

Introduction: If I'm forgiven, why should I still suffer?

David, though close to God and called “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14), experienced severe consequences due to sin. He repented deeply (Psalm 51) and was forgiven (2 Samuel 12:13). Yet consequences followed: family dysfunction, rebellion, bloodshed (2 Samuel 12:10–12). This raises key questions for all believers: *If I’m forgiven, why do I still suffer consequences?* This sermon explores three major spiritual truths to help us understand this topic.

Point 1: God Has Delegated Authority

- God gives humans dominion (Psalm 8:4–6; Psalm 115:16); He allows their choices to carry real impact. This explains why evil isn’t always stopped—God respects human free will.

Point 2: Delayed Judgment

- Final justice comes on Judgment Day, not now (2 Peter 3:9; Matthew 13:24–30). God delays judgment to allow more people to repent (John 5:22 & John 12:47–48).

Point 3: The Devil is Active, but Christ Has Overcome

- Satan deceives and disrupts (Genesis 3; Luke 4:5–7).
- Jesus defeated Satan at the cross (John 12:31; Colossians 2:15), but the devil still seeks influence (Ephesians 4:27).
- Believers are empowered to resist and overcome through Christ (Matthew 28:18).

Conclusion & Life Applications

- **Understand the spiritual dynamics:** Delegated authority, delayed judgment, and spiritual warfare explain ongoing troubles.
- **Repent and stay close to God:** Like David in Psalm 51, genuine repentance opens the door to mercy and ensures eternity with God, and victory in the midst of trouble.
- **Live victoriously:** Shine in the darkness (Matthew 5:14–16), resist the devil, and cling to eternal hope (Romans 8:18–28).

Questions - Pick any 3 questions from below...

1. What stood out to you most from David’s story? Why?
2. Have you ever seen how someone’s choices—good or bad—affected you or others around you? What did you learn?
3. What does it look like to shine God’s light in the middle of hard or painful situations?
4. What are some ways we can resist the devil in everyday life?
5. How does knowing God is with us in our struggles give you hope?
6. How can we encourage each other to shine God’s light in difficult situations?

Scriptures Used in this talk:

2 Samuel 11 & 12 - the story of David's sin, Nathan the prophet's challenge to him, his repentance and forgiveness. and some of the consequences he faced.

Psalms 51 - David's repentance

1 Chronicles 22:8 - Consequences - David was not allowed to build the temple.

Psalms 115:16 & Psalm 8:4-6 - God has delegated authority over earth to mankind.

Genesis 2 & 3 - Satan's temptation of the humans, their response, and the consequences of their choice.

Psalms 51:11-12 & Psalm 32:3 - The effects of staying in sin - Psalm 32:3 NKJV - "When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long."

Matthew 21:33-43 - The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers - an illustration of delegated authority

Romans 8:19-28 - The whole of creation groans because humans sinned - they were cut off from God's life, and creation was affected too. This passage also says that we (believers) also groan, and the Holy Spirit in us groans in prayer.

2 Peter 3:7-10 - Judgement day will come eventually when all will be put right. Until then God is patiently waiting trying to give as much opportunity to as many people as possible for salvation.

Matthew 13:24-30 - the parable of the wheat and the tares - God delays judgement, and won't stop evil until judgement day, because if He did He would have to wind up the whole of creation, suspend free will for everyone, and bring about judgement day for the whole of creation - it can't be done "piecemeal".

John 5:22 NKJV - "22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,"

John 12:47-48 NKJV - "47 "And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day."

Hebrews 12:6 - God does sometimes discipline His children - but discipline is very different from judgement. Discipline stops us destroying ourselves, judgement is the just punishment for sin. While discipline may happen to His children, judgement for the whole world has been delayed until the last day.

John 12:31 - Satan is called the "ruler of the world" and Jesus took his legal authority. (Matthew 28:18)

Luke 4:5-7 - Satan confessed that all kingdoms were under his control because they had been delivered to him (by Adam and Eve's sin)

1 John 5:19 NKJV - "19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one."

2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:6 - believers' present reality - forgiven and seated with Him

2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:6

2Co 2:14 NKJV - "14 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place." (spoken in the context of extreme difficulty, confusion and opposition for Paul.)

Psalms 32:7, Psalm 18:34, Psalm 18:29 - The ways God helped David to get through difficulties and opposition (and consequences of his sin)

Ephesians 4:27, 1 John 1:9, James 4:7, Philippians 2:15 - we can, as Christians, give the devil a "foothold" through sin, and we must avoid this, resist him, and shine as lights in a dark world.