

SEX INDUSTRY AND THE CHURCH, 2SAM.12:1-7

◆**Intro:** We were vacationing in South Dakota, staying in a nice hotel with one of those cool swimming pools that is also more like a playground. I had been running around with our four boys who were, I'd say, all below the age of 12 at that time, when I ventured into the mens room. The solitary commode was an overflowing pool of refuse clear up to it's brim and seeping onto the floor. I thought to myself, "pity the fellow who has to clean this bathroom!" and beat a hasty retreat lest someone think I was the culprit! You may be thinking about now that this wasn't the best kind of illustration to start off a message in church. There is a certain distaste involved. And I agree. But you will see why. Today we are recognizing what is called in our denomination of Christian churches Safe Church Sunday. It is meant to open up our eyes to sin among us in the form of abuse of persons (be that physical, sexual, emotional or spiritual), and to open up our arms to people being hurt by it. It is not a happy story. But just as a restroom facility needs to be maintained in order to be useful for public health, so too our culture needs addressing for the health of all of us. To set the stage, we've invited Arvid Olson of the Greater Lafayette Harbor House Initiative to present some of the current facts on the reality of human trafficking in our nation and our local area.

◆Arvid's presentation....

◆This isn't exactly a pretty topic. In fact it is a very ugly one. I'm sorry if it makes you uncomfortable. But God has not failed to address these things as we will see in our text this morning. (read 2 Samuel 11.)

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- ◆ **1.** One thing you see in this story is a lot of use, and ab-use of people followed by cover up and secrecy. Most often we prefer to hide ugliness and ignore it but this is a mistake.

God's people are commissioned to face the dirtiness of the world in themselves and others. In what is clearly a typical abusive situation, David first exercises his power over a weaker individual, and then spends a lot of time covering his tracks. He didn't `fess up until backed into a corner by the Feds (in his case, Nathan the prophet of God in chapter 12). Abuse can be seen as first a crime of power. The sexual encounter has nothing to do with love. It is a strong person making a subjected person do what he or she wants. But this is not OK with God and in the next chapter He calls David in to face the music.

- ◆ A. Truth be told, I think we do the same thing David did with David's *story*! Cover it up! We tend to sanitize the story of David and Bathsheba, as though they were a couple in love, who knew at first sight they were meant to be together, and the baby was their love child. David took one look and "fell for her". Or maybe she was flaunting what she had. Or we imagine she came rushing willingly to the arms of her hero the king, great King David, the war hero, the biblical poet! Perhaps they held hands, finger tip to finger tip as they parted from their steamy rendezvous. It's hogwash of course. The text does not allow it.

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- ◆ First, David was supposed to be off at war (v1). He was shirking his duty and had idle time on his hands. From the high point of the palace roof he can see into the yards and courtyards, or onto the roofs of his people and so he comes across Bathsheba taking a bath. Now since you don't take a bath with your clothes on, David got an eye full. But he shouldn't have! The text says she was a knock out babe (v2). But while it's not a sin to be beautiful, it is a sin to use someone for their beauty. Nothing we can come up with here makes it romantic or OK. David was king. Kings take what they want. Verse four reads deceptively in english ("David sent messengers to get her."). We might conjure up visions of tuxedo clad young men in white gloves beaconing Bathsheba into a carriage to dine with the King. But the text say frankly "he sent messengers and took her." The term means to "acquire", to "lay hold of", to "seize", to "carry off", and also to "marry." Well, she was already married, and so was David! Whenever she is mentioned in our text it is as "the wife of Uriah the Hittite." David was using his position to abuse another person. This was flat out sexual assault. King David chose evil that day. But that's not all.
- ◆ B. Then comes the murder of the husband. Then the cover up made to look like an accident. The biblical text nowhere indicates that Bathsheba was in love with David (or vs), or even wanted to be his, or was glad to be his eventual wife

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living in the palace. Even if she did, it wouldn't have made it the right thing to do. She was not his to take but she was taken and used by force. Her life as she knew was over in one night and none of it was her doing. David sinned against her, against her husband Uriah, against his soldiers made to carry out Uriah's killing, against his own wives and his sons (chapter 12 will predict the dire consequences in the Davidic family as a result of David's sin. That story is recorded later in 2Samuel 16), against God in whose image all these folks are made. Nobody sins in isolation. Your private sin will have an affect on the culture around you so quit believing the lie that it's nobody's business what goes on behind closed doors, or between you and a consenting adult for that matter. Morality matters just as much in private as in public.

- ◆ C. It's an ugly story. We don't want to tell it. But you will notice God's word tells it. *And God's word addresses the evil among us.* And God didn't let it go. He sent his prophet to rebuke the unjust assault of power. It's ironic that David should write it, but if you read Psalm 10, it's a pretty accurate description of a human trafficker!

◆ "In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak, who are caught in the schemes he devises. He boasts of the cravings of his heart; he blesses the greedy and reviles the LORD. ...His ways are always prosperous; he is haughty and your laws are far from him; he sneers at all his enemies. ...His mouth is full of curses and lies and

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threats; trouble and evil are under his tongue. He lies in wait near the villages; from ambush he murders the innocent, watching in secret for his victims. He lies in wait like a lion in cover; he lies in wait to catch the helpless; he catches the helpless and drags them off in his net. His victims are crushed, they collapse; they fall under his strength.”

Psalms 10:2-10, NIV.

- ◆ As image bearers of God we are called to fight darkness, including the evil of the sex industry! Think about it. There should BE NO sex industry whatsoever! And yet there is! God's word teaches one place and one place only for sexual intimacy; between a married man and woman; a husband and wife. This means that prostitution, though it is called the most ancient of occupations is not therefore acceptable. It is abuse of a human. That means that pictures (or moving pictures) of other people engaged in intimate acts - it is off limits for you and I according to God. The filming of a porn scene is not glamor, it is assault. The girl is someone's daughter. And whether the people involved mind or not, it's a distortion of the value of another person who is also God's image bearer. That means that parents using their own children is an affront against God's image. That means that looking the other way from someone enslaved is also not an option for people who believe that God is the rightful ruler of this world! What are we as God-followers doing to stop the abuse of human beings by the sex industry? Turn it

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around: What are we doing that is supporting the sex industry?

- ◆ **Conclusion:** Oddly enough, one of the largest propagators of this industry, Hugh Hefner, died this week! (9/27/17) His son called him a cultural pioneer. Others, a revolutionary. I would agree, but sadly he was not pioneering for the better of the culture. Research shows that pornography intensifies brutality and the degradation of women. It makes men romantically stunted and socially awkward. It's an excellent way to destroy a committed relationship because it is an addiction to novelty, and more, and other. In other words we are trading love and relationship for lust. You cannot love and lust at the same time. A world full of lust loses on the love end.
- ◆ One final thought. God called David to task for what he did, and thankfully David confessed and was forgiven. But if you read his history, his family was plagued by sexual misconduct and abuse as a consequence. Nevertheless he stands as an example of hope found the hard way. And if you are mis-using another person sexually, there is a remedy in forgiveness through Jesus Christ. And if you are being mis-used by someone in your family (most often the case), or elsewhere, know this: God is not OK with that. He wants you free, and valued. If you know someone caught in a life that is using them up, and abusing their image of

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God, tell someone. Come talk to me, or another leader.

Ask God what he might want *you* to do to seek their safety.

◆“But you, O God, do see trouble and grief; you consider it to take it in hand. The victim commits himself to you; you are the helper of the fatherless. Break the arm of the wicked and evil man; call him to account for his wickedness that would not be found out. The LORD is King for ever and ever; the nations will perish from his land. You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the oppressed, in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more.” Psalms 10:14-18, NIV.

- ◆ Jesus power over death itself is strong enough to stop our sin and free our hurting hearts, He can overcome the deepest pain. His love is that big.