**“AMBITION & BETRAYAL”**

 **2 Samuel 15:1-12**

***Sermon Review***

*What was the Main Point of the Sermon from Sunday?*

*What part of the sermon did you find most beneficial?*

***SMALL GROUP LESSON***

1. What are some ways that ambitious individuals can "buy" a following?
2. What are the characteristics of the ambitious people you know?

**2 Samuel 15:1-12 (NLT2)**
1  After this, Absalom bought a chariot and horses, and he hired fifty bodyguards to run ahead of him.
2  He got up early every morning and went out to the gate of the city. When people brought a case to the king for judgment, Absalom would ask where in Israel they were from, and they would tell him their tribe.
3  Then Absalom would say, “You’ve really got a strong case here! It’s too bad the king doesn’t have anyone to hear it.
4  I wish I were the judge. Then everyone could bring their cases to me for judgment, and I would give them justice!”
5  When people tried to bow before him, Absalom wouldn’t let them. Instead, he took them by the hand and embraced them.
6  Absalom did this with everyone who came to the king for judgment, and so he stole the hearts of all the people of Israel.
7  After four years, Absalom said to the king, “Let me go to Hebron to offer a sacrifice to the LORD and fulfill a vow I made to him.
8  For while your servant was at Geshur in Aram, I promised to sacrifice to the LORD in Hebron if he would bring me back to Jerusalem.”
9  “All right,” the king told him. “Go and fulfill your vow.” So Absalom went to Hebron. 10  But while he was there, he sent secret messengers to all the tribes of Israel to stir up a rebellion against the king. “As soon as you hear the ram’s horn,” his message read, “you are to say, ‘Absalom has been crowned king in Hebron.’”
11  He took 200 men from Jerusalem with him as guests, but they knew nothing of his intentions.
12  While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, one of David’s counselors who lived in Giloh. Soon many others also joined Absalom, and the conspiracy gained momentum.

***EXPLORE***

* + 1. What symbols of status and power did Absalom acquire? ([15:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A1))

* + 1. Whom was Absalom in the habit of intercepting at the city gate? ([15:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A2))

* + 1. How did Absalom flatter the people he met at the gate? ([15:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A3)-4)

* + 1. How did the Israelites react to Absalom? ([15:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A6))
		2. When he had gone to Hebron, what did Absalom ask his supporters to do? ([15:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A10))
		3. Whom else did Absalom find to join his rebellion? ([15:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A12))

***APPLY***

1. How do ambitious people manipulate the truth to their own advantage?
2. How is it possible to reconcile a strong personal ambition with devotion to God?
3. What ambition should you examine to see if it is submitted to the will of God?
4. Why might it be wise to wonder about the motives of people who seem unusually helpful?
5. When you have been betrayed in the past, did you see any “warning signs” before the betrayal?
6. Is there anything that you can do to avoid being betrayed in the future?
7. How do you balance being discerning and circumspect with “walking by faith”?

**Additional Thoughts:**

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