

The demise of self-ambition

Have you ever trusted someone, or in something that you should not have trusted? (I listened to an interview this week about a man that had taken a **high-profile job** and was **excited about his life taking off**, as he trusted a **tv executive to have his back**. He was **betrayed and fired**.)

I've experienced it in corporate America, and I have experienced it in ministry. (I also have experienced it in family.)

It is so important that we remain helpless and surrendered to Christ.

We have the Word of God to guide us, give us wisdom, to know God's will. (**Also, God Himself helps us, if he is where our dependence lies.**)

John 14:25–26 (ESV)

²⁵“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.

²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

(Godly counsel, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit.) This is the Christians secret to survival. **But if we are not connected to the Vine and not dependent...**

Today, we will introduce the story of a sad betrayal of King David by his very own son Absalom.

We know that God told David that he would reap some difficult things because of his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. (**It seems that David was on an auto-pilot mode and perhaps this is the thing that would wake him up to what he was meant to do!**)

Some of the most difficult things for a Christian are “wake up calls’ to our walk with Christ.

1. Absalom – (the wannabe king)

2 Samuel 14:25 (ESV)

²⁵Now in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

a.) How many politicians, pastors, business leaders are empty suits, but have glitz that enamors people to them?

2 Samuel 15:1–6 (ESV)

¹After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

²And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel,"

³Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you."

⁴Then Absalom would say, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice."

⁵And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.

⁶Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

- Rode around on a chariot/50 man leading it/stood as a judge to the people circumventing David's authority.
- Ambition can come from calls that God gives us as we walk with Him, or they can come from pride. (Pride decisions can destroy you, your family, churches and valuable friendships.)
- b.) A Christian can operate walking in the world/flesh, or we can walk led by the Spirit.
- c.) This gives a **choice of following God's will** or walking with the **will of pride**. (One or the other **will affect everything that you are a part of negatively or positively**.)
- Certainly, Absalom probably been just fine working with Dad, but he wanted what Dad had, and he wanted it now. (With no loyalty whatsoever- which I think that godly people are called to be loyal people.)
- d.) Listen- Absalom did something here that we must realize- He went for what he wanted rather than what God had for him!

Proverbs 16:18 (ESV)

¹⁸Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

- Why not have God order your steps and walk with God's wisdom and favor?

Psalms 37:23-24 (ESV)

²³The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way;

²⁴though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.

2. Walking with God's plan is the qualifier for God's wisdom- (David had been selected by God, Absalom had not. David had done the hard work- battles, trials, failures even!)

Acts 20:27-30 (ESV)

²⁷for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

²⁸Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

²⁹I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

³⁰and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

- a.) Absalom was a power-hungry hireling, not a God-ordained leader (The one in God's plan will lead that way, and the one outside will lead people away.)
- b.) But he was attractive/and he was not old/and he was something new! (This is where wisdom comes into play. We need God's direction!)

c.) Proudful ambition steals us of the opportunity to be who God has designed us to be and to live the life that God can give you!

- Absalom was a user rather than a servant leader. (He was willing to steal, to pretend he cared, and use people for his own purposes.)
- God brings His love into our plan – not self-seeking, God-glorifying, God empowered. (This is what each of you should desire in your job, ministry, family.)
- If you are a leader in your occupation, or in this church, home, this is the only way for spiritual unity and God’s blessing on the work of your hands.

So, Absalom devises a plan for a coup over his own parent.

He devises a pretty good plan with the help of one of David’s advisors. (Double betrayal) Ahithopel- who happens to be Bathsheba’s grandfather, who was privy to Uriah and Bathsheba.

Once again, David is on the run.

- 3. David’s return to wisdom-** (Many times our dependence comes on the heels of incredibly low points in our life.)
- David loved what God had done with Jerusalem, and he chose to not have it decimated with a civil war.
 - The Levites brought the ark with them as they retreated with David.

2 Samuel 15:25 (ESV)

²⁵Then the king said to Zadok, “Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see both it and his dwelling place.

- a.) David was going to step back into God’s plan for him. (The only way back from our pride.)
- b.) Absalom would let self-ambition become his destruction, while David decided to turn towards what God had for his survival and peace.

Do you know that when we became a Christian, we became people who suddenly had the ability to walk in the protection and guidance of God Himself?

- It is the gamechanger for our success in life, relationships, and church.

2 Corinthians 5:17–18 (ESV)

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

- This means that **this is your purpose**, and you are to **loyally love God and others**, and find the **platform of influence that God has for you**.
- Absalom was not on this plan, he was on his own.
- We finish chapter 15 with David weeping and going to the Mount of Olives carrying out God’s plan. (He knew, **no matter what was in his past**, his **present time and future was only solid within God’s plan**.)

Close

As Christ prepared to pay for our sins, he went to the Mount of Olives to pray for God's plan to be carried out.

Meanwhile, somewhere on our horizon, the ambition of the devil himself will arise to attempt a coup of God's redemptive plan.

Revelation 13:2–3 (ESV)

²And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.

³One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

Many who are not paying attention to the plan of God will stumble into following the one whose ambition **does not care for the people, will be self-directed, and will end in defeat.**

Pride of not following God's plan is never a good idea, and in the last days, will lead many to follow the attractive one whose ambition is for self and not the people.

Trust Christ as your Savior today and live in His protective plan!