

Joab: “Those Who Live By the Sword . . .”
2 Samuel

I. Paradigm: Two Approaches to Life

THE PERFORMANCE SYSTEM		
Focus:	The Kingdom of “Self” (Isa. 53:6; Rom 1:21)	
Approach:	“Bootstraps”	
Needs:	Security	Significance
Strategy:	Relationships	Achievement
Threats:	Deterioration, Alienation	Deterioration, Goal-denying obstacles
Tactics:	Self-Promotion, Manipulation	Self-Advancement, Comparison, Insist on Rights
Fears:	Rejection	Failure
Results:	Loneliness	Anxiety/Emptiness

Inherent problems with the Performance System

- How do you tell when you’ve _____ ?
- _____: External and Internal
- Tend to focus on _____ rather than responsibilities
- Tend to operate on the basis of what “_____” rather than what is _____.
- Can’t _____ on top
- Danger: Success reinforces a system that promotes _____ from God (Luke 18:15-30). This is evident in pride and a _____ of security.

THE GRACE SYSTEM		
Focus:	The Kingdom of God (Mat. 6:33)	
Needs:	Security	Significance
Means:	Relationship	Assignment
Picture:	Father-Son	Master-Steward
Provision:	Acceptance	Affirmation, Forgiveness
Condition	Faith	Faithfulness
Results:	Peace	Joy
Impact:	Free to Serve	Competent to Serve

II. Background to the Story of Joab

A. Some of David's Wives and Children

Wives:	Michal	Ahinoam	Abigail	Maacah	Haggith	Bathsheba
Children:	X	Amnon	(Chileab)	Absalom, Tamar	Adonijah	Solomon

B. Other Key Actors in the Story:

1. **Abner**: Saul's uncle and commander-in-chief who installed Ishbosheth (Saul's son) as short-lived king of the northern tribes. He was murdered by Joab.
2. Sons of Zeruah (David's half-sister; they are therefore his nephews)
 - **Abishai** – a good warrior, but impetuous and lacking Joab's leadership abilities
 - **Joab** – David's commander-in-chief for most of his reign
 - **Asahel** – a very fast runner; killed by Abner at the Battle of Gibeon
3. **Amasa**: son of David's other half-sister, Abigail; cousin of Joab; commander-in-chief of Absalom's army; murdered by Joab.

III. Observations on Joab's Career

- A. Joab provides a classic case history of a man who operated on the basis of the Performance System. He relied on his exceptional _____ as a fighter and leader, his political savvy, and his _____ to David to make life work. The system repeatedly _____.
- B. Joab never really figured out whose _____ it is. Though he evidenced flashes of spiritual insight, Joab mostly operated without a _____ (the Law of God). As a result, he didn't seek to do what was right but what he thought would work to his advantage. Virtually all of his opportunistic decisions resulted in _____. He was an expert at _____.
- C. In his relationship with David, Joab was steadfastly loyal – but on his own terms. He frequently disagreed with David's judgment and sought to circumvent David's will. He did this through subtle _____ or overt actions of _____ behind David's back. This behavior created an uneasy alliance in which David _____ Joab for his own ends but never _____ himself to him.
- D. Joab's adherence to a Performance System produced a life filled with intrigue, _____, and _____. He never knew peace in life, and his death was both violent and shameful.

IV. Biblical Truths Illustrated by Joab

- A. "There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way that leads to death" (Pro 14:12)
- B. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding.⁶ Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will make your paths straight.⁷ Do not be wise in your own estimation; fear the LORD and turn away from evil (Pro 3:5-7).
- C. "Then Jesus said to [Peter], 'Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword'" (Mat 26:52 ESV).
- D. "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal 6:7-8).