For the glory of Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

Our society, if anything marks our culture today, I think two of the most dominant features in the world today are two areas. Unbridled sexual indulgence and rampant greed. Our society has been taken over by sexual indulgence and immorality and blatant greed.

And it's very obvious, isn't it? So this chapter, there's nothing more relevant to 2006 than what we just read in David's life. You may remember a couple of years ago, up in Oklahoma on I-40, between Oklahoma City and Fort Smith, Arkansas, a bridge collapsed. And cars and trucks and even ranchers that had trailers of horses were driving along and suddenly, without warning, they couldn't stop and they drove right off into a big lake.

A number of people drowned. Some championship horses drowned. There was no warning about the impending danger.

And finally, someone had to stop and begin to wave and try to stop people about danger that was right in front of them that they weren't prepared for, that they were going to encounter, unless they stopped. This area of morality and temptation and sin's lures that become so attractive and so beautiful and so alluring and so forceful and they're pulled upon us. This area is like a bridge that's gone out and we're sailing along in life and we must, every once in a while, have a warning sound to us, watch out.

Even the strongest need to be warned. Did you know that there was a giant in David's life that he did not slay? We remember one that he did slay. His name was Goliath.

But there's another one that he lost the battle to. And so, 2 Samuel 11, David's sin is an example and a warning to the strongest men, to the wisest men, to the people who most have a heart after God. A warning and an example to us.

The fact is, there's an aspect of the Bible that is unpleasant to face. You know what it is? It's the shameful and embarrassing failures and sins of heroes in the Bible, of believers in Scripture. I mean, just admit it, it's painful to read about David and Bathsheba.

It is. It's embarrassing. It's grievous.

Or about Peter's denial when he denied the Lord even with curses. Those things aren't pleasant to read. And think about why.

Because in our hearts, in the human heart, there is a longing to have heroes to admire. That's why movies move people so deeply, about people's lives. That's why you can read a biography or an account of someone's life and their experiences and their struggles and their needs.

Movies move you to tears because we need heroes to admire. It's painful to us when they fail because we love their lives and their faith. And you know, God Himself is the great biographer.

Have you ever thought about that? But unlike other biographers, He writes the lives of His children. He writes the lives of believers in the Bible, warts and all. The victories and the defeats, the accomplishments and the failures, the great triumphs and even the tragedies and the embarrassments.

The Bible at certain points is totally transparent and even embarrassing. Such facts as this, Noah gets dead drunk after the flood. I mean, how could he do it? Abraham lies twice because he's a coward and puts his wife in danger to save his own neck.

What a bum of a husband. Abraham, how could he do it? Moses kills a man and later flies into an angry rage in public. Peter denies Jesus three times with cuss words.

How could these heroes of the faith do that stuff? You know why? You know how? Here's why. The simple fact is, no one. No one is exempt from possibly falling, failing, messing up and sinning severely.

You're not and I'm not. I mean, don't you wish you could get a vaccination that protects you from life's mess ups? Wouldn't it be great you could get a spiritual flu shot and not sin for a year? I mean, you go and see the pastor. Pastor, I'm here for my annual shot.

Well, here you go. 12 months of perfection. See you next year.

It ain't going to happen. You and I, you and I will always be walking in a spiritual minefield and you could step on one. If you don't watch your path any day when you least expect it.

That's what happened to David in 2 Samuel 11. Sin will be a battle till death. Sin's traps are laid for you individually with your name on them, prepared by the enemy in your area of weakness.

And he lays them when you least expect it. Usually when things are good or you're on vacation or things are going great and you're taking a spiritual vacation. He lays you some traps that he wants you to step in.

They're tailor made for you. David was a man, the Bible tells us, after God's own heart. He was the best songwriter in all of history.

He was a prophet of God. He wrote inspired scripture. One of the greatest men that ever lived.

Yet, after being the central leader of God's purpose, he sinned severely. Huge. Not just a little fall, but I'm talking about a leap from a high building fall.

A big bad one that even a young boy knows is wrong. David blew it. And in David and for each of us, such failures remind us of something that is so important for us to take to heart.

You know what it is? That the seed of the most monstrous sins yet lies within this flesh. And we could blow it royally if we don't recognize that. And if we have a pharisaical, self-righteous attitude in us, that we think to ourselves, we'd never say it to others, but we think to ourselves, you know, I could never do that.

You know what the Bible says to such a person? Let him who thinks he stands, what? Take heed lest he falls. You could fall into bad sin. Do you believe that? You have to either say yes or no to that.

Could I fall? Well, if you say yes, that ought to put fear in you. And if you say no, that ought to put more fear in you. Because it's that person who will fall when they least expect the temptations going to come.

Impure tendencies and the ability toward backsliding, even when you've walked with God, even when you've seen much truth, even when you've sung the praises of God, even when you've seen God do marvelous things for you, those things are no certain insurance against you falling in the future. They weren't for David. Think about his life.

It had been 20 years since he had been anointed king, and he was at the height of his strength and his might and his power at this point. And yet he had the ability toward backsliding and falling grievously. And that tendency is within everyone, one of us.

The possibility of that happening. Like the hymn writer said, Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Now, an old preacher used to say, The Christian is not prone to wander, he's prone to seek the Lord.

Well, that's true. We are prone to seek the Lord. Every believer in Jesus Christ has a new heart that loves God and loves righteousness and doesn't like sin anymore.

So we are prone to seek the Lord. But the strongest Christian at times has a tendency to be drawn to wander. And the heart can go away and we can face times of temptation that will get us unless we recognize.

Traps are laid all the time for every believer by the enemy of our soul. And we must live always in our lives with the attitude and with the realization, Sin is crouching at the door and its desire is always for me. Like Cain, God said that to him, listen, Sin is crouching at the door and it is for you.

It wants you. It wants to get you. It wants to bring you down.

And it did him. The question is, will it in your life or in mine? Second Samuel is in the Bible for this reason. David, the man after God's own heart, is an example of the finest and the strongest falling into an unexpected trap.

How quickly sin can creep up on you and I when we least expect it and trap even the best person. I mean, think about it. This area got the man after God's own heart, the God chaser, David.

It got the strongest man, Samson. It got the wisest man, Solomon. Now, do you and I put ourselves in their camp, Solomon, David and Samson? Are we as strong as they were? No, but it got them at a time.

And it can get the godliest people. Listen, beloved, there is an onslaught of this happening across our nation. I know men in the last year who were solid, godly men, sound in the faith, sound in the truths of grace, who were seasoned men, strong men, who had good families.

And they did not guard themselves. And they fell. And havoc in families and in marriages happens.

It's going on all the time. So David's sin is recording for all of history and for you and I this morning as a warning and a protection for you. How does sin get a believer? Well, right in the passage, let's look at it again there in 2 Samuel 11.

First, we see in verse 1, temptations hour. Here's how sin gets us. Temptations hour, verse 1. It says, in the time when kings go out to war, that David remained at Jerusalem.

David stayed home idle. In those days, the kings, they were on the battlefield. They weren't at the Pentagon.

They were out front with the soldiers. They were there with the men. Well, they had been having such victory that David said, man, you know, I deserve some R&R.

I don't need to go out. This is a little bunch. We'll send a few hundred out there.

We'll mop up and be home for supper time. I'm not going to go. I'm going to stay home.

So David stayed home idle, creating temptations hour. For 20 years, David had grown strong. He had greatly depended on God.

God had worked in his life deeply. God, he was excited about the Lord. He was serving God.

He was going on mission trips. He was singing the praises of God. He was leading the people of God.

He had grown strong, had seen great deliverances and amazing provisions, a key person of God's grace. But over time, there had been a gradual, invisible weakening in David. He could keep up the facade, but within, the moral fiber somehow was weakening, and he was being set up because he didn't guard himself for failure.

Good times in David's life had long come, and now was a time of blessing and prosperity, of ease and easy victories. He was now famous. He had arrived.

His popularity rating was probably 98%, and he became at ease in Zion. He had forgotten the hard times. He had forgotten the times of having to depend on God to even be kept alive till the next day, sleeping in caves, running for his life, having to desperately depend on God to keep him and lead him.

He had forgotten. You know what? How dangerous easy times can be. How dangerous encouraging times can be.

Because then, you and I don't feel our need for God like at the hard times. And at a day and at a time when David should have continued to be a warrior, his mentality had become one of idleness, relaxing, a lack of watchfulness, and he was set up. When he should have had his armor on, he had on his pajamas, even before supper time.

And the tempter wove a casual, unseen web on an ordinary day when David was alone. Beloved, listen. What we are around other people is what they think we are.

But what we are when we're alone is what God knows we are. David was alone in temptation's hour. So here he is indulging himself late one afternoon.

The Bible says it was springtime. Picture it with me. Springtime in Jerusalem.

The flowers have blossomed. The breeze is fresh. The grass is green.

The children are playing. David lays down for a casual nap before supper. Maybe he had been working on a new song earlier in the day.

And he's going to finish it after supper. So he gets up from his couch and he stretches. And the breeze is blowing.

The curtain's over at the front door, leading out on his balcony. And he just strolls out there to watch the sunset. He looks down and sees children playing.

And he thinks, what a beautiful day it is. I wonder how Joab and the men are doing. And before he turns to go back in, he turns and he looks.

And suddenly, this evening, this hour, this next five minutes, will change David's life forever. One look that didn't stop in an hour of temptation. Suddenly, David loses all sense of who he is.

Seeing her causes him to forget. Beloved, this man is not a novice. If you put him up beside today a John Piper or a Juan Sanchez or a Paul Washer or whoever you want to put him up with, he would have been head and shoulders spiritually above anybody in the earth probably.

And yet, in the hour of temptation, he forgets everything. He forgets the psalms that he wrote. He forgets the victories.

He forgets he's a king. He forgets his example and his family. He forgets his own sons and daughters and the grief and shame this will bring.

He forgets prayer. He forgets you can't take a spiritual vacation. He forgets that there are traps to be avoided.

What else did he forget? Oh yeah, he forgot God himself. You see, David didn't, at this point, he didn't curse and reject God at that moment. He just forgot the presence of God because he's lost in this lustful stare and he loses all reality.

And suddenly, it becomes a moment that he's trapped, he's caught. As he looks down, he keeps looking and he won't turn away. And in an instant, the lust of the flesh, like a prairie fire, explodes.

And boom, he's trapped. Instead of fleeing back inside and falling on his knees. Oh, that he had done that.

Run back inside and fallen on his knees, cried out for mercy. But he didn't do that. Like Joseph, he didn't flee in the hour of temptation.

He stayed and he stared. And the more he saw, the more he thought. And the more he thought, the more he desired.

What five minutes earlier would have been the furthest thing from his mind. How suddenly and how subtle and how quickly sin's traps can come upon you when you are ready for them. And in temptation's hour, David's weak and he gives in.

Guess what, beloved? There's no one strong in the area of the flesh. Nobody. All of us are weak.

And before you came to Christ, you were in bondage to the sins of the flesh and the body. Whatever the passions of the flesh, whether it's sexually or for food or entertainment or ease or whatever, they dominated us before we came to know the Lord Jesus Christ. But you know what? Even after you come to know Him, that's the battleground.

The battle still rages on. And if we don't take heed to ourselves, we can fall into a snare and a trap because it got David and be sure it can get you and I. David did not flee to escape, but he tarried in the presence of temptation. He tarried in temptation's hour.

You see, we're not to try to be strong when we face such times. We're to run. That's the most spiritual thing you can do when you see that you're facing a temptation and you feel weakness sitting in and you feel the lure and the pull and the attraction.

Run. It's your feet, not your strong will that'll be your salvation then. Use your feet.

Run. The Bible says, flee fornication, flee youthful lust. You get out of there like Joseph did.

Hey, he went to prison, but he was spared. He was spared from the fire being taken to his bosom and be burned. But David wasn't.

David wasn't. And for each of us, you have them. I have them.

There are hours that come, times of temptation, especially when you're alone on a business trip. Family's gone, or at the computer and nobody's home. You know what I'm talking about.

Times when you're alone. And the question is, how do you and I stand the test when we face those times? Temptation's hour. It's very real.

David didn't see it coming. And it got him. Because he thought up on that balcony was some R&R.

You know, there's no giants up here to get me. Boy, was he wrong. It doesn't matter where you and I are.

Sin's traps will be there and they will lay an hour of temptation. Then secondly, what else do we see here in David? We see not only temptation's hour, but we see sin's choice. Sin's choice.

Verse 3. What does it say? And David sent and inquired after the woman. Now, this is astounding. He had to call a servant up there to the balcony and point her out to him.

And David begins to ask who she is. Well, is this servant a dummy? He knows what's going on. And the servant says, is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam? Now, notice this.

Usually when they would identify someone in the Bible, they would identify them by whose son or the daughter they were. But the servant adds something. He says, is this not the wife of Uriah the Hittite? Well, this is servant's subtle way to warn David.

David, wait a minute. Do you realize she's a man's wife? But David gives in to the choice to pursue his desire. He saw her.

He desired her. He faces a choice. And suddenly, he's a practical atheist.

It's as if God doesn't exist. God's not around. Why? You know why? Because strong temptation, if you and I don't avoid temptation's hour and resist it, can cause temporary spiritual insanity.

Sin is an irrational thing. The lust of the flesh in David caused rationalization. And he might have begun to think like this.

You know, these are normal desires. Look at all the wives God's given me. These are normal desires.

And after all, am I not the king? Why should I be desired? And isn't it true? After all, what I want is what's most important. What I want is what's most important. That's what David's heart basically said.

Beloved, you know what's at the root of every marriage problem and every moral problem in America? Self. Selfishness, self-centeredness, and modern psychology wants to blame it on our grandfather or grandmother or whoever in our past and make us a victim where we shift the blame rather than taking responsibility and say, I did that. I ruined my marriage.

I went into her. I had that affair. I gave in to the bondage of pornography because I'm sinful and selfish.

That's why David, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life at that moment, ruled and he chose to take her. He silenced the fear of God in his heart. Would not the Holy Spirit have been there whispering to his conscience? But David silenced the fear of God.

He rejected the voice of conscience and the desire is pursued and sin is chosen. Listen, beloved, I'm sounding a warning this morning. Have you been in a valley of temptation? Are you at a crossroads where there's an attraction, where the heart's wandering and nobody knows it but you and God? Listen to me.

I'm sounding a warning. Sin's choice David made. And at that point, Solomon's words spoken years later now apply to David when Solomon said the evil deeds of a man in snaring and his sin holds him fast.

David is snared because a choice is made. A choice to pursue a particular sin. And beloved, what is true of David and for David can be true for you and I. Oh, it's easy for us with 2020 to look back and look at David and see the stupidity and his weakness and the wrong choice.

But it's far more difficult for you and I to see ourselves when we're being tempted, when sin's attractive and desirable and it's looking good. And we know it would satisfy. There's a famous British author, Malcolm Muggeridge.

You may have heard of him. You may have read some of his things before. He grew into adulthood in Britain as a famous writer.

And I don't know all that he did. And he became a Christian in his later years. But Muggeridge confessed that for years he had in his heart a fantasy about what would it be like, how fulfilling would it be, how romantic would it be when I'm alone in some other country to have a fling, to have an affair, to experience that.

He went to India on a trip. And he went down to the beach. And he saw out in the water, he saw an attractive woman with her back to him.

And there, there was people who could bathe or swim however they wanted to. And suddenly, this thought arose in him. He said, I'm going to swim out there.

And he takes off. And there's adrenaline flowing and there's desire. And he says, this is the moment.

This is the most protected situation I've ever been in. I could ever be in. And he swims.

And as he gets closer, the woman turns around. And suddenly, the lust empties out and disgust fills him. Because when she turns around, he sees that she's a leper.

Beloved, that is what the most attractive sin truly is. And that's what it will do to us if we're lured by the beauty and the attraction of it. All it has for us is death and disgust and misery.

We are blinded by its attractiveness and the lure when we're alone. That's why the Bible says in James, everyone is tempted when we're drawn away of our own lust. And when lust has conceived, it brings forth what? Sin.

And when sin has conceived, it brings forth what? Death. Not life. Not happiness.

Not fulfillment. Not purpose. Not joy.

Not satisfaction. Death. That's what it produces every time.

Every time. Sin's choice. And verse 5 tells us something else about it.

We see there another reality about David's life. In verse 5, we see sin's results. Look at it.

Verse 5. The four simple words. And the woman conceived. She conceived.

Guess what? Sin always does. It always produces offspring. Consequences.

Permanent effects. Permanent results. I mean, let me ask you a question.

Were David and Bathsheba planning on having an unplanned pregnancy? Yet a night of quick gratification produced a lifetime of tragedy and pain. Sin always does. And sin's attractiveness blinds you and I to its consequences.

Satan, someone says, shows beautiful bait, but he hides the painful hook. That's the truth. We're blinded to the consequences.

It shows momentary pleasure, but it hides the long-term damage. I mean, no one reasons this way. No one thinks this way.

Well, I think I'm going to get up today and I'm going to go fall into sin. I'm going to invest in sin. And what will the return be? Let's say grief, heartache, pain, family destruction.

Yeah, I think I'll do it. Nobody thinks that way. We don't think about the consequences until it's done.

And Solomon said, the foolish, stupid young man in Proverbs 5 through 7, he did not consider the latter end. Beloved, when you're in an hour of temptation and you're facing sin's choice, you ought to do some quick, hard thinking. How will I feel when this is over? What will this do to those that I'm an influence on? Sin's results.

All the consequences are hidden. But listen, the choice to sin only brings trouble. The Bible says the way of the transgressor is what? Hard.

Hard. Read Proverbs 5, 6 and 7 if you hadn't read it lately. Damage, damage, damage, destruction, death, grief, heartache, foolishness.

Oh, listen, when temptation's hour is not resisted and sin's choice is not rejected, serious consequences happen. Did David think about any of that when Bathsheba was available? No. He only saw the pleasure.

But listen, though Satan's apple has a beautiful skin, it has a rotten, poisonous core. Always. For a couple of hours' pleasure, David's choice produced months and years of painful regret.

If only, says many a tearful person, if only I had thought, if only I had listened, if only I had known, if only I had not been stupid and made that choice. Sin starts as a little seed, but it always spreads into a big oak tree. It's much bigger than you and I to deal with.

And we ought to fear it. Well, with David, what happened? Nathan the prophet shows up at David's door one day. Why? To be the voice of God to David.

To make David, a child of God, face the consequences. Nathan came to him, and you know the story he told him about the poor man that had one little lamb he had raised from being a baby. It drank out of his own bowl at the table.

He nursed it like his own child. And a rich farmer down the road who had thousands of lambs, a traveler came into town. And that rich man didn't want to give up one of his lambs, though he had a lot.

He went and took the poor man's lamb and made it the dinner for the visitor. Suddenly, David's conscience awoke. Well, he deserves to die.

What did Nathan do? He pointed that bony finger and said, David, it's you. You're the guy. Consequences.

Nathan said to David in chapter 12, verse 10, the sword will never depart from your house. In verse 14, he said, you have given great reason for God's enemies to blaspheme His name. And when a believer falls into sin's traps, the Gentiles and the world knows, and it gives great reason for God's name to be blasphemed, and for the church of Jesus Christ to be embarrassed, and for the other saints who love them to be grieving and hurt.

And great, great damage is done to the testimony of the gospel. Temptation's hour, sin's choice, and sin's consequence. And finally, we see sin's exposure.

It came out. Beloved, as sure as the sun rises in the east, those who yield to fleshly sins in the hour of temptation will have consequences, and their sin will be exposed. Listen, if you can live in secret sin and not get caught, and you like it, and God doesn't pull your file and stop you, that's the worst news you ever had.

That means you're a lost, unregenerate child of the devil. Because God chastens His children. He says, whom the Lord loves, He what? He wraps them in cotton wool and never corrects them, right? No, He scourges them and corrects every child that He receives.

God pulled David's file. He didn't get away with it. And listen, I tell you what, if anybody had the power, money, prestige, and ability to cover their sin, David did.

But listen, nobody can hide it from God or keep Him from exposing it. God, through faithful Nathan, exposes it. No Christian gets away with sin.

Now, how can you and I - let's apply this to our hearts - how can you and I be kept from sin's traps? They are laid for you, young ladies, young men. There are traps with your name on them that the enemy wants you to fall into. He is like a roaring lion, roaming about, seeking to find someone to devour.

How can you and I be kept from sin's traps? Number one, we must learn to be on guard spiritually consistently. We're in a spiritual battle. We are not on a playground.

We are on a battlefield spiritually. Now, this world thinks that all of life is a playground. I mean, this world thinks everything is Disney World.

And that's all it wants to pursue is play, play, play. Fun, fun, fun. Entertainment, entertainment, etc.

Beloved, we are on a battlefield spiritually. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, spiritual wickedness and heavenly places. And we are their target.

We must be wise and discerning and careful and sober and vigilant, watchful like a soldier behind enemy lines, because we have an adversary that wants to trip us up and wants us to fall into his traps. He's laid for us. Family vacations are great.

Spiritual vacations are dangerous. Be on guard. Secondly, what will keep us from sin's traps? To view sin as a serious and dangerous enemy.

But who does that today? I mean, the media and movies have completely desensitized us to sin. And what is evil and wicked and abominable to God, I mean, think about it. Christians go to movies and somebody asks them, well, how was that? Oh, it was good.

It was neat. Wonderful plot. Wonderful story.

You know, there was only a little sex and a little cussing in it. So, we justify it. Does that offend anybody? I hope so.

It ought to make us nervous. The culture has desensitized us to what is truly sinful. But beloved, listen.

What pleases Jesus Christ in our life? What offends Him ought to offend us. What is distasteful to Him ought to be distasteful to us. Are our standards being elevated to reach the truth? Or are we pulling our standards down to the level of the culture? One, think about it.

One bite from a piece of fruit casts all the human race into death. Because God said, see that tree? Don't touch it. Don't eat from it.

One bite of fruit. We've got to view sin as serious and dangerous. You and I must develop a personal motto about this area.

You and I need to be able to say sincerely in our hearts, I could fall like David did. I, sin could get me. Now, can you say that? Will you really believe it? Or do you think, well, I've known the truth too long.

I've walked with the Lord too long. I'm sanitized enough. And, you know, there are some areas that could get me, but I don't think that one could.

There was a well-known Christian leader several years ago. He was interviewed by National Christian Magazine. And the interviewer asked him this question.

If the enemy were to attack you in any area, where would he try to attack you? And he thought a little while. He said, well, I'm not sure, but I do know this. I don't think he could get me in the moral area because I've done too much homework on that.

I've written books. I have a good marriage. I've taught on that area.

So I don't think he could get me there. Within a year, the man fell into adultery with his secretary and was out of the ministry. You and I could fall in this area.

Do you fear God? Do you fear sin? Do you fear Satan's traps? God hadn't given us a spirit of carnal fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind and self-control. But there are some things to fear. We ought to fear God.

And we ought to fear sin. And we ought to fear sin's traps. And we ought to be able to say, I could fall.

And by the grace of God, I could be like that man. I could do what David did. Thirdly, how do we stay kept from sin's traps? Make this your goal.

Make this your passion and your desire. Not to be successful. Not to be famous.

Not to have an enviable retirement portfolio. But make this your goal. Seek after Jesus Christ Himself as your Lord and your Lover and your chief pleasure and satisfaction.

That's the protection. Abide in Him. Seek after Him.

Love Him. Give Him your heart daily. Cry out to Him daily, Lord, I am weak, but Thou art strong.

Jesus, keep me from all wrong. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil today. Keep me, Lord.

You're my shield. You're my hope. You're my refuge.

You're my protection. Keep me or I will fall. Listen, beloved, you seek after Jesus Christ with all your heart.

Put on the mind of Christ. Be filled with the love of Christ. Seek the presence of Christ.

And as the hymn writer says, temptations lose their power when thou art nigh. When Jesus Christ satisfies the heart, sin is a lot less desirable. Picture this, a fellow pulls up at a mall and he gets out of his car and he's walking in and he passes a 1970 rusted pink Pinto.

I don't know if the Pinto or the Gremlin was the ugliest car in history, but the Pinto. And he looks and the window's down. Well, the body's rusted and the hood's bent up and the trunk lid's gone and the back window's busted out.

And he looks and he laughs and smiles and he sees the keys are in it. And guess what? You think he's tempted to steal that thing? No, you know why? Because he's driving a new Lexus. Listen, beloved, you and I have something so far more exceedingly attractive and beautiful and desirable and satisfying in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And when He satisfies, you will not want the pink Pintos of sin and chasing foolish, stupid sin areas like that. I said this earlier and I'm going to close with this. Not every giant David faced, he slew.

The giants like Goliath of the Philistines are one thing, but the daughters and the handsome sons of Jerusalem are quite another. And the kid 20 years earlier who brought down a 10-foot giant with only a sling is now taken captive by a woman with only a glance. And the sweet psalmist that once thirsted for God is now drunk on forbidden wine.

Having forgotten what he once sang, I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. Let us learn some lessons from David. One of them is our duty is more than our work.

It's our salvation. Listen, if David had been on the battlefield performing his duty, he would not have had time for the rooftop. And sins not feared and avoided will always take you further than you're willing to go and they'll cost you more than you're willing to spend.

Now, let me stop preaching and let me start prying a little bit. Face these questions in your heart today. In your life right now, are you in trouble with any sin areas? Is any moral sin secretly defeating you? Are you being tempted right now in your life? Oh, maybe not to have a physical affair, but an affair of the mind.

There's an attraction with somebody. There's a connection at the office or in the workplace or in the neighborhood. And you're being tempted right now in your life.

There's a weakening. Are you in danger there? Are you heading down the highway toward a bridge and you don't know the bridge is out? And all that's ahead, if you don't stop, is a wreck. This morning, God has brought you a warning sign and a warning call.

Stop now. Nip it in the bud. Put it to death.

Hate it. Wake up. View it rightly.

Consider the latter end. Deal with it thoroughly. How do you and I answer the question, could I fall? If we answer yes, that ought to put fear in us.

And if we would say, no, I couldn't, that ought to put more fear in us. The glorious joy in this is that David repented. David got free.

He was restored. He was used of God again. God had great purposes of grace and forgiveness and restoration in his life.

And listen, for anyone who's fallen in this way, God is the God of all grace and mercy. For those who will come to Him and do what David did, turn with brokenness, turn with honesty, turn with transparency, say, Lord, against You and You only have I sinned. I've sinned.

My hands are impure. My heart is impure. Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Purify my hands and my heart. Anyone who will go to the Lord like that and seek Him, there is full forgiveness and restoration and a healing process can begin. I quoted earlier Proverbs 28, 13.

It said this, He who covers his sin will not prosper. But I love the second half of the verse. You know what it says? But the one who confesses, what does that mean? It means agree with God about it.

That's all it means. Take God's side against yourself. Lord, You're right.

I agree with You that this is wrong. He who confesses and forsakes it shall find and receive mercy. Now, Robert's going to come in a moment and we're going to have some music, a hymn, a song.

This is a time of meditation and evaluation. If this area applies in any way to your life, or perhaps you say, you know, by the grace of God, I've never fallen this way, and I don't seem to be the subject of attacks in this area. But some of you can't say that.

This is a battle every day for some people. And sometimes they become this close to blowing it. Or perhaps you say, you know, this area has affected our extended family, our children, my parents, brothers and sisters being wrecked by moral failure.

How I want to renew my prayers for God to have mercy on them and touch them. This is a time of response, to be before the Lord as Robert comes. There are going to be elders here, a prayer room through these doors to my left.

There'll be elders there, elders at the back. If you need to talk to someone and you need help, seek it out. I'll be here.

If you need someone to pray for you or for someone you know that's been affected by this, let's respond to God's presence as we wait before Him.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/mack-tomlinson/avoiding-sins-sudden-traps/>

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