

## Dealing with an Absalom Spirit

### 2 Samuel 14:19-15:6

**Psalm 55:12-14** "For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; Then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; Then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng."

**2 Samuel 15:12** "Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city—from Giloh—while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number."

**What Caused Absalom's Sin:** Offense & Hatred; Unforgiveness & Bitterness.

**Matthew 24:3, 10** ". . . what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" . . . 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another."

**Motives:** Revenge, Discredit, & Ruin.

**2 Samuel 15:6** "In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

#### I. How David Failed:

1. His feelings almost destroyed him:

**2 Samuel 13:39** "And King David longed to go to Absalom. For he had been comforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead."

**2 Samuel 14:1** "So Joab the son of Zeruah perceived that the king's heart was concerned about Absalom."

2. Feeling he had to prove his compassion to others to the point of ruining his own kingdom.

3. He tolerated his antics and didn't confront him.

#### II. Why Is This Absalom Spirit Difficult to Deal With?

1. People are emotionally attached to them through relationships.

2. Absalom is nice, lovable and popular. Everyone loved Absalom (even David).

3. To deal with them appears as unloving. The only way to deal with him is to cut him off. Had David not let him back into the kingdom he would not have had a problem. Many times, those who operate in an Absalom spirit will leave a church out of rebellion but want to stay a part of the fellowship. "We are still a part of the

kingdom of God even if we are not in the same church” is the spiritual reasoning. The logic sounds good, but the past history and the fact that they are causing division are the indicators that their true motive is not for fellowship.

4. It appears as if the pastor/leadership is paranoid.

### **III. Be Aware of Characteristics:**

1. They seek an audience.

**2 Samuel 15:2** "Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, 'What city are you from?' And he would say, 'Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel.'"

2. Love, kindness and favor are their tools. Who can resist that?

3. Absalom caused division by sweetness, “stealing the hearts of David’s followers”

**2 Samuel 15:5** "And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him."

4. Tells people, “You are special to me and are my friend”. “I love you more than the pastor; I will spend the quality time with you that he doesn’t”.

5. Special treatment: Coffee, Tea, fellowship, trips, gifts, favors. Everyone likes to be treated special. Everyone wants to feel special.

6. Nothing the pastor/leadership does is good enough for Absalom. Even if most of Absalom’s ideas are implemented it will never be good enough. Fault will always be found.

7. They plant doubt concerning leadership. They find faults in leaders usually not related to spiritual qualifications, and minor things are made major issues; such as what kind of car the pastor drives, how long he takes to receive offerings, etc.

**2 Samuel 15:4** "Moreover Absalom would say, 'Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.'"

8. They have a hidden agenda. His motives were not known until they manifested and it was too late. You know where you stand with Jezebel and Korah, but Absalom is sneaky, and does things behind your back.

9. Absalom tells you what you want to hear. A pastor’s job is to speak the truth in love; sometimes that truth hurts and requires change, but it is always for our good. Deception means you don’t know you are being deceived.

We think we have more discernment than we do. We forget this is a demonic spirit we are dealing with.

Their involvement is coming against God’s established authority and seeking to divide His kingdom.

10. They eventually come forward with open disloyalty and division. He later came to a place of such brazenness as sleeping openly with his father's wives.

#### **IV. Deception of continuing in fellowship with Absalom Takes the Form Of:**

1. "I can handle it." Charm is powerful and deceptive.

**Proverbs 31:30** "Charm is deceitful . . ."

Amplified - Charm and grace are deceptive,

Darby 1890 - Gracefulness is deceitful

The Century Bible - Charm can fool you,

2. "I am special to them." They prey upon our insecurities and need for acceptance.

**2 Samuel 15:5** "And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him."

3. "They are my friends. Your problem is not my problem with them. Being their friends will not affect my relationship with my church."

4. "They love God. You should not judge them."

**2 Samuel 15:11** "And with Absalom went two hundred men invited from Jerusalem (to worship), and they went along innocently and did not know anything."

5. "I can help them" Those operating in this spirit think they are helping you. We have the false notion that we can love Absalom back into the kingdom. He exists on that sentiment, and it gives him a greater inroad to influence, take advantage of, and shipwreck you. Their main purpose is advancing their agenda.

**Titus 3:10** "Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition . . ."

#### **V. How to Deal with This Spirit:**

1. Discerning of spirits needed from leadership.

2. Proper role modeling. If the rest of the sheep see you hobnobbing with Absalom, then they will think it is okay also.

3. Have a sheep-dog mentality. Protect the sheep from being kissed (bitten). Wolves don't come dressed as wolves, but as sheep.

4. Stop tolerating their antics. Put an end to the Absalom spirit.

5. Don't give them a place in the life of the body

**2 Samuel 14:21** "And the king said to Joab, 'All right, I have granted this thing. Go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom.'"

6. Avoid promoting people until the true character is proven.

7. Mark those who cause division and avoid them.

**Romans 16:17-18** "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple."

8. Pray for them.

**Luke 6:26-28** "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets. 27 'But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.'"

9. Leave vengeance to the Lord. Their own pride will bring them down.

**2 Samuel 18:9, 14** . . . his head got caught in the terebinth tree; so he was left hanging . . . Joab . . . took three spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom's heart.

**Proverbs 16:18** "Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall."

#### **VI. In the End:**

Absalom's downfall ended like that of Jezebel, Korah and Judas. They fell through pride and their lives ended prematurely and tragically. It is dangerous ground to sow strife and cause division in the body of Christ.

The Lord hates . . . one who sows discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:16-19).