Sloth and Anger
2 Samuel 3:22-27
The Lord calls you into his presence today.

Are you standing strong this summer?

You are with David in his triumph. Despite the sins of his followers, David
remains righteous toward his enemies. He becomes King over all of Israel
and takes Jerusalem as his new capital.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he
has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus
Men, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference,
despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your
servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord
and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for
you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel
Just then the servants of David arrived with Joab from a raid, bringing
much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David at Hebron, for he had
sent him away, and he had gone in peace. When Joab and all the army that
was with him came, it was told Joab, "Abner the son of Ner came to the
king, and he has let him go, and he has gone in peace." Then Joab went to
the king and said, "What have you done? Behold, Abner came to you; why is
it that you have sent him away, so that he is gone? You know that Abner the
son of Ner came to deceive you, and to know your going out and your coming
in, and to know all that you are doing." When Joab came out from David's
presence, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from
the cistern of Sirah; but David did not know about it. And when Abner
returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the midst of the gate to speak
with him privately, and there he smote him in the belly, so that he died,
for the blood of Asahel his brother.

Reflection
When Joab goes to avenge the death of his brother, Asahel, he does so in a
very brash way. Perhaps Abner had it coming, not only for killing Asahel,
but for the way he would often disregard right order. Nevertheless, Joab
deceives Abner and disregards the arrangement his king had just made with
him. Has he been overcome with anger at Abner's killing of Asahel? Does he
feel threatened by Abner now that he and David have made peace? Is he
envious that Abner has been elevated by his master? While all these things
are likely at play, it is most certainly the case that Joab had been
waiting for a time to repay Abner when David and Ish-bosheth finally went
to war. But upon learning that Abner and David were allies, Joab felt he
had to take justice into his own hands.

This is a different Joab than we saw before. Previously, Joab was very poised and honorable. But he has obviously allowed his anger over Asahel's death to fester. What Joab does is undermine his master and compromise his word and strategy. What is interesting is that David does not have Joab killed like he had done to the Amalekite who killed King Saul.

Sloth is often rooted in an irritableness and anger, a deep-seated grudge or sense of having been slighted. There is a lingering sense in the slothful person that they have suffered some injustice, some loss, or some misfortune, and therefore, they deserve to take justice into their own hands when the opportunity presents itself. As Evagrius observed, the slothful monk resents the rule and thinks he can decide for himself when and where to follow it.

Is there a grudge and trauma that you are hanging on to? Do you find yourself irritable or quick to take offense? Is there a person you feel like you cannot forgive? Ask the Lord to reveal to you areas of your heart that are ensnared in anger and how that might be leading to slackness in doing what is right.

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

Week 3 Action Items
Plan a summer BBQ.
Evaluate your Plan of Life.
Commit to intentional prayer time with others.