

# GET BACK IN IT + + +

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Well, good morning, King of Kings. What a fun, crazy day, right? I mean, we've got jerseys, we've got songs we're voting on, we've got all the kids in all the rooms today. The question today, though, is as faith and fun are colliding, can Fortnite even collide on a day like this? That's what we're going to find out. How many Fortnite gamers we got across the campuses? Make some noise if you play Fortnite. A lot of our kids. I didn't hear many grown men or women in that, but that's okay.

Fortnite is kind of an incredible game. It came onto the scene in 2017. It is fast-paced, colorful, creative, chaotic. It's also free, or at least it can be. More on that later. And it's on nearly every major video game platform or device that is out there. With over 500 million users worldwide, that means about one out of every 15 people in our world regularly drop into the Fortnite world. The goal of the game is simple. You drop into an island with 99 other players, and you try to be the last one standing. And if you do, you get the title of Victory Royale.

If you haven't noticed, the gameplay behind me these last few weeks is my gameplay, and it is atrocious and offensive to actual video gamers. I don't know what I'm doing. I don't know why they chose that every week. But see, I don't even know what I'm doing, but anyway, yeah, now you're laughing at me. Thanks. I played twice for the camera, and I got 93rd out of 100 was my best out of the two times, so you know. Thank you. Thank you.

Some players that play Fortnite are more defensive-minded. They're trying to wait for their time. They may seek shelter or build or find shelter until the right time to go into combat is. Other players are more offensive-minded, thinking the sooner I get other people eliminated, the faster this game goes. Plus, if I'm on the offensive, I can start picking up the weapons that are around the world, or even as you defeat somebody, you get their inventory.

No matter what, though, if you're offensive or defensive-minded, there is a reality in the Fortnite world that the map, the island, shrinks as the game progresses. There is a storm that comes in and forces everybody into the center of action, and so you can't just hide forever. Eventually, the storm will find you.

Fortnite's influence is really kind of crazy, and it maybe spills over into areas that you don't even know. I don't know if you know this, but there's a whole thing called Fortnite dance moves. They call them emotes. For our guy in the Old Testament that we've been looking at in our Game On series, David, do you know there was a section of Scripture where David danced? He danced and worshiped the Lord that they called it undignified, but he was unashamed to dance before our Lord.

And so I thought, since Fortnite dances are so popular, and we've got three campus directors at our three King of Kings campuses, I wondered which of the campus directors might be the best Fortnite dancer of all. And so I thought I would launch the first and only ever annual campus director Fortnite dancing battle. The task was simple. Campus director, find me a Fortnite dance on YouTube, and then I

want you to mimic that. And let's see who wins. By the way, grab those phones out because you're going to vote for this at the end. Yeah, one of these campus directors will get crowned.

Let's start with our oldest campus since 1962, King of Kings Millard campus, now represented by our campus director, Seth Flick. Here is the dance move that Seth Flick saw on YouTube that he wants to emulate. It's called the gritty. Yeah, Packers fans, you've got to admit that Justin Jefferson does it well. But does Seth Flick do it well? Let's see what we got from Seth Flick doing the gritty. That's pretty good. That's pretty good. That's pretty good.

Our second campus, two years old now, represented by our campus director, the one and the only Peter Bay. Let's see the dance that Peter chose. This one's called the orange justice. Whoa, that's a tough one to pull off. How did he pull it off? Check it out, Peter Bay. Okay. Oh, whoa. Hey. Within the rules, within the rules. And the kids director, formerly at Millard, he's got a key to the VBS closet still. Using the rules.

And then finally, our third campus, which by the way, is in Fremont, and it technically publicly relaunched next Sunday. Hey, man, that's cool. We've been having services all year, but we didn't want to relaunch without a campus director. And two months ago, Tyler Rolfsen, his wife, Aaliyah, their three kids moved to Fremont, took on that position, doing fabulous things before we've already relaunched. And so here's the reality. Fremont, I know you're inviting everybody to come next week, but Millard and Northwest Omaha, if you know anybody in Fremont, in Valley, in Waterloo, any of those suburbs of Fremont, they're going to want to be at King of Kings next Sunday. Send the invites on. It's going to be an awesome Sunday.

But can Tyler Rolfsen dance? Well, let's see. Here's what he chose. He chose the dance move called Fresh. Some of y'all might know this as the Carlton. Any Fresh Prince of Bel-Air fans? Okay. Tyler, what you got, my man? Let's see it. That's pretty good. Those arms flailing everywhere. Okay. Wow. Wow. All right. Get those phones out. The voting instructions are going to be on the screen and you've got to the end of the sermon to vote for which campus director should win the first and the only ever annual campus director Fortnite dancing battle. Who is it going to be? We'll find that out later.

Somehow I've got to rescue this and turn it into a sermon now. It's been a fun month where we've—keep those instructions on for a little bit longer just in case they need to see them.

It's been a fun month though as we've been exploring some different video games that are powerful cultural storytelling machines in our day. And we said that this truth, that when it comes to video games, we can find spiritual truths where our culture spends time. Jesus was a master at this. When he lived, he used ordinary illustrations and images and metaphors and parables in order to connect spiritual truths or kingdom principles to the people that he was around.

And we've been doing that this month through the life, the times, the events of David in the Old Testament. We've looked at three different video games over the last three weeks at how David was anointed to be the king of Israel at a young age. Two weeks ago, how he defeated this giant Goliath. And last Sunday, how it was 22 and a half years before he actually became king of all of Israel and how he escaped multiple murder attempts.

In those three messages, we learned these three truths, these three things, that you have a mission and so you're to know your mission. You are armed in the fight and so you're to choose your weapon and you have a call to stay in the fight.

But today in our fourth and final installment of the series, get the victory. How do you get the victory? Now we're going to fast forward David's story quite a bit. He's been king for some time now and he's very well established. He has brought a level of peace and prosperity and success to Israel that they'd never seen. So much so that when Jesus came centuries later, the people called Jesus, one of his titles was son of David.

Not only because he was in the line of David, but because that's really what they wanted Jesus to be like. Just be like David when Israel reigned and when things were going really well. Son of David, that's all we really want you to be.

But unlike Jesus, there was a time when David's story is going to take a disastrous turn and he miserably fails. And it's in this turn, we're going to learn three principles that will help you get the victory in your Christian life. These three principles will have a dual effect that if you ever drop into the world of Fortnite, they'll also help you in there too.

So we're going to be in 2 Samuel chapter 11 to get our first principle and it's this, be in the proper position, be in the proper position.

In the church space, I think we talk a lot about how character gets revealed in trials and in adversity. But one of the things I don't think we talk about enough is the flip side of that, that I really believe that one of the greatest tests of your character is not only in adversity, but also in success. That your character is most revealed in times of adversity and in times of great success. Who are you when you have success, when you have prosperity, and that's exactly what we're going to see in the life of David.

Let me read the opening verses of 2 Samuel 11 to you. And it may not seem like much, but we're going to see there's something more to it. It says in the spring at the time when Kings go off to what go off to what war. David sent Joab out with the King's men and the whole Israelite army. But David did what? He remained in Jerusalem.

And that's the first sign that something's wrong. At the peak of his power, when he used to be on the battlefield with his army, rather than being out there with them and leading his army, he stayed behind and he remained in a place of comfort.

Now in Fortnite, one of the fastest ways to lose is to be in the wrong spot at the right time or at the wrong time, especially when the storm is shrinking. You can have all the great weapons. You can have an inventory that is so impressive. You can have the highest health possible, but you are done if you are not in the right position.

David wasn't where he was supposed to be; the consequences came quickly. This warrior that once faced giants is now lingering in comfort in palaces and traipsing around on his rooftop. And it's in this place, again, of success, not in adversity, that David's greatest failure took root.

And we live in a day and age where leaders of all types, Christians or not, CEOs, celebrities, pastors, fall, not because they were under attack, but I believe because they were unguarded in success. And maybe the success got to their head and maybe they thought they were invincible.

Recent example, all I need to say is two words and you'll get it. Coldplay, kiss cam. And man, the world loved to jump on that and just make it blast everywhere.

See, sometimes it's actually not the pressure of hardship that breaks a person, but the unchecked influence of success. The same heart that once beat for God so powerfully slowly drifts more successful you are towards yourself, and it's a sobering reminder, David's story, what we're going to see that success does not make you invincible. It actually makes you vulnerable in brand new ways.

I'm not going to talk to you about an epic victory or a daring escape from David, things he's known for, but rather a devastating fall. But in this devastating fall, if you'll enter into it with me, you will see one of the most explicit pictures of grace and restoration that is offered in all of the Bible, which means if God can do this for David after the stuff that he did and the stuff we're going to look at and talk about today, there may be some of you here today that thought you did some pretty bad things and maybe you did do some awful things. Maybe you did some things that would get you canceled in today's culture.

But the good news is that God can meet you in that place, in that one night, in that one season where you lost your way and you are still making yourself pay for what you did because we're going to find out that even in your failure, God's victory is not finished. Even in your failure, God's victory, it's not over.

So let's talk about the failure of David as he's in comfort in a place where he ought not to be. One evening, verse 2, David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. The Hebrew implies it was a continual walking, not a happenstance as some preachers like to preach.

From the roof, he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said she is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him and he slept with her. When she went back home, the woman conceived and sent word to David saying, I am pregnant.

Trouble often finds you when you are not in position. When you're in positions you should not be in, temptation can meet you in ways that it otherwise would not have met you. I think there are many of us that sometimes unfairly judge those who are in situations that you're not in and that you'll never be, and we unfairly judge them and we say things like, well, if I was in that position, I would never choose that. I would never do that.

And I want to say, we're all sinful. And sometimes the reason some of us don't sin in these public ways that others sin in is not because we wouldn't, it's because the opportunity to sin wasn't available to you. Because we're all sinful. We all struggle. We all get stuck in what I call the sin spiral, where temptation, which is not a sin, comes in, but we're giving into that because it's so strong. And then we

sin and that just piles into more sin and more sin and more sin. And we try to get out and we don't know how.

And David got stuck in this sin spiral, actually preached about a year ago on this story in what I called the sin spiral. And so if you want to dive deeper into like, how do we get out of the sin spiral when we get into it, there's a QR code that you can grab that and you can watch that at some time this week, because the good news is you can get out of the sin spiral, no matter where you are in it, no matter how far you've been in it, you always have a way out.

David wanted to get out, but the way he chose to get out often in this story was actually not through Jesus, but by doing more sin. Maybe if I lie about it, then nobody will know about it.

You see what happened in David's story is he wasn't positioned well, the success got to his head. He was in places that he shouldn't be. So the question you have to ask yourself, and I think there's many of us that are in this boat that live in America.

I think that again, character can be revealed through adversity and trials. And we have that, but I believe we're a very successful, prosperous nation that collectively has lost our way, not because of trial and adversity, but because of corporate success.

So the question is, if you're experiencing success, do you have measures in place that keep you in a relationship with Jesus? David didn't. And so again, to try to get out of the spiral, he did lots of different things. He abused his power, he slept with Bathsheba, he impregnated her, and in a desperate attempt to cover up his sin, he lied to her husband, who proved to be a very faithful man, so faithful that David still needed to dispose of him.

So he sent him out onto the front lines of battle where David ought to have been and actually assassinated her husband, Uriah.

David like would have been canceled way more quickly than Coldplay kiss cam guy, legitimately. But what accountability do you have in your life to guard you, to check you, to say that, you know what, life is going pretty well and I've got lots of success around me.

Do you have measures in place? Do you have a measure in your relationship with Jesus? Are there spiritual disciplines, like praying and getting in the Word? I know you're here today, so you're probably the faithful, but are you in that rhythm of weekly worshiping together? Are you in that rhythm of getting into a connect group and community with one another? Are you in that rhythm of serving as a regular part of your positioning? Do you have an accountability partner in your life? Someone you can tell some things to, someone that can hear your story, someone that can bring you forgiveness when you failed?

About six years ago, I added that into my life and it's a beautiful thing and we talk and he absolves me of sin that I confess.

Are you in the proper position?

Number two, when you fail, not if, when, respawn.

God's life, his story should have been over, but it wasn't, just like in Fortnite, when you die, it should be the end, but it's not. You can respawn. To respawn means to appear or exist again in a video game. You're dead, but then all of a sudden, you're playing again and that happens in Fortnite.

There's a couple of modes of Fortnite where you actually play with a partner and you can actually die, but as long as your partner's still alive and that person, he or she is managing the battle themselves and they can kind of come find you and bring what's called a reboot card to you. They can fill you back up with health so you can get back in the game.

But in most game modes, if you die, you're out of that game, but because there's 500 million users worldwide, you just jump into the next one in the next 10 seconds. Start over.

And I bet David wished he could start over. And again, all of those measures of sin were his opportunities to try to start over. He blew it big time, abused power, lust, adultery, deception, murder, tried to cover it up.

And yet it wasn't enough. His friend, good friend, Nathan, the prophet confronted him on his sin.

Last week, actually, at all of our campuses, the kids ministry was actually looking at the story of David and Bathsheba and Julie Easley was leading the large group for our Millard campus here. And she said, does anyone know why Nathan confronted David?

And a first grade boy raised his hand and with confidence said, to show him what a monster he is.

Exactly. He is a monster.

And it was this moment where David doesn't deflect or deny. He owns it. 2 Samuel 12, 13 says, I have sinned against the Lord. There's no excuses. There's no spinning it. There is just confession.

And that confession opens up the door to restoration.

Nathan shows up in David's despair. You could say with a reboot card, but this reboot card isn't coming from Nathan's inventory of supplies. And it's not coming from David's own grit and willpower. It's coming through this gift called grace.

And respawning is just a picture of what grace looks like, that it should be over, but it's not because there's a free gift given to you.

And I think that after this story is really where David does some beautiful things in my mind. I think he writes the best confession of a human and all of the Bible.

It's in Psalm chapter 51, his words, where he says, have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions, wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me.

Cleanse me with hyssop and I'll be clean. Wash me and I'll be whiter than snow, creating me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

And there are too many people that think that if they've fallen, that their story and their life is over, that they can't get back up again.

But the truth all throughout the Bible is God never meets you in your perfection. If you're expecting God to meet you in your perfection, you'll never find him because you're not perfect. God only meets you in your failure.

The Bible actually says that we were dead to sin before we knew Jesus, which means we need Jesus to go and get a reboot card off the cross and the grave and come find each of us in our sin and bring us back to life.

We need someone, something from the outside.

We cannot earn it. We cannot get it. We are dead.

And yet Jesus said, I will go to the cross. I will go down into the pits of hell. I will get what you need and bring you back to life, which is beautiful.

God will meet you wherever you are. And the Bible says there is no pit too deep that God's arm cannot reach and his ears are not so dull that he can't hear you.

No matter how far down you've gone, no matter how far you've fallen, no matter what egregious sin you bring before the Lord, I've said before that the admission price to your freedom begins when the admission of your sin.

And that's when God can do some serious work.

With failure, Jesus comes and gives you another opportunity to respawn, to appear again, to live again.

And speaking of all this, not only does he give you a gift of grace, but he gives you this gift of the Holy Spirit, which is my third principle today.

Wear the right skin.

Wear the right skin.

One of the things that Fortnite is famous for are their skins.

Skins are outfits that change the character's appearance. And so you can be a warrior, a football player. You can be Wonder Woman if you want. And some people spend real money trying to wear the coolest skin.

In 2022 alone, Fortnite made \$5 billion on skins and cosmetic things on animated characters that equal, here's the reality, no advantage in the game.

And as a dad, that drove me crazy to see my son's number one budget line expense every month for a few years be the \$19.99 for the Fortnite monthly battle pass, which gave him limited edition skins.

Because I'm like, son, it gives you no advantage.

I'm not going to go too far into that, but it drove me crazy as you can see.

David would continue his confession.

Don't cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

David says, I need the Holy Spirit power. I need you to clothe me with the power that comes from above.

And that's the beautiful thing is that God clothes us.

Galatians 3 verse 27 says, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have what? Have clothed yourselves with Christ.

You get to wear the clothes of Christ, his garments of righteousness, the Bible says.

Jesus says it this way, I'm going to send you what my father has promised, but stay in the city until you've been what? Until you've been clothed with power from on high.

When you are baptized, when you believe, when you confess and receive God's grace, you get, you get clothed. You get under armor, if you will, that go with you wherever you are in this world.

And once you have that, you don't have to stay stuck where you were.

And that's the beautiful thing about David's story is he did not stay stuck in his shame.

He confessed and he changed.

He did have worldly consequences for the sins that he committed.

But after confessing, he turned his life, he repented, he turned away from bad and turned towards good and truly lived an amazing next chapter, made things right with Bathsheba.

He married her.

They had a second son, Solomon.



And in the final years of David's life, he poured into his son and his son's legacy to build the kingdom of God and really finished well.

In the New Testament, David is seen and is known of all the Bible.

This is the guy that's known as a man after God's own heart.

And you look at all the crap that he did and it's like, how is that the one that's a man after God's own heart?

And it's because when you receive God's grace, you are born again and you are clothed with his garments of righteousness.

So that when God looks at you, child, he doesn't see you for your brokenness and for your failure.

In fact, the Bible says all of your sins from east to west, I'm pretty sure that means everything has been forgotten.

So that when God sees you, he sees you as the born again son or daughter, child of his perfect, holy and blameless, that you also are a man and a woman after God's own heart.

If God can do this for someone like David, then certainly, surely he can do this for someone like you.

And here's like where the analogy of a silly video game with gospel truths kind of breaks down a little bit.

In Fortnite, you have to pay with your own money to buy skins that give you no advantage.

But in Christianity, in Jesus, you have someone that paid with his own skin to give you an advantage that you did not deserve and cannot earn.

In Fortnite, the goal is how can I outlast and be the greatest of the 100?

But the thing with Jesus is he is not trying to outlast the 99.

He came to give his life for the 99.

And even if he sees one out of this world, he will go and he will rescue that one and he will whatever analogy you want, give you grace, give you a reboot card, help you respawn, help you be born again, give you clothes, give you garments of righteousness, whatever analogy you want.

He will make you alive again and he will then send you into this world as the born again people and remind you that now you've got his clothes, you've got his power.

You're sent on purpose.

And there's far too many people that don't know that think the game is over for them and it's not over.

The storm is coming.

It's shrinking.

There's urgency to what we're doing.

But now we who are born again get to now go and take the unearned undeserved gift of grace that we've received and give it away to those who think their game is over, who think they could never have a second chance.

We get to share the good news of Jesus and by the grace of God, bring them back to life.

This is your call and this is my call.

Can I get one big amen from all three campuses on the count of three.

One, two, three.

Amen.