

2 Samuel 12:1-31 | “God’s Multifaceted Grace”  
*Preached on October 2, 2022 by Pastor Matt Brown*

Please turn in your Bibles to 2 Samuel 12.

Last time that I preached, we heard all about David’s sin of adultery and murder, but now we will see what happens when God confronts him with his sin. *[pauseeee]*

How do you feel when you watch someone get confronted with their sin and receive punishment for it?

Now I’m not talking about how you responded to your brother or sister getting into trouble when you were young.

You probably delighted in that. *[pause]*

I’m also not talking about someone like a Nazi or a terrorist, who did such wickedness to a people group that you were happy that justice was done.

I’m talking about someone who you looked up to and admired.

They did something horrible, and now you have to watch them get confronted with their sin and receive the consequences for that act.

How do you respond then? *[pause]*

On one hand, you obviously know that they did wrong and deserve to be confronted and face the consequences...

...But on the other hand, watching them go through that is unpleasant to you, and you kind of want to turn away and not look. *[pause]*

Well that’s sort of what it’s like when we read the chapter before us.

David is such an admired person in the Bible, and now when we see him confronted with his sin and face the consequences, it’s kinda hard to hear.

It’s not super pleasant to read, as we see the sad results of sin, and yet it will also show us some important truths about God’s grace, too.

Let me show you from the chapter, starting in verse 1. *[read verses 1-15a]*

*The first point that I want you to see is...*

**I. God’s pursuing grace.**

Have you ever been just minding your own business, thinking all is well, and then ‘BAM’ you are confronted with something big?

That's what happens with David - he thinks all is well, but little does he know what's coming, as God is fully aware of what he did. *[pause]*

This reminds us that God always knows about our sin.

While David tried to cover his sin and felt like he got away with it, God was about to show David that his sin was never truly covered. *[pause]*

And how does God confront David? With a story.

Nathan shares this story about a rich man, who had so much, yet he steals and kills the one little lamb that a poor man loved.

David's anger rises, and declares that this rich man ought to restore the lamb fourfold and that he deserves to die because he had no pity on the poor man. *[pauseeee]*

Isn't it interesting how David was so furious over the sin of someone stealing and killing a lamb, all the while he stole someone's wife and killed her husband.

But isn't that the natural tendency of us as sinners?

We are irate over the sin of other people, but we are quiet over our sin, which is often worse.

We are many times far-sighted, seeing other people's sin in 20/20 vision, but blind to the sin nearest to us: our own. *[pauseeee]*

It's at the moment when David declares the verdict that Nathan says, "You are the man!" *[pause]*

By using this story, God didn't allow David to put up his defenses, but to lower them first.

David wasn't prepared to be confronted with his sin, but was prepared to judge someone else's. *[pause]*

By doing this, it put David in the position where he couldn't deny the wickedness of his sin, and what his sin deserved.

David essentially condemned himself. *[pause]*

By proclaiming that the rich man deserved death, David was accurately stating the verdict on his own sin, for God's Law said that both adulterers and murders were to be put to death.<sup>1</sup> *[pauseeee]*

Even though God had given David so much over the years - and would have given more, if needed - David still did this.

And God says, "Why?!" *[pause]*

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<sup>1</sup> See Leviticus 20:10, 24:17.

After being given so much, how could he just despise God like that?

You see, the ugliness of our sin is seen for what it is when it's placed next to the beauty of God's grace. *[pause]*

In David's case, he wasn't gladly content in all that he had received, but wanted more.

He had neglected the grace of God in selfish pursuit of more. *[pauseeee]*

Isn't your sin often because you aren't content with what God has given you, so you want *more*?

God has given you a beautiful wife, but you want more, and you look at pornography.

God has given you possessions, but you want more, so you covet what someone else has.

God has given you a certain personality and gifts, but you want more, so you live in ungratefulness for what God has given you. *[pause]*

Most often our problem is that, like David, we aren't focused on and content with the gracious gifts that God has given us, but we focus on what we don't have.

We are like a child who is graciously given two cupcakes, and who says, "Where's the third one?"

But just consider all that God has given you!

Your lack of satisfaction doesn't make sense in light of his grace! *[pauseeee]*

Not only did David neglect God's grace in his life, but he also despised the word of the Lord by breaking His commandments.

In essence, David's actions displayed an attitude of, "I can take and do what I want, I don't care what God says."

He put himself above God by disregarding God's commands, which is the same thing as disregarding God. *[pauseeeee]*

The Lord rebuked David for his sin here in 2 Samuel 12, there's no getting around that.

But our world thinks, "How is it loving to rebuke someone? Isn't that mean?"

Yet what do you notice in this passage?

Being rebuked for our sin is good because it can lead to repentance and renewal. *[pause]*

To see what I mean, just think of what it would indicate for God to *not* confront David with his sin.

First, David wouldn't have seen his sin for what it was and repented and received forgiveness.

So David would have remained unforgiven, is that really a good thing? *[pause]*

Also, in Psalm 32, David talks about how the guilt of his sin caused him to groan, his bones to waste away, and his strength to be dried up.<sup>2</sup>

So by confronting David with his sin, God was showing love in that he didn't want David to continue in anguish, but to experience the relief of forgiveness! *[pause]*

Secondly, we saw what happens when God abandons someone in their sin when we read about Saul.

When God's Spirit left him, he spiraled downward and got worse and worse until he eventually met his sad demise. *[pause]*

In the Bible, when God leaves you in your sin, it's not a good thing at all.

Think of Romans 1, where we hear that because of people's sin, God "gave them up" to their sins, which led to worse and worse sin and depravity.<sup>3</sup> *[pause]*

All of this is to say: when God confronts you with your sin it's actually *pursuing grace*.

It's not just to make you miserable and that's it, but rather, it's only when we are confronted with our sinfulness that we can turn to Him in repentance and receive forgiveness! *[pauseeee]*

The Lord is the great Initiator, who pursues us, using His Word, to confront us with our sin, so that we can find relief in His remedy!

So everytime the Word of God is preached or read, it's God's pursuing you in grace, so that you would draw nearer to Him. *[pauseeee]*

Praise God that He has pursued us, even when we sinned against Him!

He didn't let us wander in darkness, but through Jesus, he has shown us our sinfulness, and has shown us the remedy in Christ.

Even after salvation, he pursues us, and wants us to grow, by confronting us regularly by his Word, which shows us our sin.

He wants us to be refined, purified, and brought forth as gold.

He wants us to experience a renewed fellowship with Him, so don't despise the Lord's pursuing grace, which confronts you with your sin. *[pauseeee]*

So often when we are convicted of our sin, we become angry, defensive, and resistant, but let conviction do its work and lead you to repentance and renewed joy in the Lord. *[pause]*

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<sup>2</sup> See Psalm 32:3-4.

<sup>3</sup> See Romans 1:18-32.

When God's convicting arrows fly, it's not time to put up a wall and shoot some back.

But it's time to see that his arrows aren't weapons that kill, but scalpels, there to perform surgery that will eventually heal and make you healthier. *[pauseeee]*

Some of the greatest times of growth in your life will be when you are so convicted of your sin that you are led back into the arms of the Father.

And that can only come when God pursues us in grace with His convicting Word. *[pauseeeee]*

*In this passage, we also see...*

## **II. God's forgiving grace.**

After being shown his sin, David simply says, "I have sinned against the Lord."

He didn't give any excuses or try to defend himself, but admits his sin. *[pause]*

When someone is truly repentant of their sin, they stand before God with no excuses, no defense, but only a confession of guilt. *[pause]*

And look at how God responds!

Nathan says, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."

**WHAT?! This is amazing grace!**

By all accounts, David deserved to die, and if he died, God would have been 100% just!

Yet God declares that his sin is put away and he won't face the penalty for his sin. *[pauseeeee]*

If you are a man, I want you to imagine a man.

If you are a woman, imagine a woman.

Now think of that person committing adultery, like David.

**Think about them killing someone in a cold and calculated way.**

Isn't that horrible! They did some evil stuff, and had no pity on their victims.

According to God's law, they deserve to die.

And you might be sitting there thinking, "How could he or she? I mean that's so horrific! They slept with someone else's spouse and even heartlessly killed someone!"

You might even be thinking, "They actually do deserve to die."

Well let me tell you this morning, YOU ARE THAT MAN! YOU ARE THAT WOMAN!

*[pause]*

Jesus says that everyone who is angry with someone else is liable to judgment, just as a murderer is.<sup>4</sup>

He says that everyone who “looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”<sup>5</sup>

So if you have ever been angry with someone, called them names, or lusted, you are liable to God’s judgment just like a murderer or adulterer. *[pause]*

You see, we are guilty before God just like David.

Nathan could easily say to us, “You are the man,” or “You are the woman,” and it would be true. *[pause]*

Romans explains that the wages of sin is death, and that we all have sinned.<sup>6</sup>

And like that story told to David, so God’s Word strips us bare and exposes our sin for what it is.

It uncovers our sin in all of its wickedness, so that we stand condemned and without excuse, and who can put up a defense against God Almighty’s verdict? *[pauseeee]*

Our sin deserves death.

We are that man or woman, but the amazing part is that God is forgiving.

I have sinned against the Creator and Judge of the world, yet He provides a way for me to not face the penalty?!

Oh, what a marvel it is that the judgment that I deserved is placed on the One who I sinned against, and I can walk free.

For Christ came to earth, died for our sins, paying the penalty of death that we deserved.

So now when anyone trusts in what Christ did for them, God declares, “I have put away your sin; you shall not die”! *[pause]*

David’s forgiveness is a picture of what happens when we trust in Christ!

So if you have never trusted in Christ’s work on your behalf, paying the penalty for your sin, then confess your sin and trust in Him, and your sins will be forgiven - you shall not die, but have eternal life!

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<sup>4</sup> See Matthew 5:21-22.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 5:28.

<sup>6</sup> See Romans 3:23, 6:23.

And if you trust in Him, then always remember that you are forgiven.

Christ has paid for your sins, God has put away your sin, you shall not die. *[pauseeee]*

You see, God not only pursues and confronts us in grace, but He also forgives us in grace.

Praise Him that He is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, *forgiving* iniquity and transgression and sin.”<sup>7</sup>  
*[pauseeeee]*

So God forgives David, but what happens next?

Let’s keep READING, beginning in the second half of verse 15. *[READ VERSES 15a-23]*

Even though God forgives us, this doesn’t mean that we won’t ever face any earthly consequences for our sin.

David still received some consequences for his actions, as his son would die. *[pause]*

Some people might think, “Well if I’m forgiven, then I shouldn’t have to face *any* consequences, right?”

No, that’s not how it works.

Certainly the eternal consequence is taken away, so that you have eternal life, instead of death.

Certainly your relationship with God is restored, so that you no longer stand condemned.

But we do still face some temporary, earthly ramifications of our sin.

As Alec Motyer [MAH-TEER] says, “The stone can be fetched back, but the ripples are spreading.”<sup>8</sup> *[pause]*

David’s son would die, there would be conflict in his household, and his wives would be laid with so that everyone would see.

Sin still brings with it earthly consequences. *[pause]*

Just think of this practically and it will make more sense...

If you steal and you are caught, you still go to jail, even if you are forgiven by God.

If you are a horrible parent to your kids, your kids will be affected by this, even if you are truly forgiven by God for it.

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<sup>7</sup> Exodus 34:6b-7a (Italics is mine).

<sup>8</sup> Quoted at: <https://www.truthforlife.org/resources/sermon/restoration-king-david/>.

If you treat others horribly, even though you are forgiven, this will still mess up your relationships with others. *[pause]*

You see, God wants to free us from the guilt of sin *and* the presence of sin.

So sometimes He uses the earthly consequences of our sin as chastisement to grow, purify, and aid us on in righteousness. *[pauseeee]*

Sometimes we face some of sin's earthly consequences, but David shows us the way to handle them...

The child becomes sick, and David seeks God to intervene on the child's behalf by fasting and laying on the ground.

But then once the child dies, he hears his servants whispering, so he asks them if the child died, and then changes his attitude to acceptance, getting back to eating, and worshiping. *[pauseeee]*

David's actions show us first that there's nothing wrong with humbly and respectfully asking God to take away the consequences for our sin.

David knew he deserved these consequences, yet he still sought God, for He knew God was gracious, and didn't know if God would relent and let his child live. *[pause]*

Like David, knowing that our God is gracious, we can always wonder, "Maybe He will show grace now?"

But here's the thing.

Consider how David responded when his intercession didn't work - he humbly accepted it and worshiped. *[pauseeee]*

There are myriads of people who have grown up going to church, but because they don't get what they want from God, they never return.

Yet here is David, pleading with God, yet not getting what he asked for, and the first place he goes is to worship the God who took his son. *[pause]*

How could he do this?

David knew that he *deserved* what he received, and actually that he deserved worse and didn't get it. *[pause]*

You see, if you always think that you deserve more, then you will become bitter at God when you don't get it.

But when you know that you don't deserve anything, then not getting something isn't offensive, but makes you thankful for what you do have. *[pauseeee]*



David also knew that God was always right, just, and good.

When you truly believe that God does what is best, then you can worship even after getting a different answer than you wanted to your prayer. *[pauseeee]*

And like David's servants thought it was odd at how David handled things, so the way you respond to a different answer to your prayer than you wanted will cause others to think it's odd.

They will not understand how your mind works, and they will think, "How can you be content and still worship God when you didn't get the answer that you wanted?!"

But that's the result of faith in a great God: it dispels bitterness, cultivates contentment, and leads to worship. *[pauseeeee]*

Truly, God is a forgiving God, and so His grace is a forgiving grace.

He forgives even the most wicked sinner when they turn in repentance and faith in Christ. *[pauseeee]*

*As we continue to hold up this chapter and see the multifaceted diamond of God's grace, we also see...*

### **III. God's faithful grace.**

READ WITH ME VERSES 24-31. *[read verses 24-31]*

**We love it when someone shows us grace.**

But there's a huge difference between someone showing us grace for one minute in our lives, and someone who shows continual, faithful grace to us throughout our lifetime. *[pause]*

Thankfully, God's grace isn't a one-time deal, but He shows *faithful grace* towards us.

He doesn't just say, "OK, I showed you grace, now you're on your own for the rest of your life."

But rather, He faithfully shows us unmerited kindness. *[pause]*

Think of our story...

**God pursued David and forgave him in grace.**

That's good in itself, isn't it?

And God could have easily said, "Look David, I pursued you and forgave you, I mean that's a lot right there, for I didn't kill you, isn't that enough?"

But did you notice anything as I read verses 24-31?

Even after being pursued and forgiven, David is being blessed by God.

He has another son with Bathsheba and this time the child lives and the Lord loves him.

And then Israel is victorious over the Ammonites and David gets to put the final nail in the coffin, wear the heavy crown, and subdue the enemy. *[pause]*

This is in great contrast to God's dealings with Saul.

For Saul, when he sinned, he didn't repent and therefore didn't receive forgiveness, and he wasn't blessed, but his dynasty was torn from him.

But for David, he's forgiven and his line gets to continue!

David may have been reaping earthly consequences for his sin, but God's love was still with him! *[pause]*

What a glorious truth that we can hold dear...

The earthly consequences that come from our sin do not mean that God doesn't love us!

Hebrews actually says that discipline is evidence that He loves us.<sup>9</sup> *[pause]*

Never think that those earthly consequences mean that God doesn't love you, instead, His love is faithful, you can count on that.

If God puts away your sin, it is unquestionably put away! *[pauseeee]*

After all that David did, being forgiven was a big act of grace on God's part.

But His grace didn't stop there, for His grace is not only forgiving, but faithful, too. *[pause]*

Since the Lord chose and promised David's line to continue, then it would continue, even amid David's great sin.

God's grace is truly greater than our sin!<sup>10</sup> *[pauseeee]*

If you have repented of your sins and trusted in Christ, then you are forgiven, and nothing will change that.

Nothing will separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.<sup>11</sup>

Even amid your sin and messiness, God's grace will be faithful to do what He promised.

Like David, your sin won't take away your forgiven standing, but God will show you continual love.

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<sup>9</sup> See Hebrews 12:7-11.

<sup>10</sup> A reference to the hymn, "Grace Greater than Our Sin," by Julia H. Johnston.

<sup>11</sup> See Romans 8:38-39.

And even those earthly consequences of sin that you face aren't signs of hatred. *[pauseeee]*

Consider this, too.

David sinned greatly and did it with Bathsheba.

Yet here is God giving David a son with Bathsheba and not only that, but God says that he loves him and gives him a name that means "loved by God."<sup>12</sup> *[pause]*

So get this: the child who would eventually become king comes from the woman who David committed adultery with.

How?!

Because God loves to bring beauty out of ashes.

He loves to take our sin and messiness and bring forth something beautiful! *[pause]*

God wasn't condoning what David did with Bathsheba when he committed adultery, for God just showed how wrong it was.

Rather, God was showing that David was truly forgiven...

...And he was also demonstrating that even in the ugly, messy, ruination of sin - when we repent, He can redeem it and use it for His glory.

He can make something beautiful out of the wreckage of our own doing. *[pause]*

And get this: not only did the next king, Solomon, come out of David and Bathsheba, but guess who else eventually came out of that line? Jesus Christ.<sup>13</sup> *[pause]*

God can use you even amidst your sin and failures.

God can do anything He wants with whatever situation is in front of Him.

His grace is faithful grace - it won't be hindered by anything.

If He has promised something, it will come.

If He has forgiven, you are forgiven.

Praise God that His grace is not only pursuing grace, and forgiving grace, but faithful grace. *[pauseeeee]*

*2 Samuel 12 is a sad scene of the results of sin, but it's also a scene of great grace, for it shows us that...*

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<sup>12</sup> Jedidiah means "loved by God."

<sup>13</sup> See Matthew 1:1-16, especially verse 6.

**God gives us immeasurably more good than we deserve and incredibly less consequences than we deserve!**

This chapter is a vivid picture of our sinfulness, but a vivid picture of God's grace.

David's sin was shown for what it was - sin against a holy God, deserving of death.

Yet God in His grace pursues him and forgives him, so that he doesn't have to face the penalty that he deserved. *[pauseee]*

I want you to do something unpleasant this morning.

I know it's not going to be fun, but it's important.

I want you to think about the worst sin that you have ever committed.

Now think about this - if God can forgive David of adultery and murder, then there is no sin that God cannot forgive in your life. *[pause]*

Christ's death on the Cross is able to cover any sin that you have ever committed because He paid for that sin when He died on the Cross.

God credited that sin of yours to Jesus and Jesus paid the penalty for you, and your account was credited with Christ's righteousness.

But to receive this forgiveness, you have to confess your sin, like David, and place your faith in Christ as the only way to be forgiven, and you will be forgiven, and no longer be in guilt anymore.

So today, trust in Christ taking your place and feel the amazing relief of forgiveness!

And if you have trusted in Christ's work, then never forget this.

When the guilt of past sins creeps in, remember what Jesus did for you, and rest in the forgiveness you have, for your sins have been put away by Christ's atoning work. *[pause]*

We are truly given more good than we deserve, and we face way less than we deserve - praise God.