



Parkway Fellowship

2 Samuel: From the Height of Power, to the Depths of Dysfunction • David's Return •

2 Samuel 19:1-8; 2 Samuel 20:1-26 • 04/07/2019

Main Point

God works continually to draw us closer to Him, even when we experience moments or seasons of rebellion.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What are some common causes of conflict in the home, the church, and the workplace?

Why is it challenging to confront people we love? What risks do we take in doing so?

Conflict easily can develop in any relationship. Favoritism, real or imagined, can create jealousy within a family. The success of one employee can make co-workers jealous. Even in our churches, some members can be jealous of multi-talented and gifted individuals. Under such circumstances, conflict and tension grow quickly. But as we'll see in this week's study, part of our responsibility to our family, friends, and the body of Christ is to pursue peace in our relationships and to help facilitate peace in the relationships of others.

Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 19:1-8.

Why did Joab intervene? What charges did he make against David (v. 6)?

How did David respond to Joab's counsel? What does this reveal about their relationship?

How would you have responded if you were David?

Have you ever had a friend, like Joab, lovingly confront you during a time of grief? How did you respond to your friend? Was it helpful or hurtful for you to hear his or her advice?

David's grief certainly did not end when he returned to his responsibilities. He continued to mourn Absalom's death. No doubt his grief was more intense some days than others. Joab could not remove David's grief, but he could remind him that life had to go on. In continuing his relationships with and service to others, David could begin to find comfort, hope, and a new start.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 20:1-7.

According to 2 Samuel 20:1-2, how was hostility against David inflamed? Why were the men of Israel jealous of the men of Judah? (See also 19:40-43.)

Sheba is an example of someone encouraging conflict rather than peace. What are some of the characteristics that an instigator of conflict exhibits? What does David's response teach us about dealing with people like that?

David's victory over Absalom's forces did not bring an end to hostilities. Those who supported Absalom had lost their champion, but not necessarily their desire to see David overthrown. Sheba, a "troublemaker" (20:1, NIV) from the tribe of Benjamin, took advantage of the jealousy between Israel and Judah and led the representatives of the northern tribes to turn away from David.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 20:8-13.

Joab did many evil and manipulative things. Why do you think God continued to use him in David's life? How do you react when you see bad people prosper, especially when it seems like God is blessing and using them?

Read 1 Kings 2:5-6, 31-35. What happened to Joab? Why might David have waited so long to punish Joab for all his injustices?

Joab's murderous ways caused all, including David, to fear him. Joab remained loyal to David, but his power increased so that even David had limited control over him. At the end of David's life, he directed Solomon to punish Joab for his many murders. Joab's sins eventually caught up with him, and he reaped what he had sown.

| Have a volunteer read 2 Samuel 20:14-26.

What advice did the wise woman give Joab? What were the benefits when Joab heeded her counsel?

Why do you think the woman's advice was considered "wise"? What can we learn from her?

There are times when God calls us to intervene in problematic situations and gives us the wisdom to do so. In this case, the woman's intervention kept peace, saved lives, and secured God's throne. With the latest threat neutralized, David reorganized his court. Joab once again became David's chief general, and others received great responsibilities (20:23-26).

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What are the dangers of unresolved conflict in our families? What about in our church? How might unresolved conflict keep us from fulfilling our calling?

From the two stories in 2 Samuel 20, what can we conclude are keys to promoting harmonious relationships? How do we need to put these to practice in our relationships currently?

Pray

Close in prayer, thanking God for the example His Son gives us for pursuing peace in our relationship with God and in our relationships with others. Pray for the boldness to intervene in the lives of our loved ones, and to be an instrument of harmony for the Kingdom.

Commentary

| 2 Samuel 19:1-8

19:1 Joab returned to Mahanaim from the battle to hear about David's mourning over Absalom.

19:2 Victory was turned to mourning because victory had come through Absalom's death.

19:3 In this bittersweet moment, David's victorious troops returned to the city (lit "stole away"), acting as if they had lost the battle.

19:5-7 Joab recognized the serious public relations problem the king would face if he persisted in mourning the traitorous Absalom. David's soldiers, who had rescued David and all his family, would feel shame instead of a sense of victory because of the king's mourning. Joab told David to go out and encourage his soldiers, lest they abandon him. Joab's words in these verses are strong and blunt, but they may have saved David's kingship.

| 2 samuel 20:1-26

20:1 Sheba son of Bichri is not mentioned outside this account, but he was probably a leader among the Benjaminite delegation that escorted David back to Jerusalem. He blew the ram's horn and called the people of Israel to break off from David (cp. 18:16), citing the more distant relationship.

20:2 In the heat of the moment, following Sheba seemed to many people the right thing to do, so the men of Israel deserted David. Meanwhile, the men of Judah escorted David all the way to Jerusalem to guarantee his safety.

20:3 David compassionately provided for the welfare of the 10 concubines with whom Absalom had had sex during his coup attempt (16:22). However, he was not intimate with them again, perhaps because of Torah considerations (Lv 18:15) but more likely to ensure no confusion arose within the royal line.

20:4-5 Amasa, the new head of David's army (19:13), was commanded to gather the men of Judah to crush Sheba's revolt. Time was of the essence, a fact that Amasa apparently did not grasp.

20:6 Abishai was David's next choice to lead the attack against Sheba.

20:8 Gibeon, about four miles northwest of Jerusalem, had been the site of Joab's encounter with Abner's forces (2:12-16). The site provided a panoramic view of the central Benjamin plateau and was large enough to gather a large fighting force. Amasa's late arrival may have received a mixed response from the army; after all, he had led Absalom's forces against David (17:25). Joab was present, though he was not in charge. His sword fell out of its sheath, probably a deceptive move by Joab so Amasa would not view him as drawing his weapon.

20:9 Joab grabbed Amasa by the beard—reached out and touched his face as he might do before greeting him with a kiss.

20:10 The sword in Joab's hand did not seem a threat to Amasa because it appeared that Joab was merely picking it up after dropping it (v. 8).

20:11 One of Joab's young men rallied everyone to follow Joab as their self-proclaimed, reappointed leader. Abishai apparently acquiesced to his brother's leadership.

20:14 Sheba retreated to the far north; Abel of Beth-maacah lay about 30 miles north of the Sea of Galilee.

20:15 Besieging a city generally involved surrounding it, cutting off its food and water supply, building an assault ramp to get over the wall, and constructing battering rams to break down the city's wall.

20:16 This woman is described as wise in retrospect because of what she did in the narrative.

20:17 Joab no doubt approached the woman cautiously (Jdg 9:50-55).

20:18-19 The city of Abel, a city of long standing within the nation, had a reputation as a place where wisdom often settled disputes.

20:21 Joab responded that his fight was not with the city's inhabitants, only with Sheba, whom they were harboring.

20:22 Once Sheba was dead, the revolt was ended.

20:23 Joab had become commander of the whole army of Israel again, and David may have felt that he should leave well enough alone. After all, Joab had been a factor in reuniting Israel and restoring David's kingdom. Joab's sin, however, was not forgotten, and David later instructed his son Solomon to deal with it when he became king (1Ki 2:5-6).

20:24 Forced labor appears here for the first time; during Solomon's days, only non-Israelites made up this group (1Ki 9:20). Perhaps this was added late in David's reign.

20:25 Jehoshaphat was now assisted by Sheva, who had apparently replaced Seraiah (8:17) as court secretary. Zadok's influence would continue into Solomon's reign (1Ki 2:35), though Abiathar would side against Solomon during the transition of power from David to Solomon and suffer banishment from the priesthood (1Ki 1:7; 2:26-27).

20:26 Ira the Jairite, otherwise unknown, was David's priest, perhaps assisting him in matters of private worship, but certainly not functioning in place of Torah-prescribed patterns (unlike Micah in Jdg 17).

READING ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK:

2 Samuel 23:1-23