

## David the King 1 - A Man after God's Heart

Today, I would like to begin a set of messages based on the life of David, the King. David was preeminently known as a man after god's own heart. He had faults and failings as any man might, but his victories and his heart were greater. There is much we can learn from how God worked in his life.

### 1. The selfish heart.

The first reference we have concerning David is in first Samuel 13 where Samuel reveals that Saul has been rejected in favor of a man whose heart is after God.

1Sam 13:13-14 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.

The phrase "after his own heart" means according to His, God's, heart. It is literally "as His own heart." It refers to being one at heart with God. The things God desired would be the things that David would desire. In contrast, Saul did not desire the things of God.

To really appreciate this we need the background that led up to the search for a man after God's heart to replace Saul as King. Let me share with you how the selfish heart that characterized the reign of Saul. This was demonstrated beginning with the very demand of the people for a king and how God met that demand up to the moment when God sought a man after His own heart.

First of all, at the end of the book of Judges, Israel was in a sad state of affairs.

Judg 21:25 In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes.

By the time Samuel was getting older, Israel started lusting after a king like the other nations had. God had given very specific instructions about a king back in Deuteronomy.

Deut 17:14-15 When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a

king over me, like as all the nations that *are* about me;

15Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother.

They were not supposed to seek a king like the other nations, but only one whom God would choose.

Later, when Samuel was old, his sons did not follow in his steps and the people wanted a king.

1Sam 8:4-5 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

5And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

When the time came when they started desiring a king, they did not seek out the Lord. They lusted after a king like the other nations had. At first, Samuel was upset, but then God said He *would* grant them a king, but the king He gave them was one who matched their spiritual estate.

1Sam 8:7-9 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: **for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me**, that I should not reign over them.

8According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

9Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

God gave them Saul, who operated very much according to his self-interest and whatever seemed to get him along. It's not that Saul hated God, or didn't do things for God, or even didn't believe in God. It's just that Saul didn't have a great respect and appreciation *for* God. When he was to be selected he was more concerned about how self appeared and hid himself amongst "the stuff." Later in his reign, when it came time to wait for Samuel to make a sacrifice for God, Saul demonstrated that he was more given over to self wisdom than his heart was given to God.

1Sam 13:8-12 And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel *had appointed*:

but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

9And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

10And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

11And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

Saul took on the role of the priest. It was not *his* place to offer sacrifices. But, go ahead, blame it on the people!

12Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.

It was at *this* point that God announced He was going to find a man who was one at heart with Him.

Reminding Saul of how Amalek had vexed Israel in the wilderness, God commanded him to utterly destroy Amalek and all that he had. Instead, Saul spared the cattle and Agag, the king, and destroyed everything else that was vile and refuse and useless. Samuel called Saul out on his disobedience.

1Sam 15:10-19 Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,

11It repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

...

13And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14And Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Again, blame it on the people, and at

the same time be so noble! Samuel admonished Saul and Saul continued to try to defend the decision he made by himself.

1Sam 15:19-23,28 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

Saul was using double talk.

21But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams.

23For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

It was at this point that Saul was rejected utterly by God.

28And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *that is* better than thou.

Saul's reign represents the natural man. We have to remember that what can be said of natural men that is lost in his self centeredness can also apply to an immature believer whose mind is focused on self. It is possible to appear religious in the case of a lost man *or* someone who is saved. Such self-centered nature is revealed when a person does not find God useful in getting what they want, but instead will try something else to get what they want. I find so many times that people start off well with what looks like spiritual zeal, but it doesn't last. I often quote

Prov 20:6 Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

People don't count the cost of energy

it takes to stay consistent. All of this is usually hidden when the economy is good, society is at peace, and their health is good. It is important for us to ask ourselves, "Where is our heart?"

## 2. A heart for God.

The world will make saints and gods of men by ignoring their human frailty. One of the ways we have confidence in the word of God is because the Bible does not hide the failures of his children. We will certainly be looking at how David failed as well as his victories. David would have his times of failure, but the fact that he had a heart for God in general would serve to make his reign great in the sight of God.

Samuel soon went to Bethlehem with instructions from the Lord to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be king. He called for Jesse's sons to be brought forward.

1Sam 16:6-13 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed *is* before him.

7But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Samuel went through all of Jesse's sons, except one.

11And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.

13Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

You should know that Saul was head and shoulders above the rest of Israel. He was physically impressive. The next king was not one who was going to be impressive by the outward appearance. God was not interested in the outward appearance. Remember that God was looking on the heart, and He chose David.

David was a youth. He had the lowly

job of tending his father's sheep. He had a wonderful opportunity to prepare his heart for God. He had time to spend with God. He had time away from the distractions of life. There was no nightlife as we think of it today, there was no abundance of entertainment venues, there was no media catering to his fears or discontent for what he doesn't have. There were no producers shoving the lust of the eyes and of the flesh or the pride of life on screens that appear everywhere you look. There was no Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TicToc. There were no lustful and bloody video games. There was no Youtube. David learned to listen *to* God and to search *for* God.

Keep in mind that David did not even have as much Scripture to be able to know God. There were, tops, seven books of the Bible available to him. He did more with what he had than we do with the complete Scriptures. Instead, he communed with God so closely that he was inspired to *write* holy Scripture.

- He penned 73 Psalms of worship. He may have also written some of 49 anonymous Psalms; these lyrics express his deep desire for God and his heart-felt worship.
- He positioned the Ark in Jerusalem. By doing so, he made his capitol God's headquarters on earth. He loved God's presence so much he wanted to be as close to it as possible.
- He provided a new tabernacle to house the Ark. This replaced Moses' Tabernacle and revolved around true worship rather than sacrifices and rituals — 2 Sam. 6:16-17.
- He promoted musicians and singers to full-time worshipers. Since he couldn't worship God 24/7, David delegated others to do it — 1 Chr. 16:1-6, 37.
- He proclaimed his desire to build God a permanent temple. He felt guilty for living in a cedar palace while the Ark was in a tent and told Nathan his dream to build a temple — 2 Sam. 7:1-14.
- He planned and funded the Temple. When God refused for David to build the Temple because he was a man of war, he stockpiled materials for Solomon (a man of peace) to build it.
- His "perfect heart" never turned to idolatry. Most of the forty plus kings of Israel and Judah, including his own son, Solomon, fell into idolatry; David never did — 1 Kgs. 11:4.

Today, modern songs reflect the evil heart of man. They are filled with perversity, lust, violence, and self-ambition. David's songs are from a heart filled with a desire and awe for God.

You can hear the beat of David's

heart for God in the Psalms. When David sat on the hillside at night he could see God in the vast expanse of the heavens without a telescope.

Ps 139:8-16 If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*.

9If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

12Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*.

He could marvel at the workings of each cell that formed us without a microscope:

13For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

14I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well.

15My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

16Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

In the 1800s, scientists still thought that cells were *globules*. It wasn't until the 1880s, after the death of Darwin, that they began to realize that cells produced other cells based on the chromosomes in the cell. Darwin could have no idea how inheritance even worked. It wasn't even until 1943 that the crucial role of DNA was determined and then how DNA *worked* 10 years later. And then it wasn't until the 1980s that stem cells were discovered, cells that are neutral and turn into other cells like muscle, nerves, and bone. The structures and functions of the cell with a billion chemical reactions per second taking place per second absolutely defy imagination when we look at the impossibility of a single cell coming into existence accidentally.

David didn't have the advantage of all these discoveries, but saw all of this, anyway, when he saw God's work in the creation of a new life in the womb. Some cells all of a sudden knew, somehow, to be clear and form the cornea on our eyes; and even within the cornea it is not just one layer, but several, that are differentiated. Some cells inexplicably

know to turn themselves into bone and know when to stop growing and then know to form round structures at the ends that fit into other bones and then turn into cells within the bones to produce blood, yet another kind of cell that handles oxygen exchange...we could go on and on...David saw this and marveled at God.

Imagine how his heart must have been ready to explode as he saw a thousand years off into the future the sacrifice of his great descendant Jesus, the Christ, on the cross:

Ps 22:16-18 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

17I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me.

18They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

Is it any wonder that David was one at heart with God?

### 3. Cultivate a heart for God.

One of the most depressing Scriptures for me is the sower of the seed in Matthew 13. Let's read how Jesus explained it as a parable on the condition of men's hearts:

Matt 13:19-23 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

I see the way side as the heart that has been trampled on by the philosophers and skeptics of this world, hearts that are hardened and unwilling to receive the Word of the Gospel.

20But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

Here Jesus describes the heart where the Word of God has not taken root. When tribulation and persecution comes, he gives up on the Word because it is not "working" for him.

22He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.



Jesus describes how that another kind of heart is filled with the deceitfulness of riches and the material world and the Word of God is choked out.

Finally, however, there are those hearts that have been tilled and disked and harrowed, and fertilized, and weeded...in other words, a heart well prepared to receive the Word of God.

23But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

It is depressing to me to know that there are many who we witness to whose hearts are disposed against God, willfully blinding themselves to what God has to offer them. How do we cultivate our heart to know God and be one at heart with Him?

- Confess from your heart the risen Savior, Jesus.

Rom 10:8-13 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

- Fill your heart with the treasures of God.

Matt 6:20-21 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Replace the evil treasures.

Mark 7:21-23 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye,

blasphemy, pride, foolishness:  
23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Col 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

- Join your heart to other believers.

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

1Pet 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Ps 101:4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked *person*.

- Sing from your heart.

Eph 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

- Get alone with God.

Ps 4:4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

- Meditate on God and His Word.

Ps 49:3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

Ps 57:7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

Ps 119:36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

Ps 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.