

Hungering for God
Ordering Our Appetite for Justice
2 Samuel 11:1-17, 12:1-15a
Sermon Outline

Introduction: We have a strong but uneven hunger for justice from our earliest days. How do we satisfy it?

I) Don't rely too heavily on people to deliver justice

A) David is Israel's greatest king

The man after God's heart (1 Sam 13:14)

B) David commits a frightful abuse of power

- Lust
- Cold-blooded rape
- Cover up
- Murder/manslaughter
- Against a strikingly good and loyal man: Uriah the "un-David"

C) Take away

People, including ourselves, will always let us down

We need another, better, David

II) Let your moral outrage shed light on yourself

You are the man (2 Sam 12:7)

A) David's anger and ours

B) David's sin and ours

Spinning

Rape and murder

The only difference between David and us

III) Trust God to make things right

A) God will act

And God sent Nathan (2 Sam 12:1)

Drawing forth self-condemnation

Putting the finger on the crimes

Consequences

B) God will forgive

The Lord has put away your sin: You shall not die (2 Sam 12:13)

The child who is born to you shall die (2 Sam 12:14)

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Our hunger for justice is both strong and uneven: We are at times passionate advocates of it—but we often back off, especially when we are at fault. Illustrate from your own life and from the broader culture the evidence for both the strength and the unevenness of our hunger for justice.
- 2) One of the ironies in our time is that many who, in the name of justice, vigorously defend the right of the individual to make up his own moral code also vigorously seek to impose their individualistic view of morals upon those who disagree with them. Where do you see this irony at work? How do we find our way out of it?
- 3) The story of David, Bathsheba, and Uriah describes a vivid and horrific abuse of power. Itemize the abuses.
- 4) One of the take-aways of the story of David and Bathsheba is found in Psalm 146.3: “Put not your trust in princes.” If Israel’s best king—the man after God’s heart—could screw up so royally, what about everybody else? How do we agree with this take-way without becoming totally cynical about all leaders—political, religious, academic, and otherwise?
- 5) Compare David’s behavior and character in this story with the character and behavior of David’s greater Son in the gospel story. Spend some time thanking Jesus for the sort of Ruler he is.
- 6) David’s furious reaction to Nathan’s story in 2 Sam 12 reminds us that we are often particularly critical of people because we see in their behavior our own sins—sins that we feel subconsciously badly about but have difficulty admitting to. Can you illustrate? It may well be said that the only real difference between David’s sins and ours is that he had the power to act them out fully whereas we do not. Do you agree?
- 7) Though God forgave David for his crimes, he also pronounced painful consequences upon him for them. What were the consequences? Can you identify any ways that your experience is like David’s—i.e., you are forgiven but still reaping the consequences of former folly? Talk with the Lord about what you see.
- 8) 2 Samuel 12 shows God’s great love for David. God confronts him, but he does not destroy him. When God tells David that his son will die in place of David he gives us a picture of David’s other Son, Jesus, who would fully accomplish what Bathsheba’s child only pictured. Thank god for his great love.