

Recently, I've been on a true crime kick. I've been watching various shows that detail various crimes. One of those shows is entitled, Justice Served: Murderous Affairs. The title pretty much sums up the content of the show. It tells the stories of affairs that resulted in someone's murder. What I have found most disturbing are the number of stories that involve "Christians" or devoutly religious individuals.

Last week, as we were studying James 4:1-10 and what it teaches regarding sinful desires and passions, we came across James telling his readers that their lust was leading to murder. Now, many people have dismissed the idea that James could've been talking about actual murder. But given what I've seen, I don't think we should be so quick to make James words figurative instead of literal.

As a matter of fact, there is an example of exactly that kind of behavior found in the Old Testament. The perpetrator was not an unbelieving pagan but an anointed king. We read of his murderous affair in . . .

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11-12:15; Ps. 51

- I. Sinful Pleasures: An OT Example (David)
 - A. Consumed by Sinful Desires (2 Sam. 11:2-4; Jas. 4:2a)
 1. Sinful desires ensnare David
 - a) James 1:14-15
 - (1) Desire (2)
 - (2) Deception (3)
 - (3) Disobedience (4)
 - (4) Death
 - B. Caught in Sinful Activity (2 Sam. 11:5)
 1. Sin always comes to light
 - a) Luke 12:2-3
 - (1) Bathsheba is pregnant and her husband is off at war
 - C. Cover-up Attempted (2 Sam. 11:6-13)
 1. Sin begets sin
 - a) David seeks to cover-up his sin through deceit
 2. We try to cover-up our sin with lies and deceit
 - D. Committing Murder (2 Sam. 11:14-27; Jas. 4:2b)
 1. Sin progresses in nature
 - a) David goes from adulterer, to deceiver, to murderer
 2. If sin is not confessed and repented of, it leads to greater sins
 - E. Confronted by God's Servant (2 Sam. 12:1-12; Jas. 4:4)
 1. Servants of God have the responsibility of confronting sinful behavior
 - a) James
 - b) Nathan
 - c) Us
 - F. Confession of Sin (2 Sam. 12:13)
 1. Sin, once confronted, should lead to confession
 - a) David recognizes and confesses his sin

2. How do you respond to having your sin confronted?
 - a) Defensive denial - How could you think I could do such a thing?
 - b) Aggressive attack - Who are you to judge me?
 - c) Making excuses - I didn't know? Somebody made me do it.
- G. Contrition and Repentance (Ps. 51; Jas. 4:7-10)
 1. Resign to God
 - a) Jas. 4:7a
 - b) Ps. 51:1, 3-4
 2. Resist the Devil
 - a) Jas. 4:7b
 - b) Ps. 51:6, 13
 3. Return to God
 - a) Jas. 4:8a
 - b) Ps. 51:11-12
 4. Remove the Filth
 - a) Jas. 4:8b
 - b) Ps. 51:2, 7, 10
 5. Reorient Perspective
 - a) Jas. 4:9
 - b) Ps. 51:8, 12
 6. Recall your Condition
 - a) Jas. 4:10
 - b) Ps. 51:5, 9, 17
 7. Receive Grace
 - a) Jas. 4:6b
 - b) Ps. 51:14-15, 18-19

Today's message should serve multiple purposes.

First, it should show us that no one is exempt from the powerful temptations that Satan brings against us. David was God's chosen king. He was a "man after God's own heart." He was a mighty warrior who defeated many enemies. Yet, he fell prey to Satan's schemes. Therefore, we must always remain vigilant and diligent.

Second, it should serve as an example of how we should respond when we find ourselves guilty of following our sinful passions for sinful pleasures. David's Psalm 51 shows us that hundreds of years before James outlined what sincere repentance looks like it was being practiced by those who had a heart for God.

Finally, it should reveal the truth of what James wrote. God gives a grace that is greater than our sin when we are contrite and repentant. David suffered for his sin but the Lord removed the penalty of death from David. He went on to bless not only David's kingdom but also Bathsheba's second child, Solomon.

So, I encourage you to heed all three lessons this morning. Dedicate yourself to being on guard against sinful passions for sinful pleasures. Commit yourself to following David's example of contrition and repentance when you find yourself guilty of sin. And celebrate the

fact that God's grace is greater than your sinfulness. He is faithful to forgive those who truly confess and turn from their sinful ways.