

“AND YOU THOUGHT YOUR FAMILY WAS MESSED UP?

2 Samuel 13-18

Symptoms Of A Dysfunctional Family

1. (Unhealthy Secrecy)—Refusal to face the truth.

Some time later, this happened: Absalom, David's son, had a sister who was very attractive. Her name was Tamar. Amnon, also David's son, was in love with her. Amnon was obsessed with his sister Tamar to the point of making himself sick over her.Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has your brother Amnon had his way with you? Now, my dear sister, let's keep it quiet—a family matter. He is, after all, your brother. Don't take this so hard." Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's home, bitter and desolate. 2 Samuel 13:1-2, 20 Msg.

2. (Anger)—It may be expressed or repressed.

King David heard the whole story and was enraged, but he didn't discipline Amnon. David doted on him because he was his firstborn. Absalom quit speaking to Amnon—not a word, whether good or bad—because he hated him for violating his sister Tamar. Absalom prepared a banquet fit for a king. Then he instructed his servants, "Look sharp, now. When Amnon is well into the sauce and feeling no pain, and I give the order 'Strike Amnon,' kill him. And don't be afraid—I'm the one giving the command. Courage! You can do it!" Absalom's servants did to Amnon exactly what their master ordered... 2 Samuel 13:21-22, 28-29 Msg.

3. (Estrangement)—Family members who avoid other family members.

...David mourned the death of his son a long time. When Absalom fled, he went to Talmi son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. He was there three years. The king finally gave up trying to get back at Absalom. He had come to terms with Amnon's death...Joab got up, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. The king said, "He may return to his house, but he is not to see me face-to-face." So Absalom returned home, but was not permitted to see the king. 2 Samuel 13:37-39; 14:23-24 Msg.

4. (Lack of Trust)—Seen in faulty patterns of communication.

As time went on, Absalom took to riding in a horse-drawn chariot, with fifty men running in front of him. Early each morning he would take up his post beside the road at the city gate. When anyone showed up with a case to bring to the king for a decision, Absalom would call him over and say, "Where do you hail from?" And the answer would come, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom would say, "Look, you've got a strong case; but the king isn't going to listen to you." Then he'd say, "Why doesn't someone make me a judge for this country? Anybody with a case could bring it to me and I'd settle things fair and square." 2 Samuel 15:1-4 Msg.

5. (Deception)—Inability to speak the truth to other family members.

After four years of this, Absalom spoke to the king, "Let me go to Hebron to pay a vow that I made to God. Your servant made a vow when I was living in Geshur in Aram saying, 'If God will bring me back to Jerusalem, I'll serve him with my life.'" The king said, "Go with my blessing." And he got up and set off for Hebron. Then Absalom sent undercover agents to all the tribes of Israel with the message, "When you hear the blast of the ram's horn trumpet, that's your signal: Shout, 'Absalom is king in Hebron!'" 2 Samuel 15:7-10

Lessons From David's Family

1. Sin has (consequences).

"...Killing and murder will continually plague your family. This is God speaking, remember! I'll make trouble for you out of your own family. I'll take your wives from right out in front of you. I'll give them to some neighbor, and he'll go to bed with them openly. You did your deed in secret; I'm doing mine with the whole country watching!" 2 Samuel 12:10-12 Msg.

2. God uses broken (people) and broken (families).

"...Furthermore, God has this message for you: God himself will build you a house! When your life is complete and you're buried with your ancestors, then I'll raise up your child, your own flesh and blood, to succeed you, and I'll firmly establish his rule...Your family and your kingdom are permanently secured. I'm keeping my eye on them! And your royal throne will always be there, rock solid." 2 Samuel 7:11,16 Msg.

3. You CAN take the (dys) out of (dysfunction).

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out... Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good. Romans 12:1-2, 21 Msg.

Digging Deeper

Monday.....2 Samuel 13

Tuesday.....2 Samuel 14

Wednesday.....2 Samuel 15

Thursday.....2 Samuel 16-17

Friday.....2 Samuel 18

