

I Can't Change It - Now What?

Scripture used: 2 Samuel 15:25-26 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

This week's message is the last of the six-part Change series where the overarching message is "Change is Possible!" Throughout this series, we have learned that a path leads to the same place every time and that change requires going in a different direction. Paying attention to where we are will reveal which direction we are headed and, ultimately, the destination. However, this week we learn that while it is possible for us to change, there are just some things we cannot, but there is no need to lose hope. Our passage gives us a glimpse into King David's life after he had slept with Bathsheba, then killed her husband so that he could marry her and cover up her pregnancy and his sin. Although he repented, fasted and prayed, the consequences of his sin were the death of the child, the rape of his daughter, the subsequent deaths of two of his sons, the deaths of 20,000 men and the division of a nation. Yet when David could not change his circumstances, he submitted and surrendered himself to God and His will, trusting Him with the outcome.

KEY POINTS

Some destinations and paths we want to choose are unreachable due to:

- 1) Poor decisions and irreversible consequences. Even though David had done great things from chapters 1-10, chapter 11 changes the course of his life forever. This is the chapter where he commanded Bathsheba to sleep with him. The consequences of poor decisions deter you from your desired destination.
- 2) Painful experiences and long-term damage. David's son, Amnon, rapes his half-sister (David's daughter), Tamar, and she lives the rest of her life as a single, damaged, woman. Sometimes our wounds, caused by another, keeps us from reaching a desired destination.
- 3) Permanently broken circumstances and irretrievable dreams. David did nothing about Tamar's rape, which angered her brother, Absalom. Absalom eventually waged war against his father, David, and died in battle. David wished that he was the one to die in Absalom's place. The cause of this war was the consequence of his sin, and his hopes and dreams for his son were never realized.

What to do when you can't change your circumstance:

- 1) Trust God by affirming His love in your life. The Bible is God's love letter to the world and is filled with declarations of love for us. Recall some of your favorite love passages to affirm His love for you. If that is not enough, remember all that He has done for you personally.
- 2) If you can affirm that God loves you, YOU can change for the better in the midst of unchangeable circumstances. David ultimately decides that whatever God decides will end in victory. Psalm 23:6 reassures us that, in our challenging times, we will fall into one of two things: either His goodness, or His Mercy. And no matter what direction we fall, God will usher us into His love.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** Share one experience that you had, or are having right now, where the destination of the path you are on has/will lead to pain or hardship, but in the midst of it, God's love, goodness and mercy have been revealed. Hopefully, you will see that you are not the only one going through the circumstances you have gone through and that you will either encourage, or be encouraged, through these testimonies.
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** David sinned against God despite his long history of piety and wise decisions. All of us fall short of God's standards. Why was David so confident that he could still trust God after sinning?
- 3) **DO** Go through the psalms or the book of John and write down a few passages that affirm God's love for you. Share with someone one or two instances when you've felt God's love specifically for you.

PRAYER "Lord, help me to see trouble long before it gets to me. Give me the wisdom to know what to do, and the courage to do it."