

How Can We Lose Our Saltiness and Our Light

08/16/26

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall” (1 Cor. 10: 12).

One of the problems of being salt and daylight to this world is keeping that saltiness and light at all times. This is not easy. I’ve watched the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment stand guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Since 1926, there has been an unbroken vigil maintained every minute of every day. If you’ve been at Arlington National Cemetery, you’ve probably have seen the Changing of the Guard. It is precise and done perfectly. This is done in honor of the unknown soldiers in that tomb (three service members from WWI, WWII, and Korean. Vietnam soldier was identified in 1998) and all unknown soldiers that have died in these wars. These soldiers who guard the tomb receive aggressive training to be able to guard in any type of condition. They can’t let their guard down for one minute. Would you be able to do such an honorable, but stressful task? Maybe we should ask would you be able to do this on a daily schedule? My fear would be that at some point I would let my guard down and do something wrong. As Christians, we too must be careful to not let our guard down as well because we can become vulnerable to temptation and not even know it. What do I mean by this? Let’s look at an Old Testament story that’ll shine some light on this question.

Let’s turn to 11: 1-5 where we read this, “**11** Then it happened ^[a]in the spring, at the time when kings go out *to battle*, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they brought destruction on the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.”² Now at evening time David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king’s house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.³ So David sent *servants* and inquired about the woman. And *someone* said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”⁴ Then David sent messengers and ^[b]had her brought, and when she

came to him, he slept with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. ⁵ But the woman conceived; so she sent *word* and informed David, and said, "I am pregnant." (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)

Here we have a story about King David. He has been king for about twenty years and he's about fifty years old at this time. We also know that David is a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22). We talked last week that King David had replaced King Saul as king and when that happened, the Holy Spirit left King Saul and went to King David. So, David is a good man here. However, he has been king for twenty years and he has had much success because of what God had done in his life. David has a weak moment here. Scripture tells us that it was during the spring when kings go to war and David is not where he should be. God had chosen him to clear out the land of Israel of their enemies and David had been doing that for twenty years. Now, David decides to take it easy and let someone else do his job. He had a good general in Joab. During David's time period, armies would rest during the winter, regroup, and train for the spring. They would start their wars and battles during spring. David makes the choice to stay home and Scripture makes that very plain here. So, David is walking on the roof of his palace and sees a beautiful woman and sends for someone to see who she is. That someone returns and tells David who the woman is and that she is married. Then, David sends messengers to get her and David commits sin with this married woman – Bathsheba. Again, we must remember that David is a man after God's own heart, but he commits a horrible sin here. In today's standards, this would not be a great sin. However, David was not only a king to Israel, he was salt and light to them as well. God had given David the Holy Spirit as well just like He did with Moses. Yet, David still had the ability to make choices. Temptation came when his eyes fell upon Bathsheba and thoughts came into his head. Without stopping and trying to reason with these thoughts, he sends someone to find out who she is. David has now made the choice to go down the slippery slope of temptation. Instead of turning away and trying to get his mind on something else, like making war plans, he makes the choice to continue to focus on this temptation. Now, let's stop here for a moment. What is temptation? In

Hebrew, the term is “massa” which means trial, test, temptation; despair (Strong’s Concordance). In Greek, the word used for temptation can be “peirasmos” or “peirazo” which means to test or tempt. Some may say that when God tests, it that temptation? That is a good question. I found this in the Greek translation: The difference between a test and a temptation is found in the tester’s motivation and expectations; the devil tempts that the believer might fail God’s standards of faith and so sin; God tests that He might determine and sharpen true character, with no focus on making the believer fail (Strong’s Concordance). God is not tempting David here; it is the devil. David sees the beautiful woman and the thought of wanting to know who she is keeps that temptation going. David is actually feeding the temptation here. When he gets the information, which contains the info on her marriage status, David then makes the decision he wants to have her and he gives in all the way to the temptation. David made the choice to have a relationship with a married woman and she became pregnant. That is when it became sin. Temptation is not sin till we make the choice to take part in the sin. How do we know this? Well let’s look at Luke 22: 28 where Jesus states this, “²⁸ “You are the ones who have stood by Me in My trials; (NASB – www.biblegateway.com). The term for “trials” is the same Greek term that we talked about earlier that is used for temptations in Greek. Or how about Mark 1: 12, “¹² And immediately the Spirit *brought Him out into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild animals, and the angels were serving Him.(NASB – www.biblegateway.com)” Here the Greek term is “peirazo” which means both test and tempt. Jesus was tempted and tested as well. Jesus never sinned, because He was the Son of God, so Jesus never gave into temptation even though He was tempted by the devil. So, temptation is not sin till we fulfill that temptation as David did. The devil wanted David to dishonor God and this temptation would do that when David fulfilled the devil’s temptation. This is why it is so important for a Christian to allow the Holy Spirit control of our life because then our conscious becomes holy through Jesus and we get the warning signs from our conscious when we are being tempted by the devil. Also, we’ll know when God is testing us vs the devil tempting us. So, David gives in, but it doesn’t stop there.

Let's continue in the story and turn to 2 Samuel 11: 6-11 and 18- 22, where we read this, "6 Then David sent *word* to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. 7 When Uriah came to him, David asked about Joab's well-being and ^[a]that of the people, and the condition of the war. 8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." So Uriah left the king's house, and a gift from the king ^[b]was sent after him. 9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. 10 Now when they informed David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" 11 And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in ^[c]temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Should I then go to my house to eat and drink and to sleep with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing."

18 Then Joab sent *a messenger* and reported to David all the events of the war. 19 He ordered the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling all the events of the war to the king, 20 then it shall be that if the king's wrath rises and he says to you, 'Why did you move against the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? 21 Who struck Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did a woman not throw an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you move against the wall?'—then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite also died.'""22 So the messenger departed and came and reported to David everything that Joab had sent him *to tell*. (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)"

Now, David gets deeper into sin. He tries to get Uriah to go back to his house so that Uriah could have a relationship with his wife so that the pregnancy of Bathsheba could be blamed on her husband. David was looking for an out for his sin. David had become so involved in this temptation; he became blind to the fact that God already knew about the sin. David no longer was allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to him. When Uriah refused to go to his wife because Uriah wanted to be with the army (Uriah is salt and light here), then David went the next step in the fulfillment of the temptation the devil had set up for him. He had Uriah

moved up in the front lines of the war in the hopes it would create a better chance he would be killed and he did get killed. David didn't want Uriah to know about the baby because he would know it was not his. Once we give in to temptation, it gets harder and harder to get out of the hole we allowed ourselves to get into. David kept fulfilling the temptations the devil kept throwing at David. The devil kept dealing David one temptation after another and David, after giving into the first one, couldn't stop the ball from rolling. If you remember the story of Jesus when He was in the wilderness in Luke 4, the devil didn't give Jesus just one temptation, he gave one after another, but Jesus did not sin by giving into the temptations. David did. Let's see what the outcome was for David.

Let's finish with 2 Samuel 11: 26-27 and 12: 7-14, "²⁶ Now when Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband. ²⁷ When the *time of* mourning was over, David sent *servants* and ^āhad her brought to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.

⁷ Nathan then said to David, "You yourself are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: 'It is I who anointed you as king over Israel, and it is I who rescued you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ I also gave you your master's house and *put* your master's wives ^āinto your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would have added to you ^bmany more things like these! ⁹ Why have you despised the word of the LORD, by doing evil in His sight? You have struck and killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, you have taken his wife as your wife, and you have slaughtered him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. ¹⁰ Now then, the sword shall never leave your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' ¹¹ This is what the LORD says: 'Behold, I am going to raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your companion, and he will sleep with your wives in ^cbroad daylight. ¹² Indeed, you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and ^din open daylight.'"

¹³ Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has allowed your sin to pass; you shall not die. ¹⁴ However, since by this deed you have shown utter disrespect for the ^{le}LORD, the child himself who is born to you shall certainly die. (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)"

David, the man after God's own heart was still blind to the sin he had done. I'm sure all his generals, servants, messengers, and half the kingdom knew what David had done. David had allowed himself to yield to temptation which caused him to lose his saltiness and to allow his light to go out for God. God, out of His love for David, sends Nathan the prophet to help David to understand the sin he had done to the nation of Israel, but most of all the sin he did against God. David admits his sin and he is forgiven, but this sin will cause great pain to David and to many other people including to Bathsheba who will see her baby die. We must always have our spiritual armor on all the time. In Luke 4: 13, we are reminded of this, "¹³ And so when the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time. (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)" Jesus did not give in to the temptations the devil threw at Him, but the devil would continue till the next opportune time would come. In other words, no matter how strong your faith is, the devil will always lie in wait for an opportunity to strike you with a temptation. We can learn from David on how dangerous it is to give in to any temptation. We can also learn from Jesus. If you go back to Luke 4: 1, right before Jesus gets tempted, Luke tells us that Jesus went into the wilderness "full of the Holy Spirit". We need the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and a Spirit filled conscious to help us to NOT fulfill any of the devil's temptations and to be like Jesus and rely on the wisdom of God to handle it the right way. The devil will attack when we let our guard down, like David did. Let's learn from this story so we don't repeat it in our own lives. The fulfillment of a temptation will keep us from being salt and daylight to this world. Temptations will come, let's not make ourselves be an easy target for the devil. Pray to Jesus for help to handle the temptations that come our way.

The Strongest Strong's Concordance. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2001