



DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE SIN AND THE SINS, PART 3 | 2 SAMUEL 16:1-19:8 | TODD STILES



INTRODUCTION

In August 1923, Calvin Coolidge became President of the United States following the sudden death of President Warren G. Harding. During his time as Vice President, Coolidge, a man of few words, had earned the nickname "Silent Cal."

In 1924, Coolidge won the election in his own right and would serve as the president during "The Roaring 20s," a time in which the US Economy boomed.

On June 30, 1924, just at the start of Coolidge's second term, his two teenage sons were playing tennis on the south lawn of the White House. Coolidge's younger son, Calvin, Jr., had a blister develop on one of his toes. Within a couple of days, the toe had become infected, and young Calvin, only 16-years of age, became sick. This was before the discovery of antibiotics, and simple infections could become life-threatening. By July 2, Calvin Jr. was transferred to Walter Reed Army Hospital in critical condition, where he died on July 5 of sepsis, an infection of the blood.

President Coolidge was grief-stricken, and, in many ways, never recovered from the death of his son.

Three years later, during the summer of 1927, the Republican Party was looking forward to the 1928 presidential election. The US Economy was booming, and for the most part, President Coolidge was popular and expected to win re-election.

Vacationing at his "Summer White House" in the Black Hills of South Dakota, President Coolidge called a midday press conference. When the reporters were assembled, Coolidge handed each one a small strip of paper he had cut out himself. On the strip of paper he had typed the words, "I do not choose to run for president in 1928." After handing each reporter a slip of paper, he simply stated, "There will be nothing more from this office today."

Coolidge rarely talked of the death of his son, and many believed his grieving had ended long ago. Yet, writing in his autobiography in 1929, Coolidge explained his decision not to run again for the presidency. Referring to the death of his son, Coolidge stated simply, "When he went, the power and the glory of the Presidency went with him."

Nothing in life prepares you for the death of a child. This week, we see the culmination of David's Great Sin in the death of his son, Absalom. This becomes David's Great Sorrow. As you read the remaining chapters of 2 Samuel, you get the sense you are watching a broken man go through the motions of being king. Like President Coolidge, David would probably concur that "When Absalom died, the power and the glory of being king went with him."

If you had to offer a new Mom or Dad the best piece of parenting advice you've ever heard, what would it be?

Reflecting back on your childhood, what did your Mom or Dad do that proved to be a great example for you and your siblings?

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

READ THE TEXT

David's dysfunctional family goes from bad to worse when civil war breaks out between David and Absalom. While the war itself is short-lived, the consequences for David are tragic, resulting in the death of his son, Absalom. Read 2 Samuel 16-19.

DIGGING DEEPER

- What is happening in 2 Samuel 16-18 between David and Absalom?
- What is the compounding factor in David's grief over his son's death?
- Is there a positive or negative side to shame?
- What can we learn about parenthood from the example of David and Absalom?
- How can we build the foundation of a godly home and family?

PRAYER FOCUS FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 12

"Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices; Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." – Isaiah 56:7.

We are in the midst of our 40 Days of Prayer at First Family. Make a commitment to lead your family in a focused time of prayer each day between now and Thanksgiving. com with "Prayer List" in the subject field.

If you are not receiving the daily prayer prompts, you can request to be added to the list by simply sending an email to info@ffclife.

NEXT STEPS

Questions to consider as you continue to reflect on what you learned this week:

- **Take Action:** Proverbs 20:5 "The purposes of the human heart are deep waters, but those who have insight draw them out." So it is with your children. Let your prayer this week focus on asking the Lord to reveal to you the purposes of your son or daughter's heart. Study your children, and draw them into deep conversation. What makes him or her unique? How has God intricately wired them to reflect His glory?
- **Take Courage:** Parenting is messy business. Hope begins when parents recognize how complex it is to raise a child to become a healthy adult, and how confused all parents really are about how to do it. Most parents know there are no simple answers. Hope grows when parents bring their confusion and questions to the Scriptures and find direction.

Work to memorize this week's memory verse: Psalm 51:17 "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart--These, O God, You will not despise."

Our Core Practice this week is Authenticity (John 13:33-34): I know and understand biblical truths and transfer these truths into everyday life. Who I am on the inside and outside is a pure reflection of Christ and His Word.

SERMON NOTES

TAKE HOME TRUTH

While consequences are the undertow of sin that eventually affects both others (12-13) and ourselves (14-15), they never ultimately override God's will (16-19).