Good People Don’t Do Bad Things

A BRIEF LOOK BACK

✓ The secret to moral purity is avoiding temptation – not resisting temptation.
✓ There are two kinds of fools: Lucky fools AND unlucky fools.

THE ANATOMY OF A COLOSSAL MORAL FAILURE
2 Samuel 11:1 – 12:14

FOUR DANGER ZONES THAT CAN BRING DOWN THE BEST OF THE BEST

1 Any Time I Think I’m Spiritually Superior.
   Luke 18:9-14/ 1 Corinthians 10:12/ Jeremiah 17:9 & Romans 7:14-25
   • “I’m different – I can handle what others can’t.”

2 Any Time I Think No One Could Possibly Know.
   • “What happens here will stay here.”

3 Any Season Of Great Success.
   2 Samuel 11:1-4 & 2 Chronicles 26/ Deuteronomy 8:10-14/ 2 Peter 3:8-10
   • “If everything is going well, God must be pleased with me.”

4 Any Season Of Great Hardship.
   2 Kings 12:1-21/ Proverbs 30:8-9/ Hebrews 5:7-8 & 2 Peter 1:6-7
   • “This situation is so different – The normal rules don’t apply here.”
1. We heard this weekend of David's sad example of a colossal moral failure. Joseph, on the other hand, is a great example of someone who avoided a similar failure. In Genesis 39:1-23, we see Joseph's response to an aggressive solicitation for sexual immorality. As you read this story, make a list of the things which helped Joseph avoid this ongoing temptation.

**Genesis 39:1-23**

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

[2] The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. [3] When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, [4] Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. [5] From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. [6] So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, [7] and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

[8] But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. [9] No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" [10] And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

[11] One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. [12] She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

[13] When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, [14] she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. [15] When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

[16] She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. [17] Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. [18] But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

[19] When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. [20] Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

But while Joseph was there in the prison, [21] the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. [22] So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those...
held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. [23] The warden paid no
attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in
whatever he did. [NIV]

How can the things Joseph used to avoid sexual sin also help us avoid other sin?

2. The story of King Uzziah is found in 2 Chronicles 26:1-22. It's the story of an obedient leader who
experienced much success until he became proud and arrogant. After reading the passage, answer the
following questions:

2 Chronicles 26:1-22

Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his
father Amaziah. [2] He was the one who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah after Amaziah rested with
his fathers.

[3] Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His
mother's name was Jecoliah; she was from Jerusalem. [4] He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord,
just as his father Amaziah had done. [5] He sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him
in the fear of God. As long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success.

[6] He went to war against the Philistines and broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh and Ashdod. He then
rebuilt towns near Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines. [7] God helped him against the
Philistines and against the Arabs who lived in Gur Baal and against the Meunites. [8] The Ammonites
brought tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread as far as the border of Egypt, because he had become
very powerful.

[9] Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate and at the angle of the wall,
and he fortified them. [10] He also built towers in the desert and dug many cisterns, because he had
much livestock in the foothills and in the plain. He had people working his fields and vineyards in the hills
and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil.

[11] Uzziah had a well-trained army, ready to go out by divisions according to their numbers as mustered
by Jeiel the secretary and Maaseiah the officer under the direction of Hananiah, one of the royal officials.
[12] The total number of family leaders over the fighting men was 2,600. [13] Under their command was
an army of 307,500 men trained for war, a powerful force to support the king against his enemies. [14]
Uzziah provided shields, spears, helmets, coats of armor, bows and slingstones for the entire army. [15]
In Jerusalem he made machines designed by skillful men for use on the towers and on the corner
defenses to shoot arrows and hurl large stones. His fame spread far and wide, for he was greatly helped
until he became powerful.

[16] But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall. He was unfaithful to the Lord his
God, and entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. [17] Azariah the priest
with eighty other courageous priests of the Lord followed him in. [18] They confronted him and said, "It is
not right for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord. That is for the priests, the descendants of Aaron,
who have been consecrated to burn incense. Leave the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful; and you
will not be honored by the Lord God."

[19] Uzziah, who had a censer in his hand ready to burn incense, became angry. While he was raging at
the priests in their presence before the incense altar in the Lord's temple, leprosy broke out on his
forehead. [20] When Azariah the chief priest and all the other priests looked at him, they saw that he had leprosy on his forehead, so they hurried him out. Indeed, he himself was eager to leave, because the Lord had afflicted him.

[21] King Uzziah had leprosy until the day he died. He lived in a separate house—leprous, and excluded from the temple of the Lord. Jotham his son had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land.

[22] The other events of Uzziah's reign, from beginning to end, are recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. [NIV]

What led to Uzziah's downfall?

What were the results of Uzziah's sin on himself and others?

What are some reasons that success can lead us away from God?

How can Isaiah 57:15 and 66:1-2 help you avoid falling prey to pride?

Isaiah 57:15
For this is what the high and lofty One says--
he who lives forever, whose name is holy:
"I live in a high and holy place,
but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly
and to revive the heart of the contrite. [NIV]

Isaiah 66:1-2
This is what the Lord says:
"Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
Where is the house you will build for me?
Where will my resting place be?
[2] Has not my hand made all these things,
and so they came into being?"
declares the Lord.
"This is the one I esteem:
he who is humble and contrite in spirit,
and trembles at my word. [NIV]
3. God not only tells us to avoid sexual immorality but also gives us good reasons for doing so. A number of reasons are listed in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. Make a list of the reasons for avoiding sexual immorality you find in the passage.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

"Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything. [13] "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food"—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. [14] By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. [15] Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! [16] Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." [17] But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

[18] Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. [19] Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; [20] you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. [NIV]

Which of the reasons is most motivational to you?

4. As you look back at the four danger zones Larry talked about, what has been your past experience with each of them? Is there one you are currently in or close to entering? What steps can you take to move away from that zone?