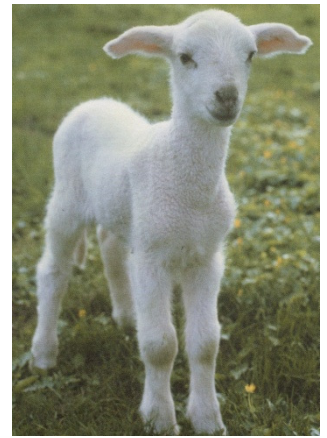


**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church**  
**Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz**  
**Pentecost 4 June 20, 2010 2 Samuel 11:26-12:10, 13-15**



When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead...David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD. The LORD sent Nathan to David...He said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him." David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die!..." Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man!..." Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die..."

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God – and that is what we are! Amen!*

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

The 6<sup>th</sup> commandment. Do you know what it is? When you were in confirmation class you knew. The 4<sup>th</sup> commandment is: **Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.** The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment? **You shall not murder.** The 6<sup>th</sup> commandment? **You shall not commit adultery.** Do you remember the *What does this mean?*-- part? **We should fear and love God that we lead a pure and decent life in words and actions, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.** Do you remember the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment? **You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his workers or his animals or anything that belongs to your neighbor.** *What does this mean?* **We should fear and love God that we do not force or entice away from our neighbor his wife, workers or animals, but urge them to stay and do their duty!** There are only 10 commandments. There are two of them – that talk about husbands and wives and marriage – about faithfulness to your spouse in thought and word and actions! That has to be a warning to us – that one of the devil's most powerful attacks is against marriage and family! Today – against the background of the story of *David and Bathsheba* we will see when it comes to sin:

**We Are The One!**

- 1. We have sinned against the LORD**
- 2. The LORD has taken away our sin!**

In all of God's Word there is not another character quite like David. When King Saul – the first king of Israel abandoned the LORD – the LORD sent Samuel to Saul to rebuke him. <sup>13</sup> "You acted foolishly," Samuel said (to Saul). "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. <sup>14</sup> But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart

**and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command."** Could it be said of us – we are a person after the LORD's own heart? David – the young shepherd boy who did battle with the warrior giant Goliath and took off his head! David – the one whom the Holy Spirit inspired to write, **"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul...yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."** If you had told King David – the shepherd King – that he would commit actual physical adultery with Bathsheba – obviously the wife of Uriah the Hittite – the faithful soldier in the King's army – and then murder him to cover up his affair – and then deny his sin for the better part of a year – David would have scoffed! Like Simon Peter – who told his Lord Jesus – I will never deny you. I will die with you! But Simon Peter was wrong and King David would have been wrong. It is powerful practical comfort of God's Word – that Adam and Eve – created flawless – Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and Solomon – Elijah and all the rest – have fallen into painful grievous sin. And so do we!

God's plan for marriage began in the Garden of Eden. If you have gone to a wedding recently you heard this. It was the LORD himself who said – **"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."** The LORD caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep – took one of his ribs – and from that created Eve. She was stunningly beautiful on the outside. But her truly exceptional beauty was on the inside – her heart. She like Adam was without sin. They overflowed with **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control!** God's plan from the beginning was profound in its simplicity. **For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh. Therefore they are no longer two but one. Therefore what God has joined together let man not separate!** In his sermon on the grassy hillside Jesus said, **"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."** Matthew 5:27,28 *ESV* We live in a world and at a time where temptations to break the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment are everywhere! If you listen to music on the radio the lyrics that were terrible in the 60s and 70s are just as horrible today. More and more people are tempted to wear clothes that are too short, too tight, too low, too thin, too immodest – so that they cause people who see us to have sinful thoughts. We need to be very careful not to put our self or anyone else in a position where they give in to sin. There are ads literally as big as a bus in Madison that say – before you have "hugs and kisses" with your *date* – ask for permission first! How sad is that? If you try to say "hugs and kisses" are a gift from God for inside marriage and only inside marriage – you are thought to be "old fashioned" and "really sweet" – and also **unbelievably naïve!** It is God's plan for babies to be conceived and born within marriage and a family – to have a father and a mother! The devil continues to attack marriage – as more and more people – in their 50's and 60's and 70's – after having the same spouse for 30 or 40 years get divorced. As families crumble – so suffers our Church and our Nation! Our only defenses against the blistering attacks of the devil are God's Word and God's forgiving love. Without Scripture and God's forgiveness in Christ we are lost. Build your marriage on the solid foundation of Jesus and we are secure!

**When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead...David had her brought to his house, and she (already pregnant with David's baby) became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.** Sin *always* displeases the LORD. The LORD could bring swift and crushing judgment on his people – in his holy white hot anger against our

sin. Again and again—judgment was swift. Take for example Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Do you know their story? **Korah son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and certain Reubenites—Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—became insolent and rose up against Moses. With them were 250 Israelite men, well-known community leaders who had been appointed members of the council. They came as a group to oppose Moses and Aaron... Insolent!** Do you know what that is—insolent? It is a stubborn and arrogant evil that begins in the heart—and shows itself in the eyes! It says, “You’re not the boss of me! You can’t tell me what to do! You can’t make me!” It’s a rebellious heart and attitude—against parents, against step-parents—you aren’t my mom! You aren’t my dad! It’s a rebellious attitude against teachers and police officers and our boss and our supervisor and our government! When you treat the leaders God has placed over us with contempt—it’s really the LORD you are treating with contempt! That’s what Moses told them. **If the LORD brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have treated the LORD with contempt. As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart and the earth opens its mouth and swallowed them, with their household and all Korah’s men and all their possessions. They went down alive into the grave, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community. At their cries, all the Israelites around them fled, shouting, “The earth is going to swallow us too!” And fire came out from the LORD and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense! Wow!** That’s what happened when people were insolent—stubborn and arrogant evil—in their hearts and in their eyes—against those the LORD had placed in authority over them. The LORD could do that to us! He could crush us for our sins—but he doesn’t. Our Heavenly Father is gracious, merciful and forgiving. The LORD was merciful to David, too. By grace alone—the LORD sent his prophet Nathan to confront the King with his sin.

He said, **“There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him. David was rightly offended at the wicked and arrogant behavior of the rich man. David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, “As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die!...” ”** Then Nathan said to David, **“You are the man!”**... I think it’s difficult for us to appreciate Nathan’s God-given courage! All David would have to do was gesture meaningfully and it would have been off with Nathan’s head—*literally!* But Nathan stood firm—condemning the sin of the King! We need to pray—that when there is sin in our family—persistent and blatant hurtful sin in the heart and life of the people we love—that we talk to them—with gentleness and humility and love. We need to admonish and encourage them with law and gospel for Jesus’ sake!

Then David said to Nathan, **“I have sinned against the LORD.”** I have sinned against the LORD! That’s very important. I love to watch M\*A\*S\*H—the dark comedy about the mobile army surgical hospital during the Korean Conflict. I loved Father Mulkahey. He was very humble and gentle and passionate for the Lord and for his sheep. From time to time—when things went painfully wrong—people would say bad words! They would curse and swear and say things that were vulgar and crude. Again and again they would apologize to Father

Hulkahey. But the fact is—the one we offend if we blurt out curse words—the one we offend if we say things that are vulgar and obscene and rude and crude is our Heavenly Father. You don't need to apologize to shepherds. You need to apologize to your Heavenly Father! To say to him, **"I have sinned against the LORD!"** It is God's will that we are guilty of disobeying. It is God's honor that we besmirch! It is God who will hold us accountable!

**Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die..."**

There were three little kittens—down in the storm sewer not far from the hospital the other day. You would have to stop and ask—to know that that happened. Most people don't. They simply drive past—just barely slowing down. If you did stop and ask what's wrong—you would learn that there were three little kittens—their eyes barely open—about five feet down—under the hundred pound steel grates. This is not a job for professionals. They don't have time to chase lost kittens. This is a job for volunteers. The question of course is—do you love little kittens? If you don't—you have more important things to do. If you do love helpless little kittens—then there is nothing more important than getting them out. It's not easy because the kittens are scared. How do you fish them out? Tempt them with food? That means an investment—a couple of dollars for some cat food. How are you going to get them out? Do you have a net? How do you keep them from going into the pipe—the cement tube as wide as the street? How do you keep them from running into the next tube that goes all the way up to the hospital? Would you spend 4 or 5 hours+—on your hands and knees—hanging into the hole? Would you drive home again and again—to get nets and cardboard and boards? If you caught two—would you give up on the third little kitten? What would you do to save three little kittens? What would you do to save a person? What would you do to save a world full of people? What would you sacrifice to save wretched sinners? Jesus was determined to die a tortured death—because he loves us so much! That's what Jesus did. He died on the cross to pay for all our sins—our adultery, our impure thoughts, our sinful words and our hurtful actions and our painful neglect. Jesus suffered and died to save us—when we never ever deserved it. That's how much Jesus loves us. Everyone will know that we are Jesus' students and followers and imitators—Jesus' disciples—if we love and forgive one another. Amen!

**To God alone all glory!**

